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Rekindling the Flame: How International Conflict Restored Colombia's Relationship with the
United States after the Panama Secession, 1900-1922

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts

in

Latin American Studies

by

Patrick Brooks Ruhl

Committee in charge:

Professor Christine Hunefeldt, Chair
Professor David Mares
Professor Matthew Vitz

2018

The Thesis of Patrick Brooks Ruhl is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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by

Patrick Brooks Ruhl

Master of Arts in Latin American Studies

University of California San Diego, 2018

Professor Christine Hunefeldt, Chair

In November of 1903, the United States, under the leadership of Theodore Roosevelt, helped protect and support a revolutionary movement on the Panama isthmus. As the region seceded from its mother country, Colombia, the world stood in both shock and celebration. The story that is normally explained afterward focuses on the building of the Panama Canal and the U.S. rise as a dominant world power. But what about Colombia's experience? For the South American country, they lost a priceless territory in a humiliatingly public event. More

strikingly, before this Colombia and the U.S. had shared a long and cooperative relationship throughout the previous century, and now this close friendship was tarnished in an instant. Instead of moving their separate ways, the governments of each nations unexpectedly went to great efforts to salvage what was left of this broken relationship over the following two decades. For the first decade ordinary circumstances made hope of a settlement a dismal affair, but monumental changes soon took place with the outbreak of World War I in 1914 which inverted the political and economic atmospheres of not only Europe, but the Western Hemisphere as well. Owing to the War's massive influences, the U.S. and Colombia would finally find motive to rekindle their ties. This essay dives into this tumultuous situation between the two nations and explains why, and how, a relationship fragmented by deceit and aggression was able to be redeemed during the most destructive conflict the world had ever seen.

Introduction:

Upon the arrival of the Colombian President-Elect, Enrique Olaya Herrera, to New York City in April 1930, representatives of the United States State Department, the City of New York, and the Pan American Society all awaited in anticipation to welcome the leader with a banquet in his honor. The American representatives wanted foremost to celebrate “the exceptional importance and significance not only of his visit here but of his election and the effect thereof on the rapidly growing commercial, economic and political relations of the United States with Colombia...” The two nations had recently experienced an extraordinary surge in relations which saw a two-thousand percent growth in total commerce from 1900 to 1929 and even more amazingly, a ten-thousand percent growth in U.S. capital investment into Colombia during the same time.¹ The opulent scene of Herrera’s arrival displayed the dramatic transition in ties between the two countries that took place over the previous decade and characterized a partnership of respect and warmth that was a familiar sight over the majority of the nations’ diplomatic history.

In 1822, the young United States took a monumental step in diplomacy when the government made their first formal recognition of a newly independent nation, the Republic of Colombia.² From this initial moment onward, the relationship between the two countries has been viewed as one of deep respect and equal cooperation. Colombia, on many occasions, has been treated as the most loyal and important Latin American ally to the United States and in the

¹ Statement released for the Associated Press by Vice-President of the Pan American Society John Barrett regarding the arrival of Dr. Enrique Olaya Herrera, April 30, 1930, *John Barrett Papers* (henceforth *JBP*), Box 97, “Latin America-Colombia” Folder, Library of Congress (LC). Commercial rates grew from \$7,000,000 in 1900 to \$153,000,000 in 1929, and U.S. Capital investments rose from around \$3,000,000 to nearly \$300,000,000 in the same period.

² Stephen J. Randall, *Colombia and the United States: Hegemony and Interdependence*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 15-16.

two centuries since relations began, the pair have become heavily intertwined economically, politically and militarily. In 1903, however, with the Republic of Colombia at a critically vulnerable state of disarray following a destructive three-year civil war, the United States double-crossed the Colombian peoples, their government, and their cultural pride by helping revolutionaries in the prized territorial possession, Panama, secede from the republic. This event immediately came as a beneficial development to the U.S., who now controlled its own destiny for the sought-after construction rights for an interoceanic canal through the isthmian region. For Colombia, though, this event displaced the greatest sense of power the country had on the international stage, and further depressed their government during an instant of division and weakness. The Department of Panama's secession would come to define the relationship between the two countries for the following two decades, as both sides had to decide whether they could continue without their longtime ally. This period marked one of massive distrust and anger on the Colombian side, while arrogance and manifest destiny continued to hold power in the emerging United States. In 1922, the signing of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty would mark a magnificent reversal in the public and political sentiments of both countries.

The support offered to the secessionists by Washington in 1903 under President Theodore Roosevelt's administration was bold and conflictual, as it directly alienated a longtime political ally who they had worked with for decades to foster a closer relationship with. Their contribution to this movement came as a shock to nearly everyone except those intimately involved in Washington and opened many questions scholars have since tried to answer: Why did Washington aid the Panama revolutionary movement against Colombian forces? How was this interpreted in Colombia, and as well inside of the U.S.? How did this affect overall U.S.-Colombian relations? Finally, as the two governments decided a settlement could be reached,

the situation requires an understanding as to what factors persuaded Bogota and Washington to establish a settlement over their dispute and why was it able to happen after nearly 20 years of dwindling relations?

This study explains that after Roosevelt's aggressive reaction to aid Panama's secessionists in order to rapidly obtain canal-building rights, that he believed were being held up by Bogota officials, relations between the two countries crashed. Immediate responses in the U.S. of celebration would begin to dampen as reports made it clear that American actions were doubtfully legal, while in Colombia instant uproar turned into two decades of anti-American rhetoric and public opinion. Negotiations between the two governments after the event suffered from divided opinions within each country over their respective cultural prides and prejudices and subsequently hopes of rehabilitating relations diminished. This paper argues that World War I's effects on Colombia, the United States and the world fomented a new political and economic atmosphere that would persuade each side to look upon renewing friendly relations with the other as not just beneficial but necessary. In the U.S. new fears over hemispheric security and resource self-sufficiency would result in the drastic reversal of opinions by characters who were vehemently anti-treaty years before. In Colombia the administrations during the war's economic downslide turned to realist-minded policymaking that viewed U.S. markets as the inevitable source for future economic progress. It is clear that other factors existed which helped foster closer relations between the governments in Bogota and Washington. Yet, it was the war's drastic changes to the world's political atmosphere that created the most significant influences for the two countries to push aside their differences and settle in to a renewed era of coordination.

Historiography

Washington and Bogota shared a relatively generous relationship throughout the nineteenth century. This friendship was primarily maintained on the basis of the 1846 Mallarino-Bidlack Treaty between the two nations. According to this document, and as a result of lingering fears of European aggression, the U.S. promised to respect and uphold Colombian sovereignty in Panama, in return for a guarantee of a stake in, or neutral use of any possible canal constructed in the region.³ Owing to this agreement the two experienced a cooperative and well-mannered diplomatic relationship for over 50 years afterward. Thus the U.S. actions in 1903 may be interpreted as an abnormality in overall policies. However, the historiography of U.S. actions in Latin America exhibits this deed against Colombian sovereignty was not an aberration, but rather a more common reflection of U.S. policies in the hemisphere.

Following the 1823 Monroe Doctrine, where the U.S. publicly denounced European colonialism in the Americas, Historian Thomas Leonard claims that the subsequent decades were characterized by a period where the United States “replaced” Great Britain as the most belligerent intervener in Central American affairs.⁴ During the timeframe of the 1830s-1860s U.S. influences created havoc in Latin America on numerous occasions. Possibly the most classic example of U.S. influence gone awry is seen in the case of “filibuster” William Walker in Nicaragua in the mid-1850s, whose expedition, author Michel Gobat explains, was the only filibuster campaign to achieve lasting control of a Latin American territory.⁵ Despite Nicaraguan

³ E. Taylor Parks, *Colombia and the United States, 1765-1934*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1935) 202-207. The Treaty ensured the United States transit rights across the isthmus of Panama, and also allowed the intervention of U.S. military forces to enter the isthmus to protect U.S. property and citizens as well as the sovereignty of Colombia in the territory.

⁴ Thomas M. Leonard, *Central America and the United States: The Search for Stability* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 34.

⁵ Michael Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream: Nicaragua Under U.S. Imperial Rule* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 2.

cries for Washington to intervene, Walker's mission to set up a slave colony in the weak nation very nearly came to fruition if it were not for a coalition of Central American forces supported by the U.S railroad tycoon Cornelius Vanderbilt.⁶ Further detrimental U.S. actions in Central America are found in the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, where US-British interests overshadowed those of the Central American states, and again in the proposal from President Abraham Lincoln to establish a colony for his country's freed blacks in the region.⁷ Overall insensitivity toward Central American ideals came from the simple fact that throughout the actions of Walker, the 1850 treaty negotiations, and the U.S. discussions of a black colony, Central American opinions and interests were rarely taken into consideration. Luckily for these nations, U.S. political attempts of involvement drastically slowed during the 1860s.

After the outbreak of the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865), authors Thomas Leonard and Thomas Schoonover claim, a period of revitalized relations took place. Schoonover's *The United States in Central America, 1860-1911*, focuses on American influence as a program of social imperialism being utilized as a linkage to promote the United States into a central power.⁸ Schoonover organizes his work through the vantage point of Immanuel Wallerstein's World Systems theory, which separates world states into three categories: peripheral, semi-peripheral and metropole.⁹ Schoonover views the postbellum decades as the pivotal era when the United

⁶ Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream*, 34-40. This coalition force consisting of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador marked a strong show of unity in the face of early U.S. imperialist expansion. One of the United States' most famous business magnates, Cornelius Vanderbilt, acting on spite toward Walker's business associates, Cornelius Garrison and Charles Morgan, who had appropriated Vanderbilt's Nicaraguan transit company years before, set out to end Walker's filibustering.

⁷ Leonard, *Central America and the United States*, 33-34.

⁸ Tomas D. Schoonover, *The United States in Central America, 1860-1911: Episodes of Social Imperialism and Imperial Rivalry in the World System* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 3-4.

⁹ Immanuel Wallerstein's World Systems Theory came to popularity in the 1970s and 1980s through his works: *The Modern World System*, and *The Capitalist World Economy*. Today there are recent volumes of these works, reprinted and edited: Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); and a recent version with expanded historical analysis can be found in, *The Modern World-System. III, The second era of great expansion of the capitalist world-economy, 1730's-1840's* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

States moved from a semi-peripheral state, who functions both as an exploited and exploiting factor in the world market, into a metropole state, which has the power, distribution, and technology to control foreign factors of production in peripheral and semi-peripheral areas.¹⁰ However, during this period, U.S. government-lead efforts to encourage a greater relationship with its southern isthmus neighbors proved fruitless. As Schoonover and other scholarship on this period explain, Washington's inefficiency and disinterest in expanding its power during this post-war period lead to U.S. imperialism of a different sort: private business entrepreneurs.

Jason Colby's, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* explains that after the Civil War in the United States, the decade of reconstruction's (1868-1878) liberal reforms became a prominent barrier against further territorial annexation.¹¹ Many citizens became conflicted over the notion that further territorial increase meant that any population brought into the republic would garner full citizenship. Idealists of white supremacy wanted to abstain from any increases of U.S. influence in, or possibly granting of citizenship to, areas full of non-whites such as Central America and the Caribbean. Due to this, the 1870s-1880s would be marked by increases in U.S. business ventures, who Colby claims, were not held back by notions of racism and therefore began to lay the foundations of a new U.S. empire driven by private enterprise.¹² Possibly the most powerful U.S. business enterprise in the history of Latin America would emerge during this period specifically, The United Fruit Company.

¹⁰ Schoonover, *The United States in Central America*, 3.

¹¹ Jason Colby, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 31. Colby's study offers a strong overview of the power of Minor Keith and his United Fruit Company in altering the economic, political, and even social characteristics of Central American nations.

¹² Colby, *The Business of Empire*, 31-32.

The United Fruit Company's (UFCO) reach specifically shows the immense power private business interests began to take hold of in Latin America. The power of UFCO is one that has been well-analyzed, especially its various actions of violent repression and examples of political corruption during the first few decades of the twentieth-century.¹³ However, the UFCO's legality as a private business entity emphasizes the extra capabilities allowed to private powers over state powers. Mark Moberg discusses this concept through attacking British Honduras' (Belize) distinguished place in history as a nation that remained resilient from U.S. interests. In his article "Responsible Men and Sharp Yankees," Moberg claims that the country did in fact experience the same manipulation and control by U.S. interests in the early twentieth-century as did the likes of Guatemala and Honduras.¹⁴ His work helps illustrate that private U.S. corporations could hold authoritative roles in areas which the government would be diplomatically unwilling to involve itself in.¹⁵ As will be explained in Colombia's case later in this paper, U.S. private enterprise was an essential tool of American influence when diplomatic bridges could not be crossed.

While creating chaos across much of the hemisphere, Colombia's comparative experience with the United States appears more positive. This experience was due in large part to their territorial holding of the Department of Panama. The quest for an opportunity of stake in an inter-oceanic canal proved to be of utmost importance to both U.S. economic interests and the government in Washington. Early political discussions guaranteed U.S. rights, or at the very least

¹³ As well with Colby's aforementioned work see Constance Orozco, *The United Fruit Company in Central America: A Bargaining Power Analysis* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991); and Marcelo Bucheli, *Bananas and Business: The United Fruit Company in Colombia, 1899-2000* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

¹⁴ Mark Moberg, "Responsible Men and Sharp Yankees: The United Fruit Company, Resident Elites, and Colonial State in British Honduras," in *Banana Wars: Power, Production, and History in the Americas*, ed. By Steve Striffler and Mark Moberg (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 146.

¹⁵ The U.S. government were weary of any official actions on the country as it was a colonial possession of their powerful European ally and trading partner, Great Britain.

neutrality, to any possible canal zone through promising American acknowledgement of, and help to ensure Colombia's sovereignty over Panama.¹⁶ Through allowing U.S. military access to support Colombia's holding, the small isthmian territory saw nine separate instances of military intervention by the United States from 1856-1895.¹⁷ This persistent military presence resulted in paranoia over U.S. influence as the post-bellum drag began to shed and the North Americans began to look thirsty of expansionism once more.

Colombian historians are rare in comparison with that of many other Latin American countries, and English language historians on the matter are even more few and far between. As David Bushnell claims in his *The Making of Modern Colombia: A Nation in spite of Itself*, "Colombia is today the least studied of the major Latin American countries, and probably the least understood."¹⁸ More so, what research there is on Colombia tends to be heavily involved with the more recent and popularly publicized topics of guerilla groups, peace negotiations, and of course, the illicit drug trade.¹⁹ One of the factors that have fed into this focus can ultimately be tied to the ramped-up U.S. interventions into the affairs of Colombia during the twentieth century's second half.²⁰ While these works are highly valuable and have contributed lengths to

¹⁶ John Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 13. A few of these cases were described as U.S. government protection for the safety of the American-owned Panama Railroad Company during conflicts, however, just as many other cases were a response to calls for support by the Colombian government.

¹⁷ Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 16-7.

¹⁸ David Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia: A Nation in Spite of Itself* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), vii.

¹⁹ Historiography of Colombia's half-century long civil war, known as "La Violencia," and its more contemporary periods is well studied by both U.S. and Colombian scholars, some of the more recent and noteworthy can be found in: Karl A. Roberts, *Forgotten Peace: Reform, Violence, and the Making of Contemporary Colombia* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017); Jefferson Jaramillo Marin, *Pasados y Presentes de La Violencia en Colombia: Estudio Sobre las Comisiones de Investigacion (1958-2011)* (Bogota, D.C.: Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2014); and Mary Roldan, *Blood and Fire: La Violencia in Antioquia, Colombia, 1946-1953* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

²⁰ For U.S. policy in Colombia's drug war see: Winifred Tate, *Drugs, Thugs and Diplomats: U.S. Policymaking in Colombia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015); Holmes, Gutierrez de Pineres, and Kevin Curtis, *Guns, Drugs, and Development in Colombia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008); and Jairo Estrada Alvarez, *El Plan Colombia y la intensificación de la guerra: aspectos globales y locales* (Bogota, D.C.: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2002).

the modern knowledge of the state of affairs in Colombia, in many cases they leave the earlier histories of the relationship between the U.S. and Colombia to be skimmed over, left untouched, and overall associated with less importance. My research into the history of the relations between the United States and Colombia, thus, is to be centered on this overshadowed era of the early twentieth century.

Existing scholarship that discusses Colombia's early twentieth century can be found in Bushnell's earlier-mentioned work, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, where he effectively covers the story of the nation from pre-Columbus times until the end of the Cold War. However, in doing so, his research (understandably) skims over many important events that deserve further discussion such as the separation of Panama and following period of diplomatic tension. In Marco Palacios' more current overview of Colombia's history, he divides the work into well-organized sections of political divergences in the overall path toward government legitimacy. Yet, the sections concerning the loss of Panama and the subsequent relations with the United States are overshadowed by discussions of internal events in the country.²¹ James Henderson's *Modernization in Colombia: The Laureano Gomez Years, 1889-1965*, offers a more narrowed period of history, while following the life and influences of the former Colombian President. Yet, the discourse surrounding events of the early twentieth century are focused more on internal political developments than on the country's experience in the global arena.²² Historiography of Colombian society is now slowly growing thanks in large part to these scholars who have continued to push for more interest in the understudied country, but there still remains important, under researched areas.

²¹ Marco Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence: A History of Colombia, 1875-2002* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

²² James Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia: The Laureano Gomez Years, 1889-1965* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001).

The intersection of Colombian history and U.S.-Latin American relations is the prime focus of this work. As mentioned above, Colombia's success in holding a favorable position with U.S. policymakers would come to a close as they entered the beginning of the twentieth century. After the end of Colombia's largest and most destructive civil war, the Thousand Days' War (1899-1902), the government in Bogota was standing on crutches internally, and internationally was beginning to frustrate the ideas of world development.²³ The Panama holding still lacked the long-sought interoceanic canal and in the eyes of many Western countries, the government in Bogota was personally holding up the construction through their slow negotiating processes with the United States over canal construction rights. The forthcoming events of 1902-1903 have created possibly the most interesting facet of historiography for early twentieth century U.S.-Colombian foreign relations.

With Colombia weak the Department of Panama, long frustrated at their rulers in Bogota, revolted and quickly gained a stance of independence. The scholarship on Panama's independence movement in 1902-1903 can be divided into two different historical viewpoints, those from the U.S. and those from Panama and Colombia. Research among U.S. scholars has focused on Washington's role in supporting the revolution byways of financial assistance and military assurance. While U.S. authors take different stances on the approval of this intervention, all emphasize that Washington's role was necessary for the Panamanians to be successful, and the consequentiality of this necessity would be lasting U.S. imperial influence in Panama in the following decades.²⁴ Scholarship from Colombia and Panama, however, emphasize that the

²³ Charles Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia, 1886-1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986). This work has long stood as not only a revered study of social and economic history, but also as a solid historical look into the everyday social aspects that came to envelop Colombia in their most brutal civil conflict to that date.

²⁴ Sharika Crawford. "Panama Fever: Colombian Fears of Secession on San Andrés and Providencia Islands, 1903–1913." *The Global South* 6, no. 2 (2012): 15-17.

turbulent relationship between the isthmus and the Bogota government during the movement's preceding decades was the main factor resulting in the split. This viewpoint furthers the notion that Colombia's first century of existence was one of disjointed nationality, which is a common historiographical trend seen within both foreign and national works of early Colombian Republican history.²⁵ No matter its interpretation, this event would tarnish ties between the two nations, and further damage the image of the United States in a region already fuming over its actions during the recent Spanish-American War amongst other earlier events.

The ramifications of Panama's separation from Colombia and the subsequent acquisition of canal rights by the U.S. has been highly studied regarding the resulting relationship between Washington and the isthmus. Michael Conniff's *Panama and the United States: The End of the Alliance* emphasizes the U.S. as a belligerent force in both their involvement in Panama's revolution and the ensuing relations between the two countries into the twenty-first century.²⁶ John Lindsay-Poland's *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama* displays a more expose-type history on the relationship through focusing on the longstanding legacy of U.S. military presence and intervention within the isthmus.²⁷ Furthermore, Noel Maurer and Carlos Yu's *The Big Ditch: How America Took, Built, Ran, and Ultimately Gave Away the Panama Canal* explains how the canal and its legacy can be seen both as an example of Northern imperialism and a highly successful project showcased within a generally economically developed nation.²⁸

²⁵ Crawford, "Panama Fever," 16-17; Frank Safford and Marco Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Ricaurte Soler, *Panama, Dependencia y Liberacion/ seleccion de textos, prologo y notas de Ricaurte Soler*, 2nd ed. (Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio, Costa Rica: Educa, 1976).

²⁶ Michael L Conniff, *Panama and the United States: The end of the Alliance* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 3rd Edition.

²⁷ See Lindsay-Poland, *Emperor's in the Jungle*.

²⁸ Noel Maurer and Carlos Yu, *The Big Ditch: How America Took, Built, Ran, and Ultimately Gave Away the Panama Canal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

The significance of Panama's independence for the United States and Panama itself is a topic that has been extensively studied by both Latin American and English scholars, however, the impact this event had on Colombian foreign relations has been rarely investigated. Colombia's loss of the valuable territory sparked widespread outrage against both the United States and Panama. The next twenty years in Colombia defined how the country would overcome this loss, regain international respect and prestige, and coax the United States and Panama into providing restitution for their collusive acts. While scholars of U.S.-Colombian foreign relations have mentioned, discussed, and constructed arguments for how the U.S. and Colombia finally came to an agreement in the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty, very little has been solely dedicated to this period. What has been said about this period of negotiations, my research explains, does not fully consider the importance of international events such as the outbreak and course of World War I (1914-1918) during this time.

Scholars who have contributed to this period of foreign resolve generally have utilized it as a small section within a broader discourse on overall U.S.-Colombian or U.S.-Latin American affairs. Early scholarship started with E. Taylor Parks' 1935 survey of U.S.-Colombian relations, where the focus of the treaty negotiations centers around the U.S. Senate's resilience against offering any form of indemnity or apology to Colombia for the actions of the highly influential President Roosevelt. It is not until the discovery of large oil reserves in Colombia's territory, Parks observes, that American politicians would dare come to an agreement on resolving the damaged relations.²⁹ Stephen Randall, in his *Colombia and the United States: Hegemony and Interdependence*, devotes a full chapter to the Panama event and following negotiations for resolve. Randall, as well, uses the majority of explanations about the negotiation period to

²⁹ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 446-457.

emphasize the economic interests that, he claims, would bring the United States into a position willing to offer concessions to Colombia.³⁰ Bradley Coleman discusses the period of relations from 1903-1921 as one of great importance, and states that a large factor was Colombian President Marco Fidel Suarez's (1918-1921) mindset that Colombia would never withstand U.S. contact and thus should do its best to make amends with their northern neighbor.³¹ In agreement with Randall he also maintains that throughout this period and beyond, Colombia was not a mere pawn of U.S. imperialism, but had control of its own autonomy in the relationship, an important factor my research as well supports.

The works mentioned thus far all situate the period of harsh relations within a much broader framework and thus leave detailed information lacking. However, Richard Lael's *Arrogant Diplomacy: U.S. Policy Toward Colombia, 1903-1922* dedicates a full study to this period which he states "reflected in microcosm the problem facing America's leaders in the opening decades of the twentieth century."³² Lael's work offers significant details into the U.S. involvements in the Panamanian move for independence, and situates the reversal in U.S. policy as a product of President Woodrow Wilson's hemispheric strategy for alliance, as well as the power of the economic opportunities in Colombia. Parks, Randall and Lael's works all emphasize economic factors as the main forces driving the easing U.S. and Colombian viewpoints toward the treaty, while Lael and Coleman also explain that the political scenes of

³⁰ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 95-102. Randall's work can be claimed as an expansion onto the work completed in Parks' earlier survey, as Randall states the majority of the effort in his book is based on the twentieth century in part to source availability and the fact that Parks' work "has very well withstood the test of time," pg 1.

³¹ Bradley Lynn Coleman, *Colombia and the United States: The Making of an Inter-American Alliance, 1939-1960* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2008), 4-5. Coleman's main effort focuses on analyzing the period after the treaty, where the relationship would once again take off in stride. In his research he focuses on the strong alliance that will be formed between the two nations to the extent of a symbolic display of Colombian troops fighting as part of the U.N security forces alongside U.S. troops in Korea.

³² Richard L. Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy: U.S. Policy Toward Colombia, 1903-1922*, (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc, 1987), 169.

each country further supported these negotiations as well. These explanations have strong merit to understanding what factors weighed upon both the U.S. and Colombian nations in reconstructing a better foreign relationship. However, I believe that the aforementioned authors downplay the vital aspect of how international affairs, and specifically World War I, affected these national and binational societies during the negotiation phase and ultimately helped produce the changing focus on economic and political needs.

The lack of a greater international context is not a failure in scholarship but a reflection of historiographical views toward the understanding of World War I at the time. Scholarship on the war for the majority of the twentieth century focuses heavily on the European and Eurasian arenas, and when delving outside the traditional box, may touch on the East Asian and African impacts as well. When historians looked at the war in the Western Hemisphere, research centered overwhelmingly on the United States' experience, Germany's Atlantic U-Boat campaign and its secretive plans with the Mexican government.³³ Not until recent scholarship has Latin America's place been fully understood and the true globality of the war processed.

In his recent work, *Latin America and the First World War*, author Stefan Rinke explains that for decades, an understanding of the interrelationship of events at the local levels with the international relationships during the conflict was not fully developed in the historiography of the war.³⁴ While most people saw the neutrality held by many of these Latin American nations as a sign that they were uninvolved, and thus uninteresting, he explains that "All of the belligerent nations aimed to support social revolutions or nationalistic liberation movements in their enemies' dominions." This viewpoint expands the impact of the war out of just the European

³³ This last focus is due in large part to Frederick Katz's provoking study on Mexico's experience and role during WWI, see Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico: Europe, the United States, and the Mexican Revolution*, with portions translated by Loren Goldner (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1981).

³⁴ Stefan Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 6.

theater and into the peripheral regions such as Latin America.³⁵ Rinke's study offers a fresh point of view on the global effects of World War One in Latin America, however in covering the entire region he admittedly foregoes the full experiences of the specific countries. This is a common theme in general histories of how the war affected Latin America, such as in Joseph Tulchin's *The Aftermath of War: World War I and U.S. Policy Toward Latin America*, whose postwar synthesis only briefly explains nation-specific experiences.³⁶

The majority of historiography covering Latin American experiences in World War I are found in more comprehensive studies of the region, therefore scholarship on Colombia's specific experience in the war is recognizably minimal.³⁷ Historian Jane Rausch discusses Colombia's lack of inclusion in Great War historiography in her *Colombia and World War I*. Here she explains that one of the longest running sources of reference has continued to be Percy Alvin Martin's *Latin America and the War*, based off his 1921 lecture series. Unfortunately, this nearly century-old information has stood as the most significant influence into the already lackluster number of sources on Colombia's wartime experience.³⁸ While Martin's work does include highly valuable information on Colombia's experience, it nevertheless still only offers a chapter's worth dedicated to the North Andean nation. Therefore, the works that have offered discourses on Colombia's World War experiences, such as, Raimundo Rivas' *Historia*

³⁵ Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War*, 9-10.

³⁶ Joseph S. Tulchin, *The Aftermath of War: World War I and U.S. Policy toward Latin America* (New York: New York University Press, 1971).

³⁷ While countries such as Argentina and Brazil have highly dedicated scholarship on their countries' involvements in the war, much of the rest of Latin America's experiences are still unrecognized. For the former stated see: Ricardo Weinmann, *Argentina en la Primera Guerra Mundial: Neutralidad, Transición Política y Continuismo Económico* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos: Fundacion Simon Rodriguez, 1994); Michael Streeter, *Epitacio Pessoa: Brazil* (London: Hauss, 2010), and Frederick Luebke, *Germans in Brazil: A Comparative History of Cultural Conflict During World War I* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987).

³⁸ Jane M. Rausch, *Colombia and World War I: The Experience of a Neutral Latin American Nation During the Great War and its Aftermath, 1914-1921* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014) ix-x. Percy Alvin Martin's 1921 lecture series has since been published in 1925 and reprinted again in 1967, see Martin, *Latin America and the War* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith Publishing, 1967).

Diplomatica de Colombia 1810-1934, and Dario Mesa's *Manual de Historia de Colombia*, rely too much on Martin's discussions and therefore do not offer much new insight into the topic.³⁹

English sources on Colombian history, also have failed to offer much awareness into the effects of World War One, as the works previously discussed by Lael, Bushnell, Randall and Parks, generally dedicate a nominal amount of their works to explain the depth of the wartime experience. While Rausch's work contributes to filling this gap in Colombian and World War history, limited research abilities for the project causes her to claim that her work is merely "a starting place for further investigation" into Colombian history and the war in Latin America as a whole.⁴⁰ That being said, she still is able to move forward the discussion on the World War in Latin America, and easily shows that despite its neutrality, Colombia was heavily affected in multiple facets of everyday life by the war going on overseas. My research intends to develop some of Rausch's ideas and connect them more completely to Colombia's ongoing settlement negotiation with the U.S. at the time.

The ratification of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty by the U.S. was a powerful incident in overall U.S.-Latin American relations as the former would publicly display (even at a minimum) an acknowledgement of its wrongdoing. Therefore, the following work explains what occurred within this 22-year period that ultimately caused the original dispute of 1903, and what factors would then convince both the governments and the peoples of Colombia and the U.S. into rekindling their extinguished relationship. Chapter one describes the preceding historic relations between the two nations to explain why the series of events that unfolded in 1903 developed.

³⁹ Raimundo Rivas, *Historia Diplomática de Colombia 1810-1934* (Bogota: Imprensa Nacional, 1961); Dario Mesa, *Manual de Historia de Colombia* (Bogota: Colcultura, 1980).

⁴⁰ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, x.

Furthermore, it illuminates that during this time the two governments experienced a generally warm and cooperative relationship that was tarnished by a rapid series of events in late 1903.

While the United States' actions in Panama rest among numerous other intrusive activities committed in Latin America, this particular situation must be highlighted due to its impacts on the international stage. Not only would the separation of Panama cause disdain amongst Colombians, but the U.S. acquisition of canal rights that soon followed would have global implications for a world increasingly reliant on international trade. President Teddy Roosevelt's "taking" of the Panama Canal from Colombia, as explained in chapter two, placed the Northern colossus on the forefront of world power, whilst robbing their ally of a key territory that had once offered Colombians political promise and inestimable economic value. The comprehension of this drastic consequence soon after was publicized in various formats to emit the debates over the legality of Washington's actions and the overall theme of Roosevelt's foreign policies.

The years that soon followed Panama's secession are the focus in chapter three, where the period will be defined by Colombia's animosity against the U.S., ignorant Washington officials denying American wrongdoing and multiple failed attempts at establishing a resolve. This chapter will delve into the continuance of Roosevelt's legacy during the remainder of his term and in that of his successor William Howard Taft, and how these were complimented by the regime of Colombia's authoritative leader Rafael Reyes. The failure of the 1909 Root-Cortes-Arosemena Treaty that resulted from negotiations between these administrations will become highlighted to specifically explain how its downfall exposed the continuation of anti-American sentiments in Colombia. After the treaty's failure, the next four years would experience little

movement toward a settlement until the introduction of the Democratic President Woodrow Wilson into office, which Colombians viewed as a promising reversal from the previous politics.

As the fateful year of 1914 entrenched the European continent in war, the past decades of self-centered American foreign policy would be faced with an enigmatic new reality. This period, detailed in chapter four, subsequently marked a transitional phase in Colombia-U.S. relations. Most significantly, the chapter elucidates, strategic interests surrounding the canal and Colombia's condition as a potential enemy, an ever-increasing reality of Washington's stained image amongst Latin America and importance of access to foreign resources would all become dramatically emphasized during the modern world's first truly global conflict, World War I.

The focus of the first three chapters will analyze how the events of 1903 came to mar and subsequently characterize the future of international relations between the two countries. Over this first decade it became clear that a settlement would be needed for the governments to move forward diplomatically and commercially. However, the terms of the various proposed agreements became a crux to which neither government would budge. Political negotiations stalled despite newfound private economic connections developing between Americans and Colombians, and in time these political disagreements would negatively affect economic opportunities in the private sector that normally escaped political drama. This study argues that World War I's effects on Colombia, the United States and the world fomented a new political and economic atmosphere that helped persuade each side to look upon renewing friendly relations with the other as not just beneficial but one of necessity. Complimentarily, this work increases the extent of research committed to explaining the First World War's wide-reaching effect by detailing events in Colombia and elsewhere in Latin America, a region that has been long ignored within the War's studies.

Chapter 1: Panama's Legacy in Colombia-United States Relations

Upon analyzing the value of the small isthmian region between the American continents in 1701, the Scotsman William Paterson drafted a petition to King William III of England to establish a colony in this area known as “The Darien.” Within the petition Paterson exclaimed the significance of the ownership of this continental bridge, and most importantly, the shortest point between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans in Central America, “Thus these doors of the seas and the keys of the universe would of course be capable of their possessors to give laws to both oceans, and to become the arbitrators of the commercial world...”¹ The ensuing Scottish attempt to colonize the area resulted in a disastrous failure due to the rough tropical conditions and ceaseless conflict with the Spanish and indigenous inhabitants.² For the next two centuries all attempts to dredge the isthmus and connect the seas would remain unsuccessful, and the keys to the universe, as Paterson had described it, would remain unclaimed.

The isthmus Paterson had boasted about over a century before would become a part of the Republic of Colombia after the Spanish-colonial wars of independence. The region would be one of the few areas held onto by the government in Bogota, whose isolated location and political mindset resulted in the separation of two massive territories that make up modern day Ecuador and Venezuela by 1830. Historically Colombia holds a surprising reputation for maintaining their consistent two-party political structure until the modern century, yet this did not mean that peace was also a consistent function. Colombia was deeply divided among its

¹ William Paterson, *The Writings of William Paterson, of Dumfriesshire, and a Citizen of London; Founder of the Bank of England, and of the Darien Colony*, Volume 1, Second Edition (London, 1859), *The Making Of The Modern World*. Web (accessed October 30, 2017), 159.

² William Ferguson, “Darien,” in *The Oxford Companion to Scottish History*, edited by Michael Lynch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199234820.001.0001/acref-9780199234820-e-77>.

population spurring from the beginning of its independence era. After Gran Colombia's independence, the leadership would become separated between supporters of Simon Bolivar and of his fellow patriot and statesmen Francisco de Paula Santander. Once Bolivar's right-hand man, Santander's political outlooks for Colombia would clash with those of Bolivar. This division created the preceding factions of a political structure that lasted well into the twentieth century, the Conservatives, who aligned closest with Bolivar, and the Liberals, who followed Santander's policies.³

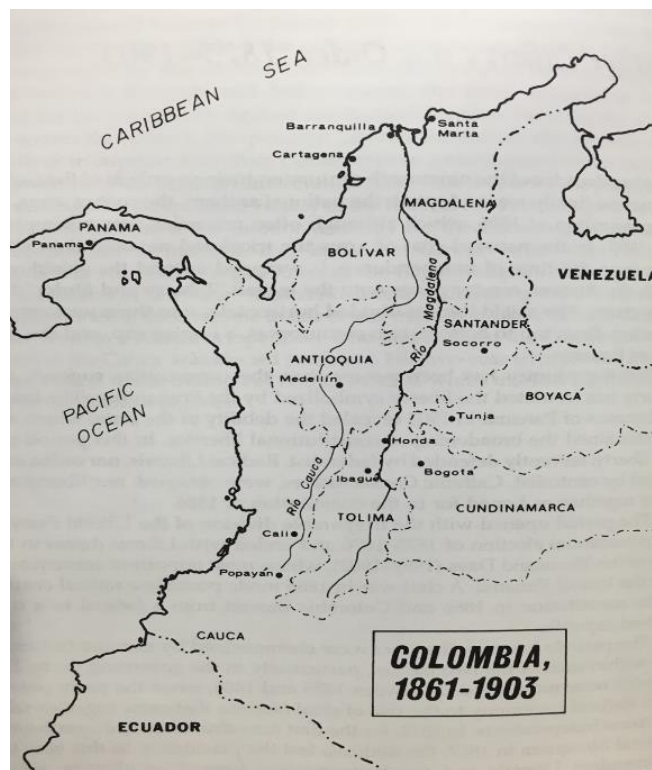


Figure 1.1: Colombian Political Divisions. Originally from Heled Delpar, *Red Against Blue: The Liberal Party in Colombian Politics, 1863-1899* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press).

³ The associations with the Liberals and Conservatives to Santander and Bolivar respectively are, for our purposes, simplifications of a much muddier and complex process that would result in the true establishments of this bi-partisan system. For more in-depth discussions on the formation of these parties see David Bushnell, *The Santander Regime in Gran Colombia* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1954); Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 91-95. For clarity purposes, within this work the Conservative and Liberal political parties will be capitalized, while reference to those ideologies not connected to the Colombian parties will be in lower case.

These two parties unbelievably united a diverse citizenry across far distances, social classes, and even labor lines. However, due to this fanatical support, they as well led the same citizenry into years of violent civil conflict that tore throughout the countryside and urban areas alike. From the 1830s until 1903 Colombia fell into more than a handful of civil wars fought over a wide variety of issues, but to best understand the country's extreme point of weakness at the turn of the century the later conflicts must be highlighted within the grand scheme of their relationship with the Panama territory and the U.S.

From the very inception of Colombian independence, its control over Panama, like that of many other political territories, was never a thing of confidence. After the reshuffling of the national government in early 1830 removed the administration most directly associated with Simon Bolivar, a secessionist government was quickly established within the Department of Panama as a response, calling for Bolivar to be placed back as the head of the country. This movement was short lived, as military commanders on the isthmus who were sympathetic to the Liberals in the national government soon quelled the secessionists and regained loyalty to the Bogota national government.⁴ This early display of disconnection with the national government foreshadowed the relationship to come.

Soon after the reorganization of obedience to the national government the United States sent Charles Biddle as a special agent to observe the nation and provide inquiries about Colombia's pledge to open its territory to international opportunity. On his way to Bogota, Biddle traveled through the isthmus recording what he described as an atmosphere of anti-government sentiment so strong that he doubted the Colombian government could even maintain control over the Department for another two years.⁵ This would prove a well-timed prophecy as

⁴ Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 83-85.

⁵ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 25-26.

just three years later during the Civil War of 1837-1841 the Department of Panama attempted to secede again and even requested recognition by the U.S. to be accepted as an independent state. Luckily for Colombia, the U.S. hesitated to declare its decision and the area was brought back into the country by the end of the conflict.⁶

Midcentury in the Department of Panama would become a turning point in the isthmus' history as it produced two major events that influenced the future of the path between the seas. The first came after another reorganization of the national government brought a new constitution that transformed some territories in the country into semi-autonomous regional governments connected to the rest of the country by a federalist link. The first to receive this alteration would be the Department of Panama in 1855, relieving the territory's population who strongly desired more autonomy and whose issues were unique to their area compared to the rest of the country.⁷ The second turning point would come with the long-anticipated opening of the U.S.-constructed Inter-Isthmian Railway, also in 1855. This massive project took five years and millions of dollars' worth of Yankee investment to complete. In doing so the passenger voyage from the Atlantic to the Pacific became easier, quicker and more comfortable. Since the discovery of gold in California in 1849, North Americans (and other Atlantic dwellers) looking to get rich increasingly made the trip through different sections of Central America, but mainly through Nicaragua and Panama where the distances were shortest. With the completion of the railway in Panama, other routes quickly disappeared from travelers' thoughts. The majority now headed for the Colombian territory where a seat on the train would cost passengers \$25 in gold

⁶ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 27. Although, Randall states sources show that Washington was prepared to send a special agent down to the isthmus to view the situation.

⁷ Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 114-115.

and the journey took just three to four hours instead of three to four days by mule and boat through malaria-infested, sweltering jungle and marshes.⁸

With the opening of the railroad, the Department of Panama's picture in the world view was heavily boosted and within the first few years the transit was averaging 40,000 passengers a year and accumulated more than \$7 million in net gain within the first six years.⁹ Despite the massive wealth and opportunity this railway created, it also brought in a growing problem, the United States of America. Not only was the railway a product of U.S. funds and construction, it was in fact the largest investment the U.S. had in Latin America at the time. The importance of this investment in addition to the product of the previously mentioned 1846 Mallarino-Bidlack Treaty encouraged an open arena for increased U.S. involvement within the isthmus.

The rest of the Department of Panama's nineteenth century would be marked by events fashioned through this relationship between Washington and Bogota and internal problems on the Colombian mainland. As the following historical analysis on Panama shows, the U.S. presence would continuously grow in the Department due to problems within Colombia, and Washington's own exploitation of the 1846 Treaty. Since the completion of the American-funded Panama railroad in 1855 there has been twenty separate occasions of U.S. military interference on the isthmus, culminating in the highly publicized December 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama.¹⁰

⁸ Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 12-14.

⁹ Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 14. The railroad's effectiveness came almost immediately, in January-June 1855 the railway took on 48 American vessels, 1,200 crewmen and 44,000 tons of cargo from the U.S. and Cuba in order to cross the isthmus. Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 38.

¹⁰ Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 1. Further statistics for this data can be found within Lindsay-Poland's expose on U.S. military influence in the region, with a table displaying invasion dates and the respective rationale for each event on 17-18. For more on U.S.-Panama relations throughout the 20th century and the 1989 event see Conniff, *Panama and the United States*.

The first incident to arise due to U.S. influences on the isthmus did not result in the landing of American troops, however, but did set a strong precedent for things to come. Just a year into the railway's life in April 1856, a drunken American passenger bound for California, John Oliver, started an international incident by stealing a piece of watermelon from a fruit stand run by Panamanian Jose Manuel Luna. Guns were drawn and soon an angry mob headed toward the Americans on the railway where eighteen people were killed, and sixteen more injured.¹¹ Despite no troop presence, the event caused a massive stir amongst the American populace and congressmen in Washington where the riot was interpreted as a prime example of the weakness of Colombia's abilities in keeping the Department in order. The isthmus was becoming increasingly dangerous as the transit company attracted both travelers and scoundrels alike into a mixture of ethnicities that became ever exposed to incoming U.S. racism and cultural ignorance.¹²

As the consensus on Bogota's ability to maintain a stable rule over the isthmus soured, Washington remained firm on its responsibility of protecting Colombia's sovereignty over the isthmus in accordance with the 1846 Treaty. Along with upholding its part of the deal, Washington's adherence to the treaty can clearly be interpreted as yet another safeguard for her desire to guarantee control over, or at least open usage of any canal built in Central America. Additionally, the 1850 Clayton-Bulwer Treaty with Britain garnered assurances of U.S. usage of any canal built by British resources and calmed fears at home over whom they believed to be

¹¹ Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 14-15. Specific casualties list 16 American passengers and 2 local citizens killed, with another 16 American passengers injured.

¹² Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 39-40. The sudden influx of new peoples into Panama by ways of Americans traveling the railway, or by west-Indie, Hindu, and Chinese workers brought in to carry out the dangerous construction, combined with the preceding Spanish, mulatto, African, and Indian inhabitants would create an explosive cultural mixture for the atmosphere of the 1850s. For more on this scene see Robert Tomes, "A Trip on the Panama Railroad," in *The United States Discovers Panama: The Writings of Soldiers, Scholars, Scientists, and Scoundrels, 1850-1905*, edited by Michael LaRosa and German R. Meija (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 5-14.

their greatest competitor in the Western Hemisphere.¹³ These two treaties were part of a grand scheme to secure a U.S. stake in any possible canal. Owing to Washington's strong belief that their canal rights were inevitably secured, the 1878 granting of rights from Colombia to the French Turr Syndicate came as a massive shock and was instantaneously viewed as a threat to their access and control of a potential canal.¹⁴

The French Canal undertaking started off with widespread excitement as the head of the project, Ferdinand De Lesseps, had recently achieved enormous fame through leading the successful construction of the Suez Canal just a decade earlier.¹⁵ However, the project in Panama proved drastically different from the Suez project as engineers and workers alike struggled with the swampy Panamanian jungle, its vicious tropical climate and the myriad diseases. The project finally collapsed in bankruptcy in 1889 due to corruption within company lines, poor administration and the severe loss of life owing to endemic bouts of yellow fever amongst workers that resulted in nearly 40,000 deaths.¹⁶ For the United States, this reopened the door of opportunity precisely during a decade fueled by imperialistic movements, the 1890s, which had furthered calls for faster interoceanic transit. As sources in the U.S. began to review their capabilities for completing the canal, events in Colombia continued to provoke questions over whether a canal through their territory could ever be considered secure or stable.

After the 1876-77 Civil War which, combined with religious undertones, would be fought over contradicting supporters of a planned railroad to connect Bogota to the mouth of the

¹³ John M. Clayton and Henry Lytton Bulwer, "The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty," *The Advocate of Peace (1894-1920)* 62, no. 3 (1900): 66-67. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25751541>.

¹⁴ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 1-2.

¹⁵ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 358-359.

¹⁶ LaRosa and Meija, *The United States Discovers Panama*, 159.

Magdalena, interparty divisions weakened the victorious Liberal regime.¹⁷ During the following presidential term, President Rafael Nunez, a moderate Liberal, would offer a warm attitude toward Conservatives, angering radical Liberals. His administration would be marked by his “Regeneration” policies to bring Colombia closer to the global markets through opening access to foreign investments in business ventures and infrastructure. However, his growing ties with Conservative opponents continued to anger radicals and when he won reelection in 1884, his opponents initiated a fiery rebellion. Though it began in small uprisings, the 1885 Civil War soon covered the country, forcing Nunez to team up with Conservative forces and subsequently crushed the radical Liberal rebellion in under a year.¹⁸ This momentous alliance would support Nunez’s administration and offer a clear path for his Regeneration policies. Nevertheless, Nunez had become disenfranchised with his former party. His revised Regeneration government would establish a new Constitution and political system that produced nearly 50 consecutive years of Conservative rule.¹⁹ Despite the stability of the Conservative rule and their new governing documents, the abrupt switch to Conservative politics would lead to new waves of Liberal unrest.

Government revenues at first steadily increased due to a surge in global coffee prices and with the help of U.S. and other foreign investments, many important trade regions had constructed modern forms of infrastructure.²⁰ This economic success strengthened the Nationalist government but the methods used by them during this period had further isolated the outside parties. The views of Liberals and Historical Conservatives, who were heavily connected to import-export interests, were largely ignored and they soon became disenfranchised with the

¹⁷ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 24-26. The proposed railroad connecting the capital to the waterway in the North of the country was viewed as heavily favoring liberal merchants over the conservative regions on the western pacific coast.

¹⁸ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 26-27.

¹⁹ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 27-28.

²⁰ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 73. Randall points out multiple examples of U.S. investment-lead projects such as in Cartagena where Boston interests helped develop the harbor and the Cartagena-Calemar Railway.

Nationalist policies which were based on conservative Catholic thought. Therefore, this period would again see continuous Liberal opposition, who used the positive economic conditions to strengthen their party materially and philosophically, and consequently provided the marginalized Historical Conservatives a reassuring option to withdraw themselves from the Nationalists.²¹ However the recent economic success and unwavering Catholic support still bred a staunch loyalty to the government among many Colombians and therefore hindered the partner's possibilities to exact political change.

In 1896, due to widespread overproduction of coffee in Colombia and elsewhere, coffee prices began to drop radically. By 1899 the prices ran around 8.6 cents per pound, which equaled just half the rate they had commanded at the beginning of the decade.²² The Regeneration's success was over. As prices crashed, so too did revenue and complicity as many coffee croppers either continued their work to produce at a loss or ended production altogether, leaving thousands of men jobless and angry. Many areas that fell into high levels of unemployment were already peripheral and without much governmental presence. A day before the Thousand Days' War broke out, the governor of Santander, Vicent Villamizar sent a telegraph to the Ministers of Government and War stating that there was a clandestine movement among the many "unemployed and probably hungry people" looking for adventure.²³ Meanwhile on the government side, bankruptcy loomed as revenues continued to drop and cooperation stumbled as they struggled to pay many important government employees including the police and military. As the internal crisis unfolded foreign companies such as the New York based Punderford and Co., a commerce house, suspended the credit of their Colombian clients or recalled their

²¹ Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*, 49-50.

²² Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*, 81, 103.

²³ Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*, 103.

accounts altogether fearing the economic downturn and the impending political dissension perceived in the country.²⁴

Historians have taken different views on the outbreak of the war that followed. The aforementioned economic problems stemming from a downturn in the coffee industry is heavily argued for in a well-known study by Charles Bergquist.²⁵ Other historians claim political issues were the main catalyst and cite the 1898 election of Manuel Antonio Sanclemente as the spark. Liberals viewed the election of Sanclemente, at 83-years-old and with severe health complications, as the implementation of a political puppet to allow Miguel Antonio Caro's regime to continue behind Sanclemente's name. Peaceful attempts to reform the regeneration policies proved to no avail and war was seen as the only answer.²⁶ The Liberal-led revolt in October 1899 would become the costliest civil conflict Colombia had ever seen. It as well would leave the nation in a crucially weak state that created its vulnerability of being so easily exploited by the U.S. in late 1903.

Better known as the Thousand Days' War, the civil war from 1899-1902 would once again split Colombians along party lines.²⁷ After early defeats, the Liberals bounced back with a decisive victory at Peralonso and gave their forces renewed hope under leader Rafael Uribe Uribe, a veteran of multiple earlier civil wars and influential diplomat.²⁸ However, the war dragged on longer than expected, and the gentlemanly policies which were followed in early

²⁴ Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*, 104.

²⁵ See Bergquist's *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*.

²⁶ Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 148.

²⁷ For more on the party aspects and other details of this event see: D'Costa Enrique Otero, *Relatos de la Guerra de los Mil Dias* (Bogota: Panamericana Editorial, 2001); Ary Campo Chicangana, *Montoneras, deserciones e insubordinaciones: yanaconas y paeces en la guerra de los mil días* (Cali: Secretaría de Cultura y Turismo Municipal, Archivo Histórico de Cali, 2003); and *Memoria de un país en guerra: los mil días, 1899-1902*, ed. By Gonzalo Sanchez and Mario Aguilera (Bogota: Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales: Unidad de Investigaciones Jurídico-Sociales Gerardo Molina: Universidad Nacional de Colombia: Planeta, 2001) just to name a few of the many Colombian sources.

²⁸ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 78.

battles gave way to unauthorized and more brutal tactics by guerillas on both sides. The Liberals were outgunned and outmanned from the beginning and after their climactic defeat at Palonegro where 4,000 soldiers perished in two weeks of battle, the Liberal fight turned into a guerilla conflict.²⁹ The only area that held enough Liberal influence (or anti-government sentiment) to continue warfare under conventional means until the war's end would be the territory of Panama.

The Thousand Days' War on the isthmus quickly grew into a struggle between the rural peasantry supporting the Liberals and the wealthy white classes in the major cities supporting the government status quo. The rebellion sparked in the Department of Panama during the summer of 1900 as the Liberal forces were led by the future Panamanian president Belisario Porras, and the aspect of political war soon turned into one defined by ethnicity.³⁰ Major battles occurred on the isthmus and in fear of losing the city of Colon in November 1901, Bogota requested assistance from the U.S., in cooperation with the 1846 Treaty. Responding quickly, Captain Thomas Perry of the *USS Iowa* issued a warning to Liberal forces that any disruption of railroad operations would prompt the landing of marines. Later in the year as Liberals picked up steam under General Benjamin Herrera, their aspirations of taking Panama City and Colon were thwarted again when Bogota requested U.S. interference. Upon U.S. troops' occupation of the rail line, Herrera knew he could not risk a siege of either major city.³¹ In 1902, with the countryside exhausted the Liberal forces came to terms with the fate of their struggle and signed a peace treaty with Conservatives on November 19. The symbolic signing of the final treaty aboard the U.S. naval ship *Wisconsin* among the two parties would soon become an ironic stain in Colombian history (Figures 1.2 and 1.3).

²⁹ Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 150.

³⁰ Thomas Leonard, *Historical Dictionary of Panama* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), 292.

³¹ Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 21-22.

The U.S. role of peacekeeper at the end of the war was anything but an honest attempt to provide a humanitarian standpoint. Instead this display was likely designed to encourage and influence the Colombian government to offer the forthcoming canal rights to the U.S., whose desire for the canal had steadily enlarged throughout the previous decades. Increasing private investments in Central America and the U.S.'s own pacific coast resulted in an amplified need for a faster and more efficient travel route. However, without official control over any of the regions that could provide such a route, like Nicaragua or Panama, the U.S. found itself frustrated. Despite displaying its loyalty to the 1846 Treaty during the Thousand Days' War, other occasions during the previous half century exhibited this frustration as Washington would begin to willfully overstretch its rights and butt heads with the Colombian government over the isthmian territory.

In the Department of Panama, the upsell of American travelers and merchandise into the isthmian transit route caused multiple disputes that began to affect the political relations between the governments in Washington and Bogota. After the previously mentioned 1856 "Watermelon Riot" resulted in the loss of American life and commerce, the U.S. charged Colombia with repaying reparations for these losses. Although both sides shared equal blame, the riot created backlash from American politicians toward Colombia's capabilities as a nation. U.S. Charge in Bogota, James Bowlin, cited a universal lack of organization and discipline in the government and police forces in Panama and went so far as to state "...that if our people and our property are to be protected on it [the isthmus], it must be by the strong arm of our power."³²

³² Bowlin to Marcy, 1 August 1856, William R. Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin American Nations*, vol. 5 (New York, 1925) 5:724-49. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b3612688?urlappend=%3Bseq=796>

Bowlin's comments would frustrate officials in Colombia. Although many of his statements were racially based on sentiments of white supremacy over Colombia's mixed complexion, he offered a testament shared by many that grew steadily over the ensuing decades: "...the question may well arise when they [Colombians] will drive us to the necessity of governing it [Panama], whether we ought to govern it under the shadow of their power, or seize it and protect it."³³ The following years would then see the U.S. utilize the loss of American lives during the riot and Colombia's subsequent lack of reparations to excuse themselves from paying the multiple tonnage and mail fees implemented onto the Panamanian commerce transit.³⁴

Besides the disagreement over the Watermelon Riot, the largest conflicts that arose between the two nations over use of the isthmian transit zone would revolve around the transportation of American troops across the Department. While the 1846 Treaty allowed the presence of U.S. troops upon Colombian request, on various occasions Washington sent troops across the isthmus unsolicited. In July 1852, December 1855 and throughout 1864 troops either crossed the isthmus unknowingly to Bogota or were reported to have crossed despite displeasure from the Colombian government.³⁵ These crossings were prime examples of Washington's attempts to stretch the agreements made within the 1846 Treaty to address new needs for establishing a faster route of commercial expansion and military mobility into the western coastline. The 1845 annexation of Texas, the movement to occupy the Oregon territory in 1846, the acquisition of the American Southwest after the Mexican-American war in 1848 and the discovery of Gold in California the following year created an urgency to expand governmental

³³ Bowlin to Marcy, 1 August 1856, Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin American Nations*, 5:724-49.

³⁴ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 240-241. This would be a reoccurring argument between both sides until Colombia finally dropped the matters in late 1862.

³⁵ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 245-247.

control and territorial security byways of an expanded military presence.³⁶ Between these unauthorized expeditions and the multiple occasions of legitimate Colombian-requested U.S. troop interference, the isthmus saw a consistent presence of American military power throughout the nineteenth century.

The U.S. military continued to exhibit its urgent desire for unrestricted transit use. However, the national government's attention waned from external affairs and was quickly displaced by private parties while Washington faced more crucial internal issues during and after the U.S. Civil War of 1861-1865. In Colombia and other areas across Latin America alike, U.S. business interests began to invest in what they saw as open neighboring markets. In addition to Colombian infrastructure projects in Cartagena and on the Magdalena river, private Yankee interests found other opportunities.³⁷ The Bostonian Henry Meiggs helped fund and construct a Chilean railroad connecting the port of Valparaiso to Santiago in the 1860s, and years later in Peru he helped establish a line from Lima to the Altiplano.³⁸ While Meiggs' accomplishments brought much needed infrastructural progress to South America his best-known work lay in an opportunity he passed off to his nephew, Minor Keith, the well-known founder of the United Fruit Company.³⁹

Keith's ventures started in Costa Rica where he was originally contracted to construct a railroad connecting the Caribbean port city of Puerto Limon with the coffee producing regions inland. Keith's success in this endeavor would launch his career and by 1911 he found himself supervisor for the completion of the nation's telegraph line, a leading stockholder in the

³⁶ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 240-241, 262.

³⁷ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 73-74.

³⁸ Teresa Meade, *A History of Modern Latin America: 1800 to the Present* (West Sussex, United Kingdom: 2010), 108-109. This was a widely impressive feat at the time as the Altiplano region in Peru reaches more than two miles above sea level.

³⁹ Colby, *The Business of Empire*, 39.

country's telephone system, and the preeminent financier in the electrification of Costa Rica's railways and street cars.⁴⁰ Despite all his successes, Keith is still best remembered for his agriculture ventures and the formation of the United Fruit Company (UFCO). Before the creation of this transnational fruit conglomerate, U.S. business investments in agriculture production in Central America were already controlling massive amounts of territory and revenue. Friendly treatment by natives in Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast, resulted in U.S. business investments of large quantities and by 1893 more than 90 percent of the reserve's wealth and commerce was controlled by private U.S. interests.⁴¹ Keith's own investment areas included this Caribbean region as well as compounds in Costa Rica, Colombia and the Department of Panama. With fruit production and export nearly monopolized by U.S. entrepreneurs, the 1899 formation of the United Fruit Company by Keith and two other of Central America's largest holders, marked the creation of a dominant economic force in Central American history.⁴²

Latin America experienced mounting U.S. private investments, such as the UFCO, in their territories due to the abundance of raw materials and the opportunity that lay within the underdeveloped infrastructure systems. However, the largest revenues created by these investments did not find their way back into the pockets of Latin Americans, but rather were sent to shareholders in the North American metropole. While UFCO executives received hefty profits, the banana zones in Central and South America would soon be known for the growing socioeconomic disparity between the native laborers and their white managers.⁴³ Private American business interests mimicked these strategies of exploitation across Latin America and

⁴⁰ Leonard, *Central America and the United States*, 44.

⁴¹ Leonard, *Central America and the United States*, 44-45.

⁴² Leonard, *Central America and the United States*, 49.

⁴³ Bucheli, *Bananas and Business*, 20-24.

Colombia. While not immune from private economic imperialism, Colombia's government held strong against U.S. diplomatic exploits during the constant negotiations over the canal rights.

Negotiations with Washington continuously exemplified Bogota's desire to steer clear of any agreement which would offer Washington too much power over their territory. This desire was a strong point of contention and caused frustration within both governments numerous times. In the late 1860s and early 1870s under President Ulysses Grant negotiations proved futile due to Colombian amendments to a possible treaty which American politicians saw as unreasonable.⁴⁴ After this failure, Washington drew back and gave less effort to find an agreement as it dealt further with its internal issues.

Ironically as U.S. focus strayed, Bogota became the anxious party to find an agreement due to the increasing American interests in a possible Nicaraguan route. However, further American opposition toward terms Colombian policymakers put forth drove the concessions into the hands of the French company, headed by de Lesseps.⁴⁵ This sparked fury amongst Americans who saw the introduction of a European entity into the project as a clear violation of the Monroe Doctrine and the 1846 Treaty with Colombia. The spreading animosity led to a proclamation by President Rutherford Hayes in front of a special House committee on interoceanic canals stating, "The true policy of the United States as to a canal across any part of the isthmus is either a canal under American control, or no canal."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 347-350. Grant's failures came even despite his personal interests in an easier canal passage resulting from his own passage across the isthmus in 1852 for a military voyage to California, where he dealt with the tough conditions face to face as his party lost nearly one-third of its peoples due to an outbreak of Cholera. A detailed account of this venture can be found in "Grant in Panama" in *The Ulysses S. Grant Association Newsletter*, V, 1 (Oct., 1967) <http://www.usgrantlibrary.org/usga/newsletter/pre1973/vol5/>.

⁴⁵ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 356-361.

⁴⁶ Rutherford Hayes, Diary Entry, February 20, 1880, Charles R. Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes: Nineteenth President of the United States*, Vol. 3 1865-1881 (Ohio: The Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, 1924), 589. He further states that this concession to the French would essentially alter the geographical relations between the east and west coasts of America and was "wholly inadmissible." More analysis in Parks, 360-363.

As the decade continued and administrations changed, this mindset was lightened again owing to Colombian complaints toward the continued American attempts to reinterpret the 1846 Treaty and to force negotiations to guarantee itself a stake in this new French canal.⁴⁷ U.S. policymakers by the late century were destined to learn from the mistakes committed over the past three decades. Under President Grover Cleveland's administration relations with Colombia went back to normal. The period saw generally warm talks and a continued fulfilment of treaty obligations among the landing of U.S. troops on the isthmus strictly upon Colombian request in 1885. Therefore, after the failure of the De Lesseps plan in 1889, the decision by Colombia's congress to extend concessions to the French company until 1894 and later to 1904, received rage within Washington.⁴⁸ Politicians reminded Colombian ministers of the growing trade interests between the two nations and the increasing amounts of U.S. investments being made in important areas of their country.

The private industry-lead expansion to acquire foreign nations' natural resources would eventually turn into a focal point of American foreign policy in the coming decades. For the time being, however, these private entrepreneurs were the main introducers of American influence in Colombia and the Department of Panama. As the U.S. settled down after the immediate period of reconstruction and took back control over internal affairs, the ideas for expansion began to take root once again. For the most part this would be taken care of during the Spanish-American War of 1898, but policymakers could not ignore the potential importance of gaining rights to a pan-oceanic canal, an accomplishment which still escaped them. With the three year long civil war

⁴⁷ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 367-371. During this period of U.S. attempts to secure from Colombia a promise to wield power within the canal and its security establishments, the Colombian press was said to have condemned these actions as efforts to ruin the French construction attempt and intervene on Colombian sovereignty in the isthmus.

⁴⁸ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 378-379.

tearing apart the Colombian countryside, Washington, under President Theodore Roosevelt, began to view the conflict with a silver lining. Colombia's devastation surely meant that government focus would be on reconstruction and thus, any source of revenue would be appreciated. The U.S. had displayed its loyalty to Bogota over and over again and now promised a source of much needed revenue and an outlet to aid in reestablishing infrastructure and economic promise in the Department of Panama.

After the turn of the century, negotiations heated up between the two countries as the French New Panama Canal Company had begun to give up its quest and realize its dismal destiny. Valued at around \$109 million it was approved to be purchased at just \$40 million by the United States government. Now all that was left for Washington was to come to an agreement with Colombia, which was still amidst a civil war. Colombians, as well, were anxious to achieve a meaningful treaty to renew the construction of the canal and reap the opportunities. With both sides getting anxious for a settlement, the U.S. Congress passed the Spooner Act (approved June 28, 1902) which allowed the president to acquire from Colombia, upon terms of his own approval, the perpetual and full rights to construct a canal. This act paved the way for Roosevelt to fully press on the gas pedal for treaty negotiations.⁴⁹ With the conclusion of Colombia's devastating Thousand Days' War, and the U.S. position as mediator and supporter of the government in Bogota during its entirety, Washington's position was primed to claim the soon-to-be available canal rights.

⁴⁹ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 386-387.

Chapter 2: The taking of Panama

America is only protected by the tombs of its heroes.
And oh how they wander, for their tombs are not unbound.
 their tombs are hostages to the Conquest.
the tomb of Bolívar, lies in soil enslaved by the Yankees, sold, miserably sold by a savage
 cacique, by an illiterate Praetor, who cannot even spell out the name of his Crime;
the tomb of Santander, “Man of Laws,” lies among lawless men, in a nation maimed by the
 Yankee; his tombstone cleaved by the sword of Treason, crowned in laurels;
the tomb of Morazán, lies in a country of entrenched Treason, which the Guatemalan hyena
 covers with its shadow, fetid and feral.
it is the Yankees’ range; the tombs of Hidalgo and Morelos stand tall, the tomb of eagles that
 have not yet been profaned.
 groups of heroes, stand guard around them.
and the Yankee retreats, faced with tombs that are unconquerable. . . .

- Jose Maria Vargas Villa¹

This excerpt from a 1902 essay written by Colombian anti-Americanist Jose Maria Vargas Villa, echoed a growing sentiment across Latin America. Rather than viewing the Monroe Doctrine as a promise of haven against European influence and colonialism, it was clear that this American policy was there to protect the hemisphere for their own exploitation. For Colombians, the timing of this essay would provide an omen for American actions that soon followed.

In the same year as Villa’s essay the new Colombian minister of foreign affairs, Jose Vicente Concha, arrived in Washington with orders to present new stipulations for a treaty.

¹ Excerpt from his 1902 essay, “Ante los bárbaros. El Yanki: He ahí el enemigo.” The views the Colombian writer expressed in his many anti-American/Capitalist essays lead to his exile from Colombia and later the United States. However, his many travels abroad lead to his inclusion in the strong brotherhood of Latin American international anti-imperialists such as Cuba’s Jose Marti and Nicaragua’s Ruben Dario. Text and information from “Facing the Yankee Enemy,” in *The Colombia Reader, History, Culture, Politics*, ed. Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, Marco Palacios and Ana Maria Gomez Lopez (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 551-555, translated by Gomez Lopez and Farnsworth-Alvear.

These revisions showed a high level of generosity by Colombia on the matter; it allowed the U.S. larger zones of influence, extended the facilities of its ports to aid in the construction, and even relinquished rights to the Panama Railroad. Accordingly, the U.S. advised Concha that they would be ready to sign such an agreement as soon as congress was able to confirm the French title's validity. U.S. minister to Colombia John Hay helped structured the treaty. Payments to Colombia were set at \$7 million upfront and a \$100,000 annuity to be further negotiated. On September 9, Concha was instructed to sign the treaty but due to new events at home, he abstained.² The U.S. then pressed Colombia, threatening a turn to the Nicaraguan route if an agreement was not imminent. Hay increased the offer to \$10 million upfront and an increased annuity was negotiated at \$250,000. This increased purchasing rate along with the ultimatum brought results. On January 22, 1903 Concha's replacement Thomas Herran signed the Hay-Herran Treaty which transferred the French concessions to the U.S. and made it exclusive for 100 years, renewable at the absolute and sole action of the U.S. The treaty was quickly ratified by the American Senate on March 17, but was unanimously rejected by its Colombian counterpart on August 12.³ Their subsequent adjournment was soon followed by a monumental event in history.

With the regeneration government victorious in the Thousand Days' War, their rejection of the concessions agreement came to the Liberal Panamanians as yet another rejection of isthmian needs. For inhabitants of the isthmus, everyday subsistence relied heavily on the transit traffic and the majority of the populace had been hoping for the canal's completion, no matter who was in charge. As has been described before, the Department of Panama was far separated

² The U.S. troops remaining upon the isthmus reportedly had been refusing passage to anyone, including government forces.

³ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 386-391. Herran replaced Concha owing to the latter's ill health.

from their national government in Bogota and more closely associated themselves with the Caribbean basin and the world import-export economy due to their geographic commercial importance.⁴ The Senate's decision put their livelihoods in jeopardy. Panamanians long awaited the great opportunities provided in the canal opening that would bring not only heavy investments to support hotels, insurance companies, banks, and port establishments, but also would bring ground-level jobs as employees for such establishments and other hospitality workforces. This feeling was especially emphasized as the previous years of war had devastated much of Panama's rural zones. Where the war had not torched the agricultural lands, increased taxes and general depopulation promised certain hardship.⁵ The isthmus' population had grown impatient, and once again a revolutionary mindset began to develop.

The events that transpired in Panama in late 1903 have long provoked differences in interpretation. To Colombians, the U.S. illegitimately stole the region under the pressure of the arrogant "big-stick" policies of President Theodore Roosevelt. For Panamanians, the event was viewed as inevitable. Bogota's continued neglect of their voices combined with growing American interests for acquiring and constructing the canal had heightened the frustration over the Colombian government's failure to produce an agreement.⁶ Americans produced various interpretations quickly and powerfully. Some celebrated the event as a success for world

⁴ *The United States Discovers Panama*, 267-268. Panamanians and those in Bogota were not just separated by their political and economic ideals, but geographically. A trip from the isthmus to the Government houses in Bogota would take a grueling month-long voyage along the Caribbean Sea, south against the Magdalena River's currents, and then up the steep Andean mountainsides. While a trip from Colon to New Orleans took a leisurely seven-day boat ride.

⁵ Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 24. Poland takes figures and details from Humberto Ricords, *Panama en la Guerra de los Mil Dias* (Panama: n.p., 1989).

⁶ For Panamanian historian viewpoints, see Alfredo Figueroa Navarro, *Dominio y Sociedad en el Panama Colombiano, 1821-1903* (Panama City: Impresora Panama, 1978); and *Panama, Dependencia y Liberacion/ seleccion de textos, prologo y notas de Ricaurte Soler* (Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio, Costa Rica: Educa, 1976).

progress and championed Roosevelt's actions, while on the other hand others condemned the actions as illegal and disrespectful toward a long-time ally such as Colombia.

Despite the Colombians Senate's rejection, they laid out another basis to hopefully renew negotiations on a stronger stance after time to recover from the civil war. The continued hesitation though, was taking a toll on aspirations in both Panama and the U.S. A June 1903 cablegram from the French canal promoter Philippe Bunau-Varilla to Colombian President Jose Marroquin warned that the Colombian rejection would leave the anxious Americans with two options: establish a canal across Nicaragua, or to go along with the Panama canal "after secession and declaration of independence of the Isthmus of Panama under protection of the United States..."⁷ This premonition may have aided the Colombian Senate's decision to attempt a new agreement soon after the rejection. However, the Senate's discussions regarding these new foundations took time to be agreed upon and on October 30 they unanimously decided to postpone action on another treaty until days later.⁸ This short interruption overextended what time Panamanians were willing to wait as the plans for secession were in full swing.

Conspirators of the secession included not just disgruntled Panamanians, but proprietors of the French Canal Company, American canal interests- both public and private, and American military men and politicians. After Colombia's rejection of the Hay-Herran Treaty in 1903, President Roosevelt dubbed their officials "contemptible little creatures" and "inefficient bandits."⁹ Years later in his autobiography, Roosevelt would call President Marroquin an "irresponsible alien dictator" who went back on the Hay-Herran agreement by ways of his

⁷ United States, Frank D. Pavey, William Nelson Cromwell, and Philippe Bunau-Varilla, *The story of Panama. Hearings on the Rainey resolution before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off, 1913), 40-41.

⁸ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 396-397.

⁹ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 43.

“puppet” senators in order to wring more money out of the deal when the French concessions ended in 1904.¹⁰ Had the Department of Panama not broke out in revolution, Roosevelt stated, he would have requested that U.S. forces occupy the isthmus and begin building the canal with or without Colombia’s graces.¹¹

In the Department of Panama, American, French and native interests constructed a subversive plan that apparently had roots in late 1902 and was more readily established throughout the following summer. By October 1903, multiple newspapers later reported, the revolutionaries on the ground had been unofficially guaranteed support by U.S. officials, and U.S. Naval ships were ordered to begin their journeys to Colombia a few days before the revolution officially broke out.¹² Secretary of the Navy Charles Darling received orders to proceed under sealed secrecy to Colon to specifically prevent the landing of any armed force, government or not, on the isthmus before or during a possible insurrection. On the day of November 3, the U.S. consul in Panama had telegraphed the State Department updating them that the event had not yet broken out, but was expected so later at night.¹³ The fact these orders were made in forecast of the revolution has since been used to argue America’s direct involvement and collusion in the event.

Preceding military orders only bring further advanced suspicion to light when tied with the physical actions taken by the U.S. during the movement. After Panama’s revolutionary forces under Manuel Amador declared independence on the evening of November 3, the United States not only blocked the incoming Colombian navy from approaching shore, but on land had taken

¹⁰ Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (New York: Scribner’s, 1926), 519-520.

¹¹ Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt*, 530-31.

¹² Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle*, 25. These orders came after Roosevelt, and Bunau-Varilla, who would later negotiate Panama’s canal treaty with Washington, had twice met earlier in the month.

¹³ Schoonover, *The United States in Central America*, 102-103.

control of the railroad and refused to transport Colombian troops into the cities to quell the rebellion and rescue detained Colombian officers jailed by revolutionary forces.¹⁴ On the following day Panama's provisional government composed of Jose Arango, Frederico Boyd, and Thomas Arias (all names implicated in later reports to have been part of the subversive plans) requested, from Washington, an acceptance for recognition of the independent Republic of Panama. Two days later, the U.S. order was sent to officially enter relations with Panama. Another message was coincidingly sent to Bogota declaring this action and recommending that any questions or issues between Colombia and Panama be settled peacefully.¹⁵ The very next day, November 7, Bunau-Varilla notified the State Department that he would be appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary for the Panama government and was officially received by President Roosevelt on the 13th.

On November 18, the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty was signed, handing the U.S. the complete rights to construct a canal on Panama's soil while the three-man provisional government were still in route to assist the treaty talks. This fast-paced series of events would cause a media explosion internationally and would bring vehement cries for either celebration or condemnation depending on the country. As for U.S.-Colombian relations, the next twenty years would witness diplomatic rounds to answer the question of whether this was an illegal acquisition of international bullying, or an inevitable move for the progress of the developed world.

There is no shortage of viewpoints or information on the events of 1903. Rather, the deficiency of information and analysis lay within the following two decades of relations between Washington and Bogota. This historiographical lacking is important to understand the full

¹⁴ Randle, *Colombia and the United States*, 86-87.

¹⁵ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 401-402.

complications that arose from such a controversial move. Many historians focus on significant technological achievements that would develop in the construction of this massive project, while others look more into the political ties that the U.S. would hold with Panama, all losing Colombian sympathies in the rear view. This story is not only about the victors, but about a country that lost its valuable holding in a humiliatingly public affair, and how world events were able to bring the two sides back together. The following section analyzes the state of relations immediately after 1903 in the U.S., Panama, and Colombia, in both political and social arenas.

Moral and Diplomatic Fallout

U.S. military involvement in the events in Panama, the unusual speed of their official diplomatic recognition, and the hastily negotiated treaty with Bunau-Varilla all stained the view of the United States and particularly President Roosevelt. From the very beginning there was unquestionable doubt over the legality of the course of actions taken by the U.S. However, the result of a favorable, speedy canal agreement and the protection of a Panamanian populace largely in support of its newfound independence muddied the interpretation outside sources could pursue. The years immediately following this event saw the diplomatic and social relations between Colombia and the United States hit an all-time low. Colombia, understandably, reacted in anger and called for help from the international world, while the Roosevelt Administration celebrated their new honor of constructing the most anticipated technological advancement the world had yet to see. Yet, things were not all black and white. Within the United States citizens and statesmen alike separated themselves from Teddy's actions and strongly voiced their disappointment of the figurative annexation of an allied territory. In Colombia and areas of Latin America, Washington's influence in Panama's secession was another example of hegemony that

showed no end to U.S. manifest desires. What is clear from this period of 1903-1904 is that the once flourishing alliance between the two countries would take a turn for the worse and it became evident to parties on both sides that to rekindle the fire heavy measures must take place.

Colombia was faced with a powerful realization soon after Panama's declaration of independence, as countries across the globe quickly recognized the latter's independent status in a matter of weeks. Directly after acknowledging Panama's independence itself, the U.S. sent out correspondence to fellow nations of the world informing them of their new policy and recommending the same. Panama's new administration did the same and soon received acknowledgments or promises of recognition from across the globe. After Washington's recognition the next came days later by the French government on September 18, and then from China on September 22. On December 1, 1903 Bunau-Varilla issued that he had received a recognition notice from the government of Germany, and a week later from Russia. Over the next three weeks Panama would receive full recognition from the governments of Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and Japan, and as well received promising notifications from England and Austria-Hungary.¹⁶ A few months into 1904, Panama's independence was recognized by nearly every country in Europe, Asia and North America. As for Colombia's fellow Latin American republics, offering recognition would be a more difficult pill to swallow than for those far separated by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Panama's government received some glimmers of warmth upon their independence from Latin American countries such as Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Cuba, although the latter two had

¹⁶ Pablo Arosemena, Legation of Panama, March 9, 1904, Document, *Bunau-Varilla Papers (BVP)*, Box 7 "General Correspondence Late November 1903- January 1904.," LC.

strong connections with the U.S. and therefore their decisions did not come as a surprise.¹⁷ Brazil too, quickly responded to Panama's hopes with open arms. Although it took until March to officially recognize the isthmian nation, Brazilian media outlets and politicians were reported to have never wavered in their support for Panama and the U.S. on the issue. However, other faces in Latin America did not see this as an opportunity to celebrate the birth of a new republic. In Chile the population was less agreeable toward Washington's actions and while they did eventually recognize Panama in March 1904, multiple papers and sections of the country voiced their disapproval and sympathized with Colombia whose Government had been a staunch ally in Chile's recent conflicts with Argentina and Peru.¹⁸ Nevertheless, it seems as the commercial possibilities that lay within the canal won over the vast majority of Chileans whose Pacific ports would now be more easily accessed.

The various countries that offered swift recognition to Panama either had much to gain from the opening of the trans-isthmian canal or had strong political and economic ties to the Yankee giant. In other areas, there was a reported South-American consensus in favor of condemning the actions of the U.S. and to support the claims for Colombia's cause. In Argentina it was described that the government hesitated to offer its recognition owing to this consensus and that its local newspapers were detailing support for both sides of the argument. By January 1904, American Minister to Argentina, John Barrett, dispatched to the State Department, in reference to a recent motion made in the Argentinian Senate for the postponement of recognition, that no one without hard judgement either fully supported nor condemned the U.S. attitude over

¹⁷ For Nicaragua see Alvery A. Adeo to Bunau-Varilla, December 16, 1903, Letter, *BVP*, Box 7, LC; For Costa Rica see J.B. Calvo to Bunau-Varilla, December 30, 1903, Letter, *BVP*, Box 7, LC; For Cuba see Gonzalo de Quezada to Bunau-Varilla, December 23, 1903, Letter, *BVP*, Box 7, LC.

¹⁸ John Patterson, "Latin-American Reactions to the Panama Revolution of 1903," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 24, no. 2 (1944): 344-346, doi:10.2307/2507855.

Panama. Despite these early qualms, by March they formally sent their recognition while Barrett issued an atmosphere of utmost support for the movement. Yet it should be noted that opposition remained. Just a few months later a leading local paper reporting on a speech made by a German official, gave its strong agreement to the German's criticism of the U.S. as an imperialist being in which the Panama event was specifically stated.¹⁹

Colombia's neighboring nations were most open in displaying their reticence upon recognition. While Venezuela's government made it clear that it disapproved of the U.S. actions, they also were not in favor of the Colombian government and therefore offered recognition in February 1904.²⁰ Ecuador also wavered from quick recognition in a show of sympathy toward their neighbor. Reports from news outlets in Quito and other larger cities portrayed antipathy toward the actions of Washington.²¹ However, Ecuador as well would eventually open relations with Panama in a matter of months, despite what at first seemed to be heavy criticism.²²

Other reports also point toward a Latin American accord against recognition. Upon Peru's official acknowledgement Panama's Minister of foreign relations, Pablo Arosemena, issued a thank you letter which stated that the kind welcome granted by Peru was a "smiling and contemptuous answer to the hypocritical and cowardly theory which tended to organize a sort of bond of coldness among the latin republics against the last born of them." Arosemena went along further to claim that Peru's offering came as the first refusal to establish a "Hispano-American holy alliance in order to strangle justice and to assault progress."²³ These strong words from Arosemena may have resulted from the consistent scene of criticism toward U.S. actions

¹⁹ Patterson, "Latin-American Reactions to the Panama Revolution of 1903," 346-348.

²⁰ This may have been more in spite toward Colombia, rather than in agreement with American actions.

²¹ Patterson, "Latin-American Reactions to the Panama Revolution of 1903," 348-350.

²² Arosemena, Legation of Panama, March 9, 1904, Document, *Bunau-Varilla Papers BVP*, Box 7, LC.

²³ Arosemena to Manuel Alvarez Calderon, December 23, 1903, Letter, *BVP*, Box 7, LC.

amongst Catholic groups and news outlets. This was seen as a larger threat than it turned out to be due to the strong Catholic connections situated within Colombia's Conservative government. Many in Washington first felt this posed a risk of a religion-based identity of unity that could form among the highly Catholic Latin American nations. However, despite worry in the U.S. and Panama, recognition eventually flowed in during the following months either due to general approval or the realization that with the U.S. involved, all seemed lost for the weaker Colombia.

Worldwide approval for Panama's independence was nearly inevitable due to the determination of Roosevelt's administration in claiming the canal rights and hastily beginning construction. Yet, the support for Washington's actions during the revolution still remained divided and would be best exemplified by sources from within the United States itself. These reactions came in various forms: petitions of towns and local entities written to their senators, debates given by esteemed professors of international diplomacy, and political satire from lively cartoonists prevalent in American newspapers of the time.

The outbreak of responses among the American public following Panama's independence sparked debates on various levels toward this complex event. Questions surrounded the legality of the actions committed by American forces against Colombia, the ethicality of treatment toward a long-standing ally, the consequences of such an action unto the international and Latin American sphere, and the righteousness of the claims of the people of Panama. Concerned of the legality and ethical dilemma of the actions against Colombia, citizens from New Haven, Connecticut sent a signed petition to the U.S. Senate voicing their opinion on the matters in December 1903. They pointed out that the measures taken by the U.S. portrayed an example of a stronger, larger force using its position to act out of conduct against the weaker Colombian nation. Due to Colombia's position of weakness as a state, it "demands of us [the U.S.] the more

caution to avoid suspicion that we are making an unjust use of our power.” Any possibility that the actions of Washington were indeed unjust, the petition stated, would create an atmosphere of distrust of which “The mere existence of such a suspicion is injurious to our honor and self-respect.”²⁴ Their fears centered around clashing with a recognized body of laws which is meant to be upheld by nations both strong and weak.

The citizens who signed the New Haven petition called for a thorough investigation to ensure that the U.S. can say they did no wrong in order to uphold their prestige and respect in the world view. However, other concerned reports were more confident that the actions of the U.S. were clearly in the wrong. A January 1904 article by the *New York Tribune* reported the opinions of three scholars from prominent universities, Dr. Jacob Gould Schurman, president of Cornell University, Dr. Theodore Salisbury Woolsey, professor of international law at Yale school of law, and Dr. Morey of the University of Rochester. Schurman bluntly stated that the U.S. “went further than was warranted by the treaty of 1846 or by international law,” and continued to predict a war would arise between the U.S. and Colombia due to this situation. Woolsey added a less contentious tone by explaining that while Washington’s recognition of Panama may have been premature, it still accomplishes its object, therefore Panama should be seen as an independent nation. However, Woolsey added, Colombia should still have the full right to attempt, unimpeded, the recovery of the isthmus and its peoples. Finally, Morey argued that the power of recognition lay exclusively within the authority of the executive, i.e. President Roosevelt, and therefore the action did not cross the 1846 agreement with Colombia.²⁵ The three

²⁴ Petition by Citizens of New Haven, December 23, 1904, SEN 58A J28- Committee on Foreign Relations- Ratification of the Panama Canal Treaty 11/11/1903-2/23/1904, Record Group 46 (RG), Box 109, National Archives (NA), Washington D.C.

²⁵ “Three Doctors on Panama,” *New York Tribune*, January 19, 1904, retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/571528993?accountid=14524> (accessed November 15, 2017).

viewpoints show the thought processes that had begun to spill into lecture halls, university politics, and international debates on law. Schurman stated that in adherence to the 1846 Treaty agreement to uphold Colombian sovereignty, the U.S. openly broke its responsibility by not allowing Colombian troops to land and restore order, therefore the action was unjustified.

Woolsey, on the other hand focused more on the swift recognition given to Panama as premature in nature, but nevertheless affective in allowing Panama to stand on its own. Yet, he goes further to state that Colombia's sovereign rights should in fact still allow it to try and recover the lost territory without obstruction from the U.S., as this too would follow the 1846 agreement. While Morey believed that the actions fell outside of the 1846 treaty altogether, and therefore it cannot be referenced in arbitration against Washington.

A few months later, the *New York Times* reported on a series of speeches made by the Texas Democratic Senator Charles Culberson. He stated he had received a full copy of an incriminating letter previously written by President Roosevelt to Dr. Albert Shaw, the editor of the *Review of the Reviews*, an influential monthly periodical. The extra section Culberson claimed, had never been printed in its entirety and proved Roosevelt's intentional desire to have Panama achieve independent status after the Colombian Senate shot down the Hay-Herran treaty. This, the *Times* reported, led to waves of cheers from the Democratic mass meeting that had gathered at Carnegie Hall.²⁶ The article expressed this was among various pushes by Democrats to pin the actions of U.S. forces in Panama to the orders of Roosevelt. Most importantly, it exhibited attempts by the opposition Democratic party to utilize this event to light a fire under the president. This displayed the significance of the Panama incident in the public eye. U.S.

²⁶ "Stir Over Panama Letter by Roosevelt," *New York Times*, October 21, 1904, retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/96389495?accountid=14524> (accessed November 15, 2017).

actions now held suspicions of wrongdoing at such a critical level that it became a calling card of Democratic opposition to Roosevelt's administration.

The concern among citizens, intellectuals, and politicians was an apparent matter throughout the following months, but the most impactful sources of criticism may have come in an outlet that made itself available to peoples of all socio-political backgrounds: newspaper cartoons. The cartoon medium at the time was a leader in public faith and honesty, as Albert Shaw, a prominent journalist and newspaper editor vouched, "The cartoonists, indeed, reflect more faithfully the changing phases of the public mind than do the writers of editorial articles." The ability to instill humor into their pieces helps tell the truth as the people feel it, and to do so under a mask that allows honesty to be portrayed directly toward powerful characters "under the guise of quip and fling and witticism."²⁷ Analysis of multiple popular comics and cartoons during the time explains how these pieces not only brought light to the otherwise intense situations, but also added respectable information into the discussions and debates that were engulfing the country at this time.

Upon Colombia's rejection of the Hay-Herran treaty in early 1903, actors in the U.S., Colombia, Panama and French arenas all depicted their respective reaction through diplomatic and public means. Figure 2.1 was printed a few weeks after the Colombian refusal in *Puck Magazine*, a popular humorist magazine that carried strong political undertones.²⁸ This cover image depicted the immediate shock of what many thought was a done deal as the French Canal proprietor reacts in disbelief shouting "Sacre Bleu!" at the report of the Colombian Senate's vote against the treaty. Unfortunately, his \$10 million check that represents the treaty

²⁷ Albert Shaw, *A Cartoon History of Roosevelt's Career* (New York: Review of the Reviews, 1910), vii.

²⁸ Tom Culbertson, "Illustrated Essay: The Gilded Age of American Political Cartoons," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* Vol. 7, No. 3 (July, 2008): 277-278, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25144529>.

proposal's purchase rate, will not be of use in the U.S. Treasury building he is seen heading toward. This cartoon proves two things: that cartoonists were following the story of the Panama Canal throughout its unfolding, thus establishing themselves as significant sources of information into the event, and that Colombia's rejection of the treaty was a major enough shock that it compelled the editors to place it on the cover print.

Along with *Puck*, *Harper's Weekly* exhibits another famous magazine of the so called "Gilded Age" of American political cartoons.²⁹ Soon after Panama's independence, the magazine printed a cover which heavily criticized Colombia's position (Figure 2.2). Here Colombia is depicted as a rough looking bandit who attempted to hold up Teddy Roosevelt and America for the canal rights, portraying Bogota's position as greedy and unlawful. Two days later *Puck* continued this theme of celebration in depicting Uncle Sam patting a small, yet robust looking Panama with canal plans in hand and equipment close offshore in the background (Figure 2.3). The title "Revelation of Revolutions" continues to add to its triumphant theme as it pictures the revolution of the worthy-looking Panamanian peoples as one of significance not just for the U.S., but also for the world at large.

This immediate reaction of celebration, however, would turn into a more complex atmosphere of questionable doubt as the facts became clearer. A late November cartoon in the *New York Herald* depicts a "Thanksgiving on the Isthmus" in which the dinner turkey has been beheaded and Panama is seen carrying away the body with the \$10 million Canal treaty sketched on its feathers (Figure 2.4). The symbolism and caricatures within this illustration is where the complexity of the situation comes in. While President Roosevelt is smiling maniacally with a bloody axe in hand, the well-kept, European military attire of Colombian President Marroquin

²⁹ Culbertson, "Illustrated Essay: The Gilded Age of American Political Cartoons," 279-280.

looks shocked at being left just the severed head. All the while, Panama's part is depicted as a childish, shoeless, dark skinned boy with tattered clothes and a wide smile carrying away the prized possession: the canal purchase money. This juxtaposition of how Americans may be viewing the stature of each nation leaves one to believe that Colombia is seen as the more settled and civilized state while Panama was able to sneak away with the canal treaty purse.

The opinions of cartoonists, along with others in America, began to turn more critical during the weeks that followed. Figure 2.5 exhibits the party politics of the matter, as the Democratic opposition to Roosevelt's administration showed continuous disapproval of Washington's actions in Panama. This dissatisfaction would become a staple of the party platform as the upcoming 1904 presidential elections approached. The cartoonist here explains this by illustrating a Democratic leader driving the opposition point right into the canal with a smiling Roosevelt peering onwards. Other cartoons, such as Figure 2.6, promoted this sentiment even more, as here Roosevelt is seen fighting off a pack of wolves, one of which is labeled "Panama Canal Obstructionists." While these may both be partial toward the Roosevelt administration, they still help depict the division apparent among the political sphere when it came to interpretations of the Panama event.

As the division became stronger in American politics and society altogether, the blame began to focus not only on Roosevelt's actions but outside factors as well. Figure 2.7, "The Man Behind the Egg," explains this sentiment perfectly. The Frenchman, holding a stock receipt of \$40 Million for selling the canal rights to the U.S., is seen putting fire under the egg that is Colombia. This depiction suggests that the French interests were just as much to blame for the Panama revolution, as Panama is born out of this heated egg handing over the canal concessions to the U.S. What is even more peculiar about what the illustrator is trying to propose, is the

heavy influence of the French canal interests in promoting Bunau-Varilla's credentials as Panama's official representative to Washington. From the beginning Bunau-Varilla's legitimacy in representing Panama as a nation was in question. This doubt was increased owing to the hastily drawn up agreement he helped create while in Washington, all while the three men who most genuinely represented Panamanian ambitions were stuck in route to America's east coast. The portrayal of the Frenchman's involvement further muddied the interpretation of what really happened in Panama.

Concerning Colombia's situation after Panama's independence, cartoonists helped detail the distinct American viewpoints on the matter. Figures 2.8 and 2.9 present two different sights, that of a complex sympathy for Colombia's loss, and a lack of respect for the South American nation's threats against Washington's behavior. Figure 2.8, printed in the *New York Herald* illustrates the news "hitting" Bogota. The loss of their most opportunity-laden territory came as a shovel of mud thrown by Roosevelt himself unto the city of Bogota, where the very men who had frustrated the giant so much are seated in their government houses. Behind Teddy is a line of ships, both commercial and military, awaiting the opening of the canal. This scene can be understood in two ways; either as a slight toward the government in Bogota, whose hesitation and opposition to the Hay-Herran Treaty caused their own downfall and thus they are faced with the consequences; or as a narrative of how Bogota and Colombia altogether had been poorly treated throughout the course of the Panama affair. Instead of further civil negotiations between Roosevelt's administration and Bogota, the latter received a figurative shovel of mud on top of their city and national pride.

The following figure, 2.9, reveals how many in Washington saw the Colombian threats of armed intervention in the moments and months that followed their loss of Panama. Not many

took Colombia seriously, and this may be the best expression of this opinion. To the eyes of most in Washington and even throughout the country, Colombia was a small child of a nation compared to that of the ever-growing behemoth America was turning into, and the prospect of the beating drum of war hardly raised much concern.

The exponential outward growth of Washington's policy, influence, and action over the previous couple of years did not strike well with everyone. For a country supposedly built on a steadfast philosophy of nonintervention and anti-imperialism, the preceding Spanish-American War had already created an undercurrent of anxiety for the future of America's path. The most celebrated founding fathers of American history made it clear that the policy of their new country would not be similar to those in Europe who they so ferociously tried to separate themselves from. The action of replacing Spain's grasp over Cuba and the Philippines was too close to reciprocating European imperial policy than many wanted to see. Therefore, the Panama event and the calls of many to completely annex the territory altogether struck fear into the minds of citizens who already were cautious of the government's external actions.

The final two illustrations exhibit this turning viewpoint on Roosevelt's aggression in external affairs. With the 1904 election debates in full swing, the opposition toward the current administration, led by the Democratic party, strongly pushed the debate on U.S. imperialism under Roosevelt's rule. Figures 2.10 and 2.11 both implant a nationalist discourse opposed to Roosevelt's actions, with specific emphasis on events that occurred in Latin America. More significantly, both achieve this using the most prominent and symbolic American presidents, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, in contradiction to how Roosevelt had acted. Figure 2.10, "Shade of the Immortal George," uses the likeness of Washington as a disapproving face looking down upon the tree being planted by Roosevelt on the Presidential lawn. The tree holds

ornaments representing Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, and upfront, the Philippines and Panama. Upon this sight, Washington asks “Where’s my hatchet?” in displeasure, ready to chop down the imperialist expansion Roosevelt has fomented. Finally, the last illustration exhibits a similar picture in which Roosevelt is being looked down upon by the shadow of the illustrious Lincoln. Roosevelt is surrounded by memories of his actions in Latin America. First depicted is Roosevelt’s refusal of the Philippine petitions for freedom as they helplessly plead on, and next to this an image of himself decorated in European kingship attire, representing opponents claims of his actions as hypocritically similar to those of imperial Europe. The top left image symbolized the antipathy he created across the hemisphere, as he is chasing away two men depicting South and Central America with his “big stick” policy. Lastly, the top right memory displays himself and a Panamanian on top of a cannon starring directly down the face of a surprised Colombia. All these images come together to show Roosevelt struggling to come to terms with the decisions he has made. This certainly helps support the powerful image of growing opinion which viewed the recent years of rule had taken the American path far off track from the principles of which their nation was founded on.

The images depicted among these and numerous other cartoons prove as invaluable sources for public opinion during the time. Not only were these an intricate part of the daily news feed, but they also provided an outlet of information for the nearly eleven percent of the American population who were illiterate. This amounted to over five million citizens in 1900. While the percentage of illiteracy was comparatively low in the U.S. than in many other nations at the time, this number still represents a massive amount of the societal makeup.³⁰ In a period

³⁰ The 1900 census reported that 10.7% of the population, or approximately 5,336,000 people were illiterate, and in 1910 those number were 7.7% amounting to 4,810,421. These number furthermore only reflect people over the age of 14. The population of people under that age during both decades floated around 25-30 million. While this last figure cannot be taken coherently in accordance to population affected, there stipulates the possibility that many

represented by colorful actors, the best way to describe these men may indeed be found within the illustrated sources of the time.

While American cartoonists offered their opinions, the government in Bogota reorganized after their initial daze, and made plans to openly confront Roosevelt's administration in Washington. The national government chose Army General Rafael Reyes to lead a mission to voice the arguments on behalf of the Colombian people. Division was apparent amongst the victims as well and Reyes' mission was not fully sanctified by all those at home. Many Colombians, citizens and politicians alike, cried for war and for Washington to be forced to pay for their illegal and brutish actions.³¹ Reyes determined onward, however, and offered to the State Department a list of grievances and rebuttals to Washington's reasons for intervention.

Upon his arrival, Reyes issued a first statement of protest in late December 1903 which claimed that the U.S. violated multiple articles within the standing 1846 Treaty. This statement dubbed U.S. failures in upholding Colombia's sovereignty and claimed collusion over Naval orders that requested warships to head toward the isthmus before unrest ever broke out. After further claims of wrongdoing against the U.S., Reyes offered Colombia's proposal for settlement, "I propose that the claims which I make in the present not on account of the violation of the aforesaid treaty, and all other claims which may hereafter be made in connection with the events of Panama, be submitted to the arbitral Tribunal of The Hague."³² The Hague

more citizens were exposed to such illustrations during the time, and these citizens would become the voters and policy makers over the next decades. Census data from U.S. Census Bureau, Section 31 "20th Century Statistics," *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (1999) <https://www.census.gov/prod/99pubs/99statab/sec31.pdf> (accessed January 19, 2018); illiteracy rates taken from National Center for Educational Statistics, "Literacy from 1870 to 1979," chapter in *20 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait*, Edited by Tom Snyder (National Center for Education Statistics, 1993) https://nces.ed.gov/naal/lit_history.asp (accessed January 19, 2018).

³¹ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 25-27.

³² Rafael Reyes to John Hay, December 23, 1903, *Diplomatic history of the Panama Canal.: Correspondence relating to the negotiation and application of certain treaties on the subject of the construction of an interoceanic canal, and accompanying papers* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914), 481-491.

Tribunal was set up in 1899 as a permanent arbitration court for the settlement of grievances between separate nations, and Reyes deemed this as the best diplomatic outlet to settle the event.

Hay's responses to Reyes merely reiterated validation of Washington's actions. This further provoked the Colombian General into making a stronger claim against the U.S. government. In January 1904, Reyes dispatched another list of grievances to Hay, this time in a cohesive form of nine violations made by the United States and a following list of rebuttals to Hay's claims. These entailed that had U.S. forces not blocked the landing and shipment of Colombian troops on the isthmus, their troops would have easily been able to put down the rebellion. Therefore, the U.S. did not uphold its part of the 1846 Treaty which promised to ensure Colombian sovereignty. Due to this and various other matters, Reyes wrote, "Colombia believes that it has been despoiled by that of the United States of its rights and sovereignty...." Reyes's list declared that the Government in Bogota would refuse to recognize the legitimacy of an independent Panama and with it the Hay-Bunau-Varilla treaty which gave Washington the canal rights. Additionally, he slipped in a more threatening means of negotiation. Reyes promised that Colombia's current mild and subdued disposition was merely due to "not being possessed of the material strength sufficient to prevent this by the means of arms" however, "it does not forego this method, which it will use to the best of its ability..."³³ The General made it clear that this was an offer for negotiation, not submission.

Reyes and those in the Colombian government who supported his trip saw this as a reputable way to settle the event before it would inescapably grow into more aggressive and forceful opinions of criticism in their nation. Roosevelt's administration, on the other hand, had opposing interpretations on the events and the proposed settlement. The disagreements seen

³³ Reyes to Hay, January 6, 1904, *Diplomatic History of the Panama Canal*, 491-507.

between the U.S. and Colombia in this immediate response foreshadowed the years to come. Reyes soon after would become the President of Colombia and introduce an entirely new mindset into the country as it struggled to recuperate from the civil war and loss of the Department of Panama. On the other hand, Roosevelt would win his reelection bid and continue the policies of his Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, which for most of Latin America meant more U.S. influence.

No matter the interpretation, American actions in Panama during its late-1903 revolution became clearer by the day and the illumination of U.S. involvement caused Colombians to feel more justified in their anger. The period directly after Panama's secession bred international debate over the legality and morality of the overall event. The divisions witnessed within the continental United States would become highlighted as the years moved forward. Democratic party standpoints would maintain pressure on Roosevelt's regime over his actions in Panama, and the changing of administrations over the next ten years would directly affect the series of negotiations between Washington and Bogota.

For the time being, though, Roosevelt and his contemporaries would make it known that they had no regret over their actions and refused to bend on this belief. Colombians, though hopeful for respite amongst their Latin American neighbors, found only small offerings of condolences. By the end of 1904 it was clear they were on their own in any diplomatic battle against the U.S. From 1904-1914 both countries would have to develop and mature their policies on how to salvage any remaining relationship. This would not come without difficulties for either nation. The U.S. was now content with its new acquisition and was focusing on developing its dominance in the hemisphere around their construction of the canal. In Colombia, no matter their dismay over Panama, the most urgent problems facing the country still stemmed from the

widespread economic and societal destruction caused by the Thousand Days' War. With the canal rights in hand, the major thread that tied Bogota and Washington close together was no longer shared. The question would soon arise whether the two nations deemed their relationship important enough to salvage.

Chapter 3: On to the Talks...

A year after the Panama secession, U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt announced a new American policy that would support the famed Monroe Doctrine:

It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere save such as are for their welfare. All this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. ... Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may for the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power...¹

This may have been perceived amongst many in Latin America and especially in Colombia as a satirical slap in the face. To others it may have been viewed as Roosevelt simply justifying his past action by regarding the Colombian nation as impotent or loosely civilized. Either way, Roosevelt's "Corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine made it known that the U.S. not only saw itself as a protector of the hemisphere, but a policing force too. As the Colombian government attempted to move forward with their complaints against the U.S., this declaration made it clear that Washington was not going to budge anytime soon.

As the public in America, Colombia and across the world enriched their discussions on the legality and ethical decisions that took place within Panama's revolution, the leaders of both nations were faced with the true conflict. In Colombia, Congress was split between those who cried retaliation and those who wanted to settle things in a more civil manner. To the north, Washington was faced with an ever-increasing internal dissent who not only opposed their actions in Panama but their overall expansionist tendencies of the past decade. Roosevelt's

¹ "The Roosevelt Corollary Asserts the U.S. Police Power over the Western Hemisphere, 1904," December 6, 1904, in *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations, Volume 1: to 1920*, edited by Dennis Merrill and Thomas Patterson (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 404-405.

speech in December 1904 announcing his “Corollary” to the Monroe Doctrine, only furthered skepticism of Washington’s plans for the hemisphere both at home and abroad.

The following section examines the decade succeeding the separation of Panama from Colombia, and the foreign relations between the latter and the United States. After immediate reactionary discussions stalled following Reyes’ petition, the two countries saw diplomatic relations come to a crawl. However, during this time, as was true in the late nineteenth century, Yankee aspirations and influences continued to move into Colombia by means of private economic forces which took advantage of Reyes’ welcoming policies for foreign investors. While talks began to heat up between the two administrations in 1909, strong anti-American opposition in Colombia would bring it to a halt before a final agreement was settled. After this point, the matters would transition into the next political generations. In Colombia Carlos Restrepo’s presidency would attempt to bring relations closer under new terms. William Howard Taft’s administration, on the other hand, would push to settle the dispute as the canal’s opening date approached and security of the travel lanes became a priority.

By 1914 a preliminary treaty agreement would finally approach conclusion, but the terms had changed drastically from Colombia’s original proposals. The economic efforts of U.S. businesses would help sway government officials and business leaders in Colombia, but the general populace still served as a strong oppositional force. Inside the U.S., Republican opposition proved stubborn against any agreement that offered a sense of apology or admission of wrongdoing on its part. These factors would endure by the time the 1914 treaty was formally proposed, despite changes to the political climates and economic ties between the two nations. Despite a warming of appearances on the surface between the two governments, this section ultimately explains the relations were nowhere near the levels seen before the Panama event.

This is proven true even with the new acknowledgements of resource availability in Colombia, including the highly examined viability of oil reserves.

Roosevelt and the Quinquenio

In the summer of 1904 President Roosevelt was locked into a heated presidential campaign which saw Democrats lined up in opposition to his aggressive policies at home and in Latin America. His actions during the Panama revolution would be highlighted among these Democrats in various arguments. During the same time in Colombia, Reyes had returned from his unfruitful mission to Washington to be elected as the new president of the nation. The following five years of his regime, which essentially became a dictatorship, has been referred to by scholars and historians as the *Quinquenio*. During his rule, Reyes would open Colombia to foreign investment, promise minority representation in the government, restrain the lasting guerilla activities in the countryside, improve infrastructure, and professionalize the military forces. However, he accomplished these progressive goals through means of heavy centralization measures which weakened the power among the departmental governments and repressed the many voices of opposition. Furthermore, he achieved the infrastructural feats through hefty borrowing and loans from foreign sources that would come back to haunt his regime.²

Throughout 1905 Bogota appeared to be favorably disposed of finding new terms to a negotiation. Each turn in the talks with Washington, however, saw Reyes' administration stick by their original proposals for arbitration without guaranteed recognition of Panama's independence. Making matters worse, the new U.S. Secretary of State and leader of the negotiation process, Elihu Root, was adversely known to Colombians through his support of

² Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 5.

Washington's actions in 1903 as Secretary of War.³ Fortunately, both administrations had a change of face. Reyes began to view close connections with the U.S. more favorably as his intended policies called for large financial support that Colombia did not have at the time due to the overwhelming inflation rates that transpired throughout the Thousand Days' War.⁴ Roosevelt, as well, seemed to experience an epiphany that his legacy needed to be changed within the views of the world, and began to take steps (although minimal) to procure more favorable opinions in Latin America.

Roosevelt's new take on diplomacy included ordering a new face down to Bogota as Minister, one with a true passion for Latin America and the idea of Pan-Americanism, John Barrett. Recently off appointments to Argentina and Panama, Barrett immediately went to work to help mend relations in Colombia. One such result came soon after his appointment in 1905 when he sent a strongly supportive informational memo about President Reyes, praising him for his military honor, intelligence, and claimed that he had "done more than anybody else to investigate the wild but resourceful interior of South America."⁵ Barrett's praise of Reyes as a leader and his knowledge of the resources in his country was directly aimed to foster investment in Reyes' open economic policies. Barrett's words could only go so far, though, as relations between Reyes and Roosevelt himself still appeared at a nominal level. When Barrett informed Roosevelt's office of the unsuccessful assassination attempt on Reyes in late 1905, Roosevelt only offered Reyes the simple response: "Congratulations upon the frustration of the reported

³ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 37-38.

⁴ Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*, 135, 233-234. In just three years the war's detrimental effects caused the value of the peso to drop from 4 to 1 with the U.S. dollar to 100 to 1 by the end of the fighting in November 1902. Bergquist covers this development in multiple areas throughout his work, but it is most easily accessed through his graphs on pgs 33, 145 and 234.

⁵ John Barrett, "General Rafael Reyes, President of Colombia," 1905, *JBP*, Box 104, LC.

attempt against your personal safety.”⁶ This contrasted clearly with the lengthy series of telegrams sent by Barrett and his discussions with Reyes himself.

Washington took time to warm up to Colombia, as Roosevelt no longer had to fear for the future of the canal after the passing of the Hay-Bunau-Varilla treaty in 1904. By late 1906, both nations, and Panama, had finally agreed to begin formal treaty negotiations. The discussions that followed were continuously congested by disagreements between the three respective governments and nothing substantial was formed until three years later.⁷ This lull period did not mean that relations were nonexistent, though, as private economic entities took advantage of Reyes’ policies to foment international investment to help increase commerce and infrastructure. These policies indeed found success in attracting foreign businesses from multiple countries. Most notably from the U.S. was the United Fruit Company, the banana conglomerate that had been growing its empire throughout Central America and had until this point spared Colombia from its imperial operations.⁸

Internally Reyes supported the agriculture industry by adding heavy incentives for banana and coffee growers and tariff and tax exemptions for businesses that invested in the former.⁹ UFCO’s introduction brought benefits to Colombia not just in trade revenues, but in infrastructure. The company constructed rail lines and brought overall economic benefits to the area of Magdalena in Northeast Colombia, which had suffered drastically in the past decades of war. Soon after UFCO’s arrival urban areas began to blossom in the region boasting cosmopolitan populations owing to the European, Middle Eastern, and Central American

⁶ *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, with the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress, December 5, 1905*, 1905, volume 74, Colombia (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906), Documents 269-273, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1905/ch56>.

⁷ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 54-57.

⁸ Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*, 59.

⁹ Bucheli, *Bananas and Business*, 89-91; Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*, 59-60.

laborers who flocked toward the growing business.¹⁰ Furthermore, Reyes' dispatching of General Jorge Holguin to London to lobby for the new fiscal policies, would help restore Colombia's credit and pay off its foreign debts within a few years. Its name would triumphantly be removed from the delinquent debtors list in the London Stock Exchange offices in 1907.¹¹

The UFCO represented just one of numerous other American investments which helped warm the stances between the governments and soon this positive atmosphere resulted in the construction of the Root-Cortes-Arosemena Treaty in 1909. The agreement promised Colombia indemnity for her losses, open and duty-free general transit of the future canal, and 50,000 shares to the New Panama Canal Company. In return, Colombia would offer open and friendly ports for the U.S., recognition of and peace toward Panama, and an essential squashing of any claims made against the U.S. during the 1903 revolution.¹² By January 1909, both the governments of Panama and the U.S. had approved the treaty and the Reyes government, along with the national media, were reporting a favorable atmosphere in the Colombian Congress.¹³

With unanimous approval of the treaty expected, the events in February and March came as a shock to parties on all sides. As U.S. Minister Thomas Dawson arrived in Bogota with the treaties for debate and subsequent approval, liberal opposition was brewing around the congressional house. While Reyes was aware of this opposition, ignorance of it was caused by

¹⁰ Bucheli, *Bananas and Business*, 91-92.

¹¹ Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*, 59.

¹² *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, with the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress, December 7, 1909*, 1909, volume 80, Colombia (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914), Document 223, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1909/d223>. This agreement developed as a tripartite treaty among the United States, represented by Secretary Root, Colombia's Minister Enrique Cortes, and Panama's Minister Carlos Arosemena.

¹³ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 434-436. An *El Nuevo Tiempo* news article also reported strong optimism for the passing of the treaty, viewing the terms extremely favorable for Colombia, see *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, with the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress, December 6, 1910*, 1909, volume 81, Colombia (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1915), Document 360, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1910/d360>.

his frantic necessity to construct closer ties with the U.S. as his fiscal policies were riding on American partnership more by the day. Reyes' methods of generating revenues for the national government consisted of lobbying international sources and widespread centralization methods which stripped departments away from normal sources of income. The consequences created a tense situation as departmental elites grew angry over losses of their traditional revenue sources. On top of this, the recessions that hit the U.S. and Europe in 1908 had dried up the most accessible bases of funding for Reyes' administrative plans. His economic structure was beginning to crumble around him.¹⁴

The financial problems aided a dissent against the Reyes administration that already had a strong foundation in the political opposition that had grown angry over his dictatorial powers and violent repression of critics. However, the event that fomented organization of a coherent opposition was one that affected the nation's whole populace: the U.S. treaty. The events in Panama still brewed anger among most Colombians, and the treaty's recognition of Panama's independence proved vastly unpopular. As the opposition amplified, Reyes hastily called upon a National Assembly for the vote, as he believed he had better favor in this body.¹⁵ Upon this order, citizens and students in Bogota broke out in anti-treaty demonstrations. Days after reporting that he saw no opposition during the preliminary treaty readings in Congress, Minister Dawson reported the first instance of a small oppositional attack against Reyes, yet confidently still stated "Ratification is certain unless Reyes weakens." Thirteen days later, on March 14, 1909, Dawson sent a telegram to Secretary of State Robert Bacon which detailed a complete

¹⁴ Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*, 240-243. This included nationalizing the tax collection on sales of tobacco, animal slaughter and alcohol, and raising tariff rates on imported manufactured and agricultural goods. While it seems these policies were ill-conceived, agriculture and textile industries actually boomed during the time, and the fiscal policies largely saved Colombia's economy from further destruction.

¹⁵ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 67-68.

reversal in tone. He reported that Reyes had suddenly abdicated the Presidency as “Anti-Reyes street riots” were occurring “all day and all night,” and that Bogota had declared a “state of siege.”¹⁶

Opposition toward Reyes’ autocratic actions had boiled over through the common unity found against conferring to an agreement with the United States. The overall sentiment among much of the population in Colombia seemed to be anti-American and anti-treaty. Riots had broken out in the capital and reports filtered in of opposition marches where stones were thrown at government buildings and chants of “Down with the treaties” and “Death to the United States” were observed.¹⁷ In the few hours Reyes left the Presidency the treaty was taken out of consideration. Even though Reyes returned to office, he postponed any further accords on the treaty until February of the next year.¹⁸ With the explosion of anti-treaty demonstrations reported across the country, all hope seemed lost for ratification.

President Reyes kept a low profile over the following few months, as anti-Reyes and anti-American protests continued throughout the country. In early June he headed north to the Santa Marta banana region to tour the UFCO operations which had successfully bloomed under his friendly investment policies. On the night of the twelfth, company officials in Colombia waited patiently for the president’s arrival for a banquet in his honor. Unknown to them, he never intended to show. In homage to the fiscal policies that caused his downfall, Reyes secretly boarded an UFCO steam liner and headed for a self-prescribed exile in England.¹⁹

¹⁶ *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, with the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress, December 6, 1910, 1909*, documents 364-369.

¹⁷ Minister Dawson to Secretary of State, *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, with the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress, December 6, 1910, 1909*, document 384.

¹⁸ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 68-70.

¹⁹ Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict*, 246.

With America's possession of the canal guaranteed, Washington felt more comfortable in finding an agreement with Bogota. In Colombia, however, the animosity over the Panama event still ran too deep to forcefully push a treaty through, even by a leader of Reyes' power. The outbreak against the Root-Cortes-Arosemena Treaty proved that economic benefits and financial influence could not be the catalyst in swaying Colombian opinion. As Reyes said goodbye to his homeland, the 1909 treaty left with him. The quest for a settlement would start anew as both countries transitioned into new administrations and phases of policy.

Negotiations Under the Taft and Restrepo Administrations

After the dramatic turn of events, both nations took a step back in their relationship as anti-American sentiment resurged in Colombia. Just a year after the anti-treaty demonstration, a small disagreement with the assistant manager of the Bogota City Railway Company, the largest American company in Colombia, broke out into an extensive anti-American riot across the capital. The rioters attacked all Yankees in sight and went further to take out their rage on any Colombian who was deemed an American sympathizer.²⁰ The event promoted widespread hostility toward the company, who would soon thereafter sell off operations to municipal authorities in Bogota, a highly celebrated headline among the media outlets. This event would soon prompt the U.S. Minister to Colombia, Elliot Northcott, to state that Colombians at the time were still defined by their anger at Americans over the events of 1903. And that any further display of force among the U.S. side would only make matters more dangerous for Americans.²¹

These acts of anti-Americanism were not just isolated to the capital city. In late 1909, on a courtesy tour of the Caribbean, the officers of the *USS Tacoma* anchored off Barranquilla

²⁰ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 72.

²¹ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 92-93.

decided to cancel the planned shore leave due to reports of anti-American sentiments in the port city. Minister Cortes experienced this frustration as well on his return from Washington in 1910. Upon his arrival also to Barranquilla, he and his wife were met with an angry mob outside of their hotel. Matters became severe enough that they required government troops to escort them to a train toward another port in which they followed Reyes' destiny and set sail for Europe.²² During this same period, an American traveler, Earl Harding, witnessed the tense atmosphere apparent throughout the country. He stated that any discussion on the Panama question exposed a "vein of bitterness against the United States for the loss of the isthmus." He likened the intense uprisings aimed at Reyes and Cortes as being a consequence of their administrative rush to accept the treaty against the grain of citizen opposition. Colombians, Harding detailed, were not focused on obtaining financial indemnity as much as they desired an admission of fault on Washington's side. He stated this feeling was shared across South America and needed to be addressed soon by means of coming to an equitable agreement in order "to win back the goodwill of Colombia and the confidence of our other Latin-American neighbors."²³

Unfortunately, nothing of the like would transpire for at least the following three years, as President Taft back peddled efforts to work with Colombia. In the eyes of Taft's administration, the 1909 anti-treaty riots were an absurd retaliation against a treaty which they believed favored Colombian aspirations. Therefore, Taft refused to begin anew any negotiations for the time being.²⁴ For the Colombian government, the newly elected President Carlos Restrepo, although desirous of putting the U.S. situation to an end, saw no use in expanding

²² Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 90-92.

²³ Earl Harding, "In Justice to Colombia," *The World's Work*, vol. XXVI May to October 1913 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1913), 674-680.

²⁴ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 71-74.

efforts until a Democrat took office in the U.S.²⁵ Nevertheless, connections were destined to conspire between the two countries as the U.S. continued attempts of self-imaging and democratization missions in Latin America.²⁶

Restrepo's presidency would overturn much of Reyes' policies and the elites regained major revenue sources at a prime moment as Colombia's economy steadily regrew.²⁷ This rapid expansion in profits shaped a new period which further divided the Colombian population along socio-economic lines. The elites wanted closer ties with the U.S. to foster growing export markets as during this time 46% of Colombian exports were received by the northern colossus.²⁸ On top of this, American fashion and culture was becoming ever more desired due to advancements in the entertainment industries. Colombia would become a prominent outlet for Hollywood's motion pictures, and while these became more accessible to the range of social classes by the day, wealthy families had the privilege of leading the charge in entertainment consumption.²⁹ Their affinity for American culture would lead a renewed charge of lightening opinions on past events.

The development of a growing wealthy class with strong affinity for American cultural values helped support a new push for renewing negotiations, especially as a change in political banner was coming in Washington. Coincidentally at this same time the Minister to Colombia,

²⁵ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 6-7.

²⁶ These actions were strongly bred through paranoia of European influences entrenching themselves in the hemisphere. Roosevelt had long been weary of European intervention in Latin America, especially after the 1901-1902 German led blockade of Venezuela after the latter defaulted on its European loans. See Mark Gilderhus "Bravado and Bluster: TR's Sphere of Influence in the Caribbean," *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations*, 408-10.

²⁷ Bergquist, *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia*, 230. One of the major factors contributing to this growth was the rising price per pound in world coffee prices combined with a coinciding rise in coffee production in Colombia.

²⁸ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 45. This information describes the five-year period from 1906-1911.

²⁹ Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*, 94-96. More detailed examples consist of elites turning to English and French style housing designs with their green patios moved from the inner patio to outer and surrounding the houses. Also, another symbolic change was the movement of elite families outside of the center plazas of the city to the suburbs beyond the urban areas, sparking a philosophical change from centuries of Spanish city planning. Other technological changes included the introduction of electric trolleys, automobiles and even airplanes, see pgs 83-113.

James T. Dubois had been improving relations between the two governments. In a letter to Secretary of State Philander Knox, Dubois explained that when he first arrived in Bogota in 1911 “there prevailed a bitter spirit against most things North American,” so much so that he was advised to not leave the legation in open public. However, within his first few months of work there occurred a complete attitude change in the city as he could now “walk the streets freely and [was] received kindly in the homes of the people.”³⁰ Dubois worked diligently on achieving a more hospitable relationship with the government and struck a chord with President Restrepo. The latter invited the Minister to spend time at his Hacienda outside of Bogota, where the two bonded over friendly banter and swimming races. Their blossoming friendship helped solidify new interest in relations between the two governments after the tumultuous 1909-1910 period, and Dubois even recommended restarting negotiations over a new treaty.³¹ However, their brotherly bond was not representative of the atmosphere that persisted in the rest of Colombia.

Underneath Restrepo’s rule, there were still plenty disconcerting events which explains a continuance of anti-American opinions throughout Colombia. Restrepo’s Minister to the U.S., Pedro Nel Ospina, had been known during the reactionary protests of 1909 for his hardline approach toward Washington. Thus, his refusal to permit a friendly visit by U.S. Secretary of State Knox while on his Caribbean tour in 1912 should not have shocked Restrepo. Assistant Secretary of State Huntington Wilson dispatched a response to the American legation in Bogota which criticized the harsh treatment by Ospina and wished upon the government of Colombia to meet the American desire for friendship.³² Despite appointing Ospina, Restrepo responded in a

³⁰ James T. Dubois to Philander Knox, January 30, 1912, letter, Library of Congress, *William Howard Taft Papers (WHTP)*, Reel 382, case file 365, LC.

³¹ Dubois to Knox, January 30, 1912, letter, *WHTP*, LC.

³² Huntington Wilson to American Legation in Bogota, February 18, 1912, Telegram, *WHTP*, Reel 382, case file 365, LC.

disappointing manner toward his minister as his administration had been working hard to foment closer relations. Ospina was removed from his post weeks later.³³ Yet, further documents show that his decision may have been made as an honest recommendation for the safety of Knox owing to this continuation of animosity over the Panama event.

Correspondence between Secretary Knox and Minister Dubois detailed that the latter believed a visit from Knox would not be received enthusiastically, and therefore would not be a success in the first place. Dubois explained that the press had begun to exhibit opposition toward a supposed visit in Bogota, and he had been informed by the consul in Cartagena that “people and press are decidedly against the visit.” This opposition had him convinced “that the memory of Panama still lives virile and bitter and will live until the Panama affair is settled right.”³⁴ With this serving as another prime example that reconciliation was needed, Dubois once more recommended renegotiation on September 30, 1912. He suggested to forego attempts to push the Colombian government to ratify the Root-Cortes-Arosemena Treaty still in limbo, as a majority of citizens in the country did not feel that treaty spoke in their best interests. Despite the distaste over the 1909 treaty, he explained, there still was a “genuine desire among the people of all classes that the United States and Colombia should...reach a just and honorable settlement” at the earliest timing possible.³⁵

Upon reading Dubois’ report both Knox and Taft offered similar rebuttals that the stipulations in the Root-Cortes-Arosemena Treaty were already plentiful. However, they did offer a lenient tone about other amendments, and an extra payment of ten million U.S. dollars,

³³ Ospina’s removal would come even after two instances where Washington explained that their criticism of him did not mean they wished him to be removed as Minister, see Wilson to American Legation in Bogota, February 18 and 20, 1912, *WHTP*, Reel 382, case file 365, LC.

³⁴ Dubois to Knox, March 4, 1912, letter, *WHTP*, Reel 382, case file 365, LC. Anti-American sentiments aimed against Knox’s visits was also seen in other areas such as Managua, Nicaragua due to American actions in that country, see Unsigned to Knox, March 8, 1912, letter, *WHTP*, Reel 382, case file 365, LC.

³⁵ Dubois to Knox, September 30, 1912, letter, *WHTP*, Reel 382, case file 365, LC.

which could be offered to bring the dispute to a close.³⁶ The path was now paved for the U.S. Minister to have some freedom in negotiations with Bogota, which could allow for an agreement upon a different basis than what they deemed unsuitable in 1909. Despite the advancements on the American side, the Colombian government stalled its treaty considerations and decided to patiently wait for the last aspect of Roosevelt's legacy to leave office. A few months after Dubois' proposal President Woodrow Wilson would be inaugurated and the anticipated transition to Democrat-party rule brought hope to many Colombians.³⁷

Thomson-Urrutia Treaty of 1914

Just over a year passed from the time Wilson entered office until a treaty was agreed upon in Colombia, on April 6, 1914 between the new U.S. Minister Thaddeus Thomson and Colombian Minister of Foreign Affairs Francisco Jose Urrutia. The agreement provided Colombia with an indemnity payment of \$25 million, and offered a statement of "sincere regret" on the American side due to actions committed by Washington in 1903. Thanks to these new provisions, the treaty passed through the Colombian Congress quickly and without amendment.³⁸ However, this did not mean that the majority of people were willing to do away with their Anti-American feeling, nor were most even on board with the current treaty.

Throughout Restrepo's presidency continuing economic growth fostered great social change, such as new tastes and styles among the wealthier classes as discussed before. The social distinctions brought on by the economic growth created vast differences in opinion on many state

³⁶ Knox to Dubois, November 29, 1912, letter; Taft to Knox, November 30, 1912, letter, *WHTP*, Reel 382, case file 365, LC.

³⁷ Taft was Roosevelt's personal choice as successor to his presidency and it was viewed that his time as Secretary of War under Roosevelt was spent being personally indoctrinated by the latter's "big stick" policies.

³⁸ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 440-441.

matters, and especially in reference to the American question. In late 1913 the American consul in Cartagena claimed that public opinion in Colombia could be divided amongst distinct groups: businessmen and government officials were said to be in support for the treaty, the press was also favorably disposed toward the treaty but still referred to Roosevelt and the 1903 event with heavy criticism, and finally the general public was still staunchly anti-American in all areas.³⁹ While this statement framed that the government was generally in approval of the treaty compared to the masses, the scene at Congress' ratification process showed otherwise.

Details of the treaty ratification hearings in Colombia's Congress exposed that officials in congress were also split. Opposition voices were profoundly heard during the ratification process. In one dramatic event a group of opposition Senators decried that the pro-treaty officials should take the indemnity payments, buy some nice land, and then subsequently erect gallows to hang themselves on.⁴⁰ The Colombian Congress' ultimate ratification of the treaty therefore was able to somehow override the opposition found amongst the public citizenry and inside the government. The question arises why pro-treaty supporters continued to press for approval and managed to be successful against what seemed to be heavy opposition? Historian Marco Palacios' analysis of this operation exclaims that the treaty was only able to pass due to outright corruption attributed to officials pulling to get access to the indemnity money and greater business connections to exploit oil reserves in the country.⁴¹ The latter aspect of Palacios' argument represents a longstanding issue in the treaty's history.

The topic of oil in Colombia is one that will reoccur within Washington throughout the following decade, but first came to the surface in the beginning of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty

³⁹ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 97.

⁴⁰ Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*, 103.

⁴¹ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 66-67.

negotiations in 1913. Developments within Colombia on possible oil concessions to a British firm, S. Pearson and Son, provoked strong reactions within the U.S. who viewed this as unwanted European intrusion into their hemisphere. Despite oil being nearly unmentioned in earlier talks, the outbreak of hostility against the British firm's concession in Colombia illuminates that it was indeed a large factor for U.S. interests in a world becoming more reliant on the fuel source.

Oil possibilities in Colombia were not unknown in 1913, as the history of oil access in the country can be traced back to 1866 when Manuel Palacio made the first attempts to find oil reserves outside of Barranquilla.⁴² Subsequent concessions were given out over the following decades, and most prominently so underneath the Reyes administration in 1905 which promoted investment in the hidden wealth.⁴³ Yet, it was not until the second decade of the twentieth century that Colombia's oil resources became a significant issue. About a month before Wilson's inauguration, Lord Murray of Elibank, representing the Pearson firm arrived in Colombia to expand the company's oil exploration operations that were already flourishing in Mexico. Despite understanding Murray's purposes no American opposition rose against his acquisition of a large concession until after the original plans were approved by President Restrepo and were moving onto approval in Congress.⁴⁴

Beginning with a protest by the General Asphalt Company of New York, who intervened in Bogota in June 1913 to petition the Pearson contract in lieu of their own desire for the concession, a wild backlash against the British contract was launched within the U.S.⁴⁵

⁴² Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 15. The mere knowledge that oil deposits existed can be claimed as far back as 1537 when Don Gonzalo Jimenez de Quesada described a bubbling well emitting a black sticky liquid, thus discovering the first illustrations of oil in the Colombian nation, see Phyllis R. Griess, "Colombia's Petroleum Resources," *Economic Geography* 22, no. 4 (1946): 245-54, doi:10.2307/141235, 245.

⁴³ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 15-16.

⁴⁴ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 87-89.

⁴⁵ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 89-91.

Specifically, General Asphalt's representatives pointed to an article in the concessions which allowed the Pearson company to construct, as needed, rail lines, port operations and canals. Many sources took this as a direct threat that the British held the power to construct a competing canal through Colombia.⁴⁶ While the British government was quick to disavow such a ridiculous claim, this nonetheless inserted the oil discussion right in between the U.S. relationship with Colombia and would be consequential to the treaty talks that were beginning to heat up.⁴⁷

American oil interests, including General Asphalt, were quick to state that the Pearson concession was large enough to be considered a monopoly, especially with the subsequent control over infrastructure within their sphere of land. The firm, controlled by English baron Lord Cowdray, insisted this was not the case and correspondence between Cowdray and the British government clearly showed that they had no interests in anything but oil.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, consistent pressure was placed onto the Colombian government and the Cowdray mission itself to oppose the contract. On November 27, 1913 Cowdray's men finally gave in.⁴⁹ The reasons for their contract withdrawal went unexplained but was speculated to be a product of various reasons such as forthcoming rejection in the Colombian congress, reaction against possible incoming Colombian legislation that would declare all mineral wealth as property of the government, and the fact that this competition was harming U.S.-British relations.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ "Cowdray Quits in Colombian Oil," 1913, *New York Tribune*, Nov 27, 1913, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575134335?accountid=14524> (accessed January 20, 2018); Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 444.

⁴⁷ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 90.

⁴⁸ Marconi, Transatlantic Wireless Telegraph to The New York Times, 1913, "Says Press Beat Colombia Oil Plan," *New York Times*, Nov 28, 1913, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/97381747?accountid=14524> (accessed January 20, 2018); Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 78-88.

⁴⁹ "Cowdray Quits Colombia in Oil," 1913, *New York Tribune*, November 27, 1913.

⁵⁰ Special to The *New York Times*, 1913, "No Pressure Used to Block Oil Deal," *New York Times*, Dec 31, 1913, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/97382816?accountid=14524> (accessed January 25, 2018). The factor of possible legislation that would declare all subsoil wealth to be government owned was at least mentioned and discussed during the 1913 period, and according to Rippy, this same indication is what eventually became the decree that was so publicized in 1919, see J. Fred Rippy, *The Capitalists and Colombia* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1931), 124-125.

This event details a strong display of European anxiety by Washington. The Wilson Administration threatened the outcome of the ongoing treaty negotiations based on Colombia's acceptance or denial of the Pearson concessions.⁵¹ Wilson already was rubbed wrong by Lord Cowdray due to events transpiring in Mexico, and did not want to see any more of his influence disturbing the new policies he was trying to install in the hemisphere.⁵² These pressures added weight upon the concession negotiations, although Restrepo and Cowdray were slowly becoming less optimistic about its approval in Congress.⁵³ Overall, the Pearson situation brought to light American anxieties over various factors: the accessibility to Colombia's natural resources, the determination to deny European influences in the hemisphere, and the importance placed upon inclusive influence within Colombian affairs.

Although U.S. forces would soon infiltrate Colombia's oil wealth, the topic will resurge in 1919 and has been highlighted by many historians as the prime reason for the eventual ratification of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty in Washington. However, this episode should be considered as an example that oil access was not a new topic involved in the treaty negotiations when it was reintroduced in 1919. Heavy opposition persisted in the U.S. despite the acknowledgement that Colombia was willing to be influenced by American commercial interest in its oil reserves. Restrepo reacted to American opposition by promising Minister Thomson that he would personally veto any contract which had monopolistic features or offered rights to

⁵¹ Marconi, Transatlantic Wireless Telegraph to The *New York Times*, 1913, "Insists Colombia was Menaced by Us," *New York Times*, Dec 30, 1913, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/97460372?accountid=14524> (accessed January 25, 2018) .

⁵² Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 91-93. Lael explains that during the ongoing conflict in Mexico, Wilson took a stance against the new rule of General Victoriano Huerta, whom he believed usurped power illegally. Cowdray's firm, it was believed, was pushing the British government to recognize Huerta's legitimacy, and were even supporting an extension of his rule.

⁵³ "Cowdray Quits in Colombia Oil," 1913, *New York Tribune*, November 27, 1913; Carlos M. Sarria, 1913, "Colombia not Coerced," *New York Times*, Nov 30, 1913, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/97409102?accountid=14524>, (accessed January 29, 2018).

construct an inter-oceanic canal.⁵⁴ While Americans exhibited a level of concern over access to Colombia's natural wealth, the latter government's promise to respect and offer Americans opportunities to exploit its resources did not carry enough weight to convince officials in Washington on the importance of settling with Colombia. Despite the developments which transpired after the ultimate failure of the 1909 tripartite treaty, American opinion was still not sympathetic enough to agree to a settlement which many saw as a blackmail.

During the Wilson administration's attempt to push the treaty's ratification as quickly as possible in April, the Senate floor proved to be a compelling obstacle. News of the treaty's larger than predicted indemnity and the "regret" clause sparked strong opposition among Republicans and anyone else who saw themselves as pro-Roosevelt, who cabled his opposition to Washington just weeks after the treaty's signing.⁵⁵ Roosevelt's opposition had been long predicted by Wilson. However, it seemed the administration unfortunately overlooked the strongest source of hostility in the Senate during the treaty talks.

Leading the Republican opposition on the floor was Massachusetts scholar-politician Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who took the Senate's job of final treaty approval extremely seriously. As the ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Relations, he was primed to create the largest obstacle for Wilson's treaty.⁵⁶ Between Roosevelt and Lodge, the opposition force strongly exaggerated the indemnity payment as hush money and pure blackmail, and the clause of regret as a flat-out apology for the actions of the great Teddy Roosevelt.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Colombia – Pearson (Cowdray) Oil Contract – Costa Rica, Memo, *John Basset Moore Papers*, Box 208, Folder "Oil (Folder D)," LC. In this memo it reports that Restrepo also tried to console American opposition toward the Pearson contract by guaranteeing to Thomson that American firms could receive the same exact concessions that may go to Pearson.

⁵⁵ Roosevelt to The Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, letter, July 11, 1914, SEN 64B B1 "Foreign Relations" Box 12, RG 46, NA; Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 442. Roosevelt not only made his opposition known but requested for his own personal hearing in front of the Senate on the matter.

⁵⁶ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 108-109.

⁵⁷ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 443.

These strong actors helped fume antagonism among not only fellow senators but as well as the public. One citizen's telegram to Democratic Senator William Stone, Chairman of the Foreign Relation Committee, argued that the Colombian treaty was "foolish" and should be "severely condemned." He rationalized that there was no reason to apologize to Colombia, and then offer two and one-half times as much money to the government which refused Washington canal rights, then what was offered to the government that did (Panama).⁵⁸ This telegram strongly represented the new opposition standpoint, which viewed the very basis of offering Colombia money now for nothing in return as completely nonsensical, when it's government refused to accept the canal payments earlier when it did have something to give.

With the public still indecisive on the treaty and a midterm election campaign heating up for fall 1914, Senator George Record wrote to Wilson and his aid warning of the dangers involved if he continued to push the treaty. Record stated that on the streets the opinion was "practically unanimous" against the agreement.⁵⁹ Record projected that unless Wilson dropped the treaty issue, it would be used as the main issue of political attacks against his general policies.⁶⁰ With these dangers in mind, Secretary Bryan telegraphed the Bogota legislation explaining that the treaty's favor in the upcoming congress was slight, and thus would not be brought to a formal vote.⁶¹

The decision to delay the ratification process in the Senate placed the treaty in the back seat of foreign affairs due to more pressing matters occurring in Europe. There may have still been ample support for the treaty among the public and Congress, but it was doubtful that it

⁵⁸ W. P. Bristy to Senator Stone, Telegram, July 16, 1914, SEN 64B B1 "Foreign Relations" Box 12, RG 46, NA.

⁵⁹ George R Record to Joseph Tumulty, letter, May 7, 1914, *Woodrow Wilson Papers (WWP)*, Reel 297, case file 826, LC.

⁶⁰ Record stated that the general press would be flooded by the Hearst and Roosevelt factions who would play up the treaty "pretty much all the time." Record to Wilson, letter, May 9, 1914, *WWP*, Reel 297, case file 826, LC.

⁶¹ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 110.

could receive the needed votes for a two-thirds majority. The opposition led by Roosevelt and Lodge proved successful for the time being. Although economic and political adventures created positive effects on the relations between the U.S. and Colombia, their diplomatic proximity still suffered from the downfall of the Panama secession and official relations were stuck in limbo. However, the major components of mounting U.S. concern witnessed over this time period such as anxieties over increasing European economic and political influences in Latin America, the growing importance given to maintaining access to resources, and particularly oil, and the continuance of anti-American sentiments in Colombia, would all be massively exposed during a time of uncertainty and violence never before experienced: World War I.

Chapter 4: The War Years

Since the turn of the twentieth century, fears had been growing both within the continent and across the Atlantic over increasing tension between the preeminent European forces. The anxieties which began to develop in the late nineteenth century over the German rise had already sparked an alliance between Russia and France in the 1890s and with Britain soon thereafter. Germany, on the other hand, had become focused on supporting the survival of its main ally Austria-Hungary. Thus, upon the June 28, 1914 assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne and the spiderweb of political agreements that soon stretched its source of contention into the neighboring nations, it was realized that what started as a local terrorist plot would not be contained as a local conflict.¹

The following years would see the outbreak of armed conflict on a scale never before experienced. For a long time World War I has been associated with the European and North America narratives, but rarely with those of Latin America. This final section contributes to the ongoing explanations of the war's true globality and specifically how this experience would affect change among U.S. policymakers' opinions on hemispheric relations. The following period created a setting which called for closer, friendlier relations with the Colombian nation due to a drastic new emphasis on hemispheric security, economic opportunity and access to valuable resources. These forces would prove to be significant enough to change the opinions of many in America on the importance of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty, which would not just be seen as a positive impact on relations, but a necessary one.

¹ Robert E. Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy, 1914-24* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 29-30.

As the war snowballed into a continental struggle, outside nations were forced to react. Wilson's administration announced the U.S. stance of neutrality on August 4, and was soon followed by a domino effect of neutrality declarations across Latin America.² In Colombia, newly elected President Jose Vicente Concha's August inauguration swept his administration directly into a period of international uncertainty. While Colombia was far across the ocean, the administration and the public knew that they could not go unaffected. Upon the declaration of neutrality given by Concha's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marco Fidel Suarez, the government was ready to dig in under strict abidance of The Hague Convention's 1907 "Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers" article to ensure diplomatic security.³ This section of The Hague Convention was designed to not only protect neutrals from belligerents but to also keep neutrals from violating their own stances. Specifically for Colombia, the statements in the first chapter of the article would become a major focal point:

Article 1: The Territory of Neutral Powers is inviolable.

Article 2. Belligerents are forbidden to move troops or convoys of either munitions of war or supplies across the territory of a neutral power.

Article 3. Belligerents are likewise forbidden to:

- (a.) Erect on the territory of a neutral power a wireless telegraphy station or other apparatus for the purpose of communicating with belligerent forces on land or sea.
- (b.) Use any installation of this kind established by them before the war on the territory of a neutral power for purely military purposes...

² Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 30; Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 23.

³ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 24-25. This convention constructed and put in place the first formal statement of policies and laws for war and war crimes in the arena of international law. The "Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land," was one article within the thirteen sections adopted by the delegates. While this ensured no possible diplomatic fallout during the war, it was also a power move by the government, as Colombia had signors of the original convention treaty and maintained a seat on the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

...Article 5. A neutral power must not allow any of the acts referred to in Article 2 to 4 to occur on its territory.⁴

The stipulations of these four articles will reappear in numerous manners in Colombian affairs throughout World War I. The first of these occasions would be a product of the original divisions in public opinion that was created by the outbreak of the war in Europe among the large populations of European descendants that inhabited both North and South America.

Public Positions on the War in Colombia and the U.S.

Neutrality was declared across the Americas as most countries followed suit with the U.S. in hoping this war would stay an European affair. However, owing to the hemisphere's large European immigrant or descendent populations, an inevitable atmosphere of cultural disposition emerged. In the U.S., popular sentiment eventually came to support the Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia, later dubbed the "Allies") over the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Empire), yet early in the war public opinion within America's own territory was more divisive than what is commonly explained.

First and second-generation Germans made up nearly ten percent of the U.S. population in the first decade of the twentieth century, and in many local areas this demographic makeup was much higher. In McLean County, Illinois, where nearly 30 percent of the population was of German descent, the local media began to protest the national news coverage on the war as being considered biased toward Britain. Therefore, they began to strictly run articles based off a

⁴ "Annex 1: Laws of War," *Rights of Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land (Hague V)*; October 18, 1907, in Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 115-119.

German-perspective to combat early forms of anti-German rhetoric.⁵ In Sedalia, Missouri, east of Kansas City, local German-American newspaper, *Sedalia Journal*, ran vehemently pro-German reports and constantly attacked president Wilson's policies, which they believed were hypocritically in support of British aims despite his declaration of neutrality.⁶ Especially in rural areas where media sources were run by local entities, pro-German sources made their voices heard early on in the U.S. before the government became involved on the Allied side.

On the other hand, areas of progressive, economically comfortable white Americans of all heritages, displayed a sympathetic view toward the Allied powers. Much of these sympathies resulted in response to the German invasion of the neutral Belgium in August 1914. These reactions sparked formations of aid organizations such as the Committee for Relief in Belgium, headed by future President Herbert Hoover.⁷ Very early on, German militarism created a negative view amongst many Americans. Despite Washington's declaration of neutrality, it was readily observed that most officials, including many of Wilson's top aides, were strongly sympathetic to the Allied cause.⁸

The defilement of Belgium's neutrality created a strong distaste for Germany among many throughout the U.S. and Latin America. Yet, some in the U.S. were much less sympathetic to this violation. African American intellectuals deemed this event as reminiscent toward

⁵ Tina Stewart Brakebill, "From "German Days" to "100 Percent Americanism": McLean County, Illinois 1913-1918: German Americans, World War One, and One Community's Reaction," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1998-) 95, no. 2 (2002): 151-155. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40193520>.

⁶ Petra Dewitt, *Degrees of Allegiance: Harassment and Loyalty in Missouri's German-American Community during World War I* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012), 37-38.

⁷ Jennifer D. Keene "Americans Respond: Perspectives on the Global War, 1914-1917," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft* 40, no. 2 (2014): 269-272, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24368712>. These aid groups spent the war period sending much needed foodstuffs to occupied Belgium and even received contributions from sympathetic Latin American nations such as Guatemala and Argentina.

⁸ Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 42-46; and John Milton Cooper Jr, *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1983), 289-290. One of the most influential pro-Allied characters would be Wilson's unofficial Foreign Policy advisor Colonel Edward House, whose strong pro-British opinion eventually caused a major rift within Wilson's administration during the summer of 1915.

Belgium's colonial atrocities committed in the African Congo under King Leopold just decades before. The approach of Wilson's government as a protector of world morality and human rights angered many prominent African Americans such as W.E.B. DuBois, a founder of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). They felt once again subjugated by white prejudices due to the overwhelming focus given to an European War while racist killings happened to blacks in the American south with little to no recognition.⁹

Washington's policies were not only interpreted as hypocritical by subjected citizens at home but as well as abroad in Latin America. For Colombians, Washington's duplicity was exemplified by its calls to unite against international violations of law, while the settlement treaty still lay ignored in the U.S. Senate. Owing to the continuance of animosity toward Yankee influences, opinions on the war in Colombia were also divisive. While major papers tended to lean toward British and French interests in the war, there existed a strong pocket of German support and propaganda that would prove worrisome to U.S. diplomatic observers.

Unlike other nations in the Americas, Colombia did not receive a staggering amount of European immigration in the decades preceding the outbreak of War.¹⁰ Yet, German interests still proved to be strong influencers owing to their holdings of trading services and business interests.¹¹ On the Caribbean coast German influence was widespread due to assets of the Hamburg-Colombia Banana Company, and German-owned coal deposits whose concessions included rights to develop harbor, railroad and telegraph facilities.¹² More German influence was found in Antioquia, where the Banco Aleman Antioqueno and its German manager worked

⁹ Keene, "Americans Respond," 273-276. For an in depth historical look at these atrocities see Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (London: Pan, 2002).

¹⁰ William Paul McGreevey, *An Economic History of Colombia, 1845-1930* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 206. Estimates from the period of 1880-1920 show Colombia received only around 10,000 European immigrants, while Brazil admitted over two million around a similar timeframe.

¹¹ Rasuch, *Colombia and World War I*, 11-12.

¹² Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 102.

diligently to convince local businesses and merchants that they need not fear the commercial blacklists that would be soon installed by Britain and later the U.S.¹³

In addition to other pro-German interests in the nation, the leading voice of German support in Colombia could be considered as young politician Laureano Gomez and his newspaper *La Unidad*. A proud participant in the 1909 student protests against the Root-Cortese-Arosemena Treaty, Gomez and his fellow Jesuit students founded *La Unidad* as a pro-clerical media source that was focused on responding to attacks against the Church. In addition to his pro-clerical views, Gomez was equally determined in his fight against the proposed reconciliation with the U.S. and in his longtime feud against Minister of Foreign Affairs Suarez, who would be one of the men most responsible for this proposal in the years to come.¹⁴

During the beginning years of the war, *La Unidad* published various articles supporting Germany and the Central Powers, reporting stories of heroism and sympathetic human-interest pieces provided by the German embassy. Gomez's stances claimed that a German victory would stymie Yankee Imperialism and allow South American nations to finally uphold a level of autonomy and development without being continually imperiled by U.S. interests.¹⁵ While *La Unidad* may have been one of the most prominent voices of German support, it was not alone. U.S. Minister Thomson claimed that two other papers, *La Tribuna* and *El Espectador* as well

¹³ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 105. Blacklists were used as part of Britain's "paper blockade" to depress German economic influences from exacting extra levels of power in foreign countries. These lists would mainly come into play in 1916 when the war came to a stalemate, Allies instituted a widespread boycott of Central Power Commerce to further starve Germany and their allies. See Jamie Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America, 1914-1922* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2016), 65; and for more on the paper blockade concept during the beginning stages of the War see Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 32-35. The Banco Aleman Antioqueno would later be listed as a "Suspect Financial Institution" by the U.S. State Department in 1917, Bisher, 357.

¹⁴ Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*, 66-68, 102-103.

¹⁵ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 36-37. Gomez argued against pro-Allied sympathies in reprisal for French and British abuses against Latin America over the past centuries.

were fomenting Central Power support and were under the funding of the German legation.¹⁶ These voices should be regarded as normal occurrences as many Latin American nations, just like the U.S., had pockets of pro-German groups. Upon the U.S. entry into the war in 1917, however, Washington would place an extra level of scrutiny on Colombia's anti-allied opposition.

American paranoia produced by pro-German voices, or rumors thereof, in Colombia would overshadow clear evidence that Colombia by majority was not a pro-German nation. Most news outlets and major civilian voices displayed obvious pro-Allied sentiments. One of the loudest voices for the allied cause was Santiago Perez Triana, a former Minister to Great Britain, who published widely circulated works that were supportive of the Allied cause.¹⁷ Also, *El Tiempo*, an emerging major paper at the time, exhibited definite pro-Allied sentiments despite its claims for maintaining neutrality.¹⁸ Much of the paper's reports throughout the war focused on Allied heroics against German violence and ultimately over a year into the conflict the paper confirmed upfront that it "Is well known the firm adherence of *El Tiempo* and her director for the allied cause."¹⁹ Although the editors promised it would not affect their news reports, further analysis shows a clear favorability toward the Allies.²⁰

¹⁶ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 100.

¹⁷ Santiago Perez Triana, "Noted South American Diplomat on Monroe Doctrine of Future," *New York Times*, December 13, 1914. In December 1914, Triana wrote a letter to President Concha, originally published in his *Hispana*, which claimed that it was justly stated that "England and France are fighting against German militarism." See Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 26. For his 1915 book which carried a staunchly pro-Allied message see, Triana, *Some Aspects of the War* (London: T. F. Unwin, Ltd., 1915).

¹⁸ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 101.

¹⁹ "La Guerra Europea en Colombia," *El Tiempo*, December 12, 1915, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=SyshAAAIAIBAJ&sjid=wFEEAAAIAIBAJ&pg=7277%2C3952164> (accessed November 24, 2017).

²⁰ One such example is found in a late-1914 issue which took war reports directly from London presses, therefore installing an obvious pro-allied bias as it focused primarily on German atrocities in Belgium, see "La Guerra Europea," *El Tiempo*, September 15, 1914, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=W2IqAAAIAIBAJ&sjid=u1EEAAAIAIBAJ&pg=1672%2C2146800> (accessed November 24, 2017).

In both the U.S. and Colombia, media outlets and public figures in the beginning stages of the war exhibited support for Central and Allied powers alike. However, these aspects will be heavily ignored by anti-treaty supporters in Washington later in the war when treaty ratification garnered more focus. As the war situation began to intensify, Washington's concern over German influences in Latin America would heighten. Unfortunately for Bogota, pro-German support in Colombia was heavily tied into anti-Americanism. Therefore, Washington's anti-treaty sector would restlessly concentrate on the pockets of German support, though comparatively small, as a major reason to oppose a settlement with Colombia. The fact that Bogota would maintain neutrality throughout the war would further increase this paranoia of anti-Americanism in Washington. Yet, in reality the stance of neutrality was a diplomatic strategy fostered by Concha and Suarez to maintain pressure on the American Senate to ratify the treaty to ensure a more favorable position by Colombia in the war.

Relations during the First Years of the War

Despite its official neutrality, anxieties grew in Washington against German influences in the Western Hemisphere and this fear began to affect their foreign relations. In Colombia particularly, a case arose against the German wireless telegraph station by British officials in Washington. Despite British attempts to suffocate German communications entirely, advanced wireless technology allowed them to maintain transmissions by using other countries' radios to channel intelligence to their vessels offshore. This would become a problem in Argentina, Chile and Cuba, and many feared it was occurring on Colombia's Caribbean coast as well.²¹

²¹ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 45.

Upon British and French protests of German communication waves in Colombia in August 1914, the Concha administration ordered all visiting ships of nations in war to dismantle their radios systems.²² This order was given as an answer to the Allied calls and to guarantee their adherence to The Hague Neutrality rules.²³ Later issues arose over two wireless stations on the Caribbean coast, one in Santa Marta run by the UFCO and the other in Cartagena, managed and run by the German Gesellschaft fur Drahtlose Telegraphie of Berlin. In September, Minister Suarez issued a decree to ensure each station's adherence to the laws of neutrality, which consisted of issuing censorship authorities to observe each station. However, a month later the British still feared German usage of the station to pass intelligence, and ordered their Naval attaché in Washington to inspect the facility. His ensuing reports stated that the station was fully under German control. The British government responded with a request for Bogota to shut the station down permanently, yet Suarez originally refused. Only when the British and French governments requested that Washington's officials discuss the matters with Bogota did Suarez give in. The station was ordered closed in December, just days after a formal U.S. request.²⁴

The closure of the German station in Cartagena and later of a station on Colombia's San Andres island due to fears over German meddling displayed Bogota's inclined adherence toward Allied requests. Their prejudice in this event becomes accentuated when acknowledging that the Santa Marta station run by American-based UFCO continued its operations unimpeded throughout the entirety of the war.²⁵ It became clear that the Colombian government was still out to appease Washington in order to promote the ratification of the settlement treaty. Bogota's representatives and their pro-treaty counterparts in Washington continued their missions of

²² Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 45.

²³ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 31.

²⁴ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 31-32; Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 45-46.

²⁵ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 46; Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 32.

persuasion through stressing the economic benefits that lay in a friendlier Colombia, and overall a friendlier Latin America.

Early on, sources in Colombia predicted that no matter the outcome, the war was destined to be detrimental to the world economy and even more so to their own. In early August, Colombian Enrique Santos Montejó published a series of articles in a local journal which described the breakout of the European War as heading toward disaster on a scale never before seen. He continued to predict that the conflict driven by racial and secular hatreds would lead to the decimation of the continent, and would affect far outside Europe as it could also bring massive economic distress to Colombia.²⁶

A few days later another article was published in *El Tiempo*, a liberal newspaper, describing the effects that war would weigh onto the large amounts of imports and exports that Europe maintained with South America. The values, defined as nearly a total investment of 100 Billion pesetas, the author stated, would surely fall in drastic numbers and a dismal outlook was certain no matter who the eventual victors be.²⁷ The Americas stood in waiting, witnessing reports of the conflict grow larger and less decisive. Soon governments of the Western Hemisphere realized this would not be a quick conflict and they now had to decide how to move forward in this tumultuous period. For Colombians, their large economic connections to Europe would prove unfortunate and they would soon see drastic downfalls in access to import materials and export opportunities. The only option for salvaging their economy would be through strict financial measures and transitioning commercial interests elsewhere. However, no matter how

²⁶ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 26.

²⁷ "La Guerra Europea," *El Tiempo*, August 24, 1914, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=TmIqAAAAIABAJ&sjid=u1EEAAAAIABAJ&pg=5007%2C2495699> (accessed November 25, 2017).

desperate things became many in the nation still refused to partake in closer ties with their best financial bet at the time, the United States.

By the time war broke out in Europe in July 1914, Colombia was still considered highly underdeveloped despite its economic growth over the previous years. The country lacked adequate railroads to help connect the rugged, mountainous terrain, and the main sources of transport normally coincided with the unreliable Magdalena River. Only five ports were involved in foreign trade despite nearly 2,000 miles of coastline touching both the Pacific and Caribbean waters. Within these ports no Colombian sources even participated in the carrying trade due to a lackluster merchant marine system. Export trade was completely in the hands of foreign entities, with England and Germany possessing the lead roles.²⁸

American forces were already behind in Colombia in foreign trade links, and their investments in the country did not promise much brighter hope. In the year before the Great War, U.S. investments reached somewhere around two million dollars.²⁹ While this amount was still considered valuable to the Colombian side that was desperate for foreign investment, it only represented a fraction of the \$60 million in total foreign investments in the country at the time.³⁰ This trend took a drastic turn over the following years, however, and by 1920 U.S. investments in Colombia would jump to \$30 million. Nearly a decade later these investments would skyrocket further to \$280 million.³¹ U.S. economic relations with Colombia clearly enhanced

²⁸ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 11-12. Coastline measurements taken from “Colombia: Geography,” *Central Intelligence Agency World Fact Book*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html> (accessed January 19, 2018).

²⁹ Rippy, *The Capitalists and Colombia*, 152.

³⁰ McGreevey, *An Economic History of Colombia, 1845-1930*, 204. To place the U.S. investment in Colombia in a better perspective, American investment in Guatemala had amounted to over \$36 million by 1914, see Schoonover, *The United States in Central America*, 113.

³¹ Rippy, *The Capitalists in Colombia*, 152.

during the years the world became enthralled in World War I, and a large reason for this increase was a result of early commercial promotion by Bogota officials and their friendly counterparts.

On October 19, 1914 John Barrett, now the Director General of the Pan-American Union in Washington, spoke in front of the American Hardware Manufacturer's Association to promote trade opportunities in Latin America. An appendix to his speech was included which described each nation's specific hardware imports and how much of those imports were being furnished by the U.S. In Colombia the U.S. supplied more than other countries, but still only consisted of 36.5% of the shared hardware imports.³² Barrett's presentation emphasized that in nearly every Latin American nation, the U.S. had opportunities to improve their commercial ties with a concerted effort to generate closer relationships. This marked just one of the many actions taken by pro-treaty supporters on both sides to emphasize the benefits of closer relations with Colombia.

Barrett's work continued to push relations in late 1914. As the war unfolded, Barrett and the Latin American representatives within the Pan-American Union began discussions on how to handle the war situation. In a December letter to President Wilson, Secretary of State Bryan reported that the representatives had shown a "universal desire" to create a committee for the investigation and study of questions involving international neutrality.³³ Latin American governments were becoming stressed over their positions and displayed view of urgency over the war in Europe. Wilson, however, responded that he saw "dynamite" in the formation of such a

³² John Barrett, Appendix to Speech, October 29, 1914, *JBP*, Box 97, "Latin America" Folder, LC. Specifically of Colombia's \$2,974,364 worth of hardware imports, the U.S. was responsible for \$1,087,479. Countries such as Argentina, Bolivia and Chile exhibited a large minority share of U.S. imports for such needs. It should be noted that John Barrett would be a consistent supporter of closer hemispheric relations and his work in the Pan-American union would be one of notable cause throughout the war period.

³³ Bryan to Wilson, Letter, December 9, 1914, *WWP*, Reel 218, Pan-American Union, LC.

committee, furthering his desire to stay far away from the war in hopes it would remain an European affair.³⁴

The Summer of 1915 would see the effects of the war in a much more pronounced manner than in its first months. Colombia began to experience economic downturn as world coffee prices and sales plummeted, European credit dried up, and import duties suffered without their major European trade partners. The downturn resulted in harsh economic policies under the Concha administration, and many public works and government agencies experienced heavy cuts. Most significantly for Colombia-U.S. relations, the disappearance of European goods for import created a greater reliance on the only major power that could fill such needs, the United States. Fortunately, U.S. business interests were quick to fill this opportunity. By the end of the year the U.S. would receive 71.3% of Colombia's total exports as opposed to 44.4% in 1913.³⁵ From this point onward, the U.S. would maintain their dominance within Colombia's trade economy.

The surge in American trading shares was not merely a natural occurrence. Colombian officials recognizing the impending economic crisis quickly enacted an international advertisement campaign to launch interest in their country. Representatives took advantage of the 1915 Pan-American Financial Conference in Washington to foster trade relations and bridge the growing gap in Colombian import needs. Bogota's representatives promoted their country's petroleum opportunities, mining sectors and other natural resources. All the while promoting their resource opportunities, they stuck to the diplomatic course of promoting the ratification of the settlement treaty still held up in the U.S. Congress. The ratification of the treaty, they argued,

³⁴ Wilson to Bryan, Letter, December 12, 1914, *WWP*, Reel 218, LC.

³⁵ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 37-39.

would allow Colombians to be more inclined to open ports to U.S. interests and goods.³⁶ The conference's discussions helped build a better attitude among U.S. officials, such as the conference's Chairman, Treasury Secretary William McAdoo, who wrote Wilson asking him to reference the good work done there in his upcoming year-end message to Congress as a reminder of Latin American opportunities.³⁷

Surmounting Pressures

The Financial Conference brought an open occasion for economic promotion, but for concerned Washington officials, the meetings marked a chance to gain insight on Latin American sentiments toward both the war and the U.S. Barrett described the fortunate findings in a letter to Wilson's aid Josephus Tumulty. Barrett stated that the Latin American republics appeared "to be most friendly disposed toward the U.S.," and all the major newspapers had praised Wilson's policies, and his overall character.³⁸ Barrett's comments on the conference displayed there was a favorable view of Wilson's foreign policies by the Latin American governments.

The new Wilsonian policies of Pan-Americanism had begun to win favor in diplomatic circles abroad. At home, however, Republicans behind Lodge and Roosevelt continued to stymie Wilson's project to settle to the Colombian dispute.³⁹ Secretary of State Bryan informed Bogota once again that the treaty would be delayed in order to save its chances for approval, adding there was confidence that the next Senate hearing in the winter would prove more promising.⁴⁰

³⁶ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 34.

³⁷ McAdoo to Wilson, Letter, November 15, 1915; Wilson to McAdoo, Letter, November 17, 1915, *WWP*, Reel 332, LC. Wilson happily replied to McAdoo that he would.

³⁸ Barrett to Wilson, Letter, July 15, 1915, *WWP* Reel 218, LC.

³⁹ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 110-111.

⁴⁰ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 111-112.

As the months continued, though, Wilson would find his hemispheric policies turn problematic upon his ordering of American forces into Northern Mexico in early 1916.⁴¹

Wilson's policies toward Mexico were not completely unfounded. Fears of the situation in Mexico were running high as concerns over the ongoing revolution became inflamed by increasing rumors of subversive German involvement.⁴² Owing to the complex situation of tension between Mexico's revolutionary government and President Wilson, in 1915 Mexico's intelligence forces devised the Plan de San Diego with the intent to create a general uprising in the American Southwest.⁴³ The plot resulted in a series of guerilla-based skirmishes which clashed with U.S. troops and Texas Rangers along the border. As the plan grew, Wilson's administration received numerous warnings about German influences invoking the fighting. These rumors caused a great level of paranoia in Washington and among the American public and prompted Wilson to order an expedition into Northern Mexico to apprehend the suspected parties.⁴⁴ The president received strong backlash from opponents for this move, even though in reality it resembled the interventionist policies of Roosevelt and Taft. Nonetheless it was another factor of antagonism against his administration in an inopportune time, as elections approached that November.⁴⁵

President Woodrow Wilson's position in late 1915 and early 1916 was a precarious one. His democratization policies in Latin America had finally gotten the country entangled in the

⁴¹ Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 89.

⁴² Rumors of German agents enmeshed into the Mexican revolutionary intelligence and military networks quickly came to light. It was reported that even Mexico's ousted General Huerta's 1915 return from exile in Spain to New York was furnished by German intelligence forces to foment more armed uprisings in Mexico. See, Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 52-54.

⁴³ The plan was designed to find support among racially antagonized minorities in Texas, New Mexico, California, Arizona and Colorado. These groups included Mexican-Americans, African-Americans, and Asians who were commonly subjugated to prejudiced policies and white violence.

⁴⁴ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 56-58, 72-73.

⁴⁵ Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest*, 267.

violence in Mexico, and the standstill occurring in Europe made reports of German influences sound more threatening. Many officials feared the standstill would be a prime moment for Germany to try to expand its operations to gain a global advantage. After the infamous sinking of the *Lusitania* in May 1915 American protests over Germany's actions continued to grow.⁴⁶ Although the Wilson administration continued to state their devotion to neutrality, attitudes were becoming more supportive of the Allied side. Many officials in Washington saw an armed conflict with Germany as inevitable, therefore insiders pressured Wilson to take more aggressive policies toward Germany, while Roosevelt's group on the other side criticized the administration for not being proactive enough in promoting peace.⁴⁷

The ongoing scene of internal pressures once again prompted the tabling of the Colombian settlement in 1916. With a Presidential election approaching that fall, Wilson did not want to push the treaty while already facing opposition over Mexico and within the midst of rising war tensions.⁴⁸ This move would consequentially create a detrimental diplomatic situation with Colombia. Colombians fed up with the constant delays in the U.S. Senate became more disposed to anti-American rhetoric and even threatened pro-German stances to pressure the U.S. into ratification.

Starting in late 1915, news sources began to comment increasingly on the war and subsequently on American relations and the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty. In December, *El Tiempo* published an interview with former President Carlos Restrepo, asking for his opinions on the war. In response to questions of whether he was a Germanophile or a Francophile, Restrepo

⁴⁶ Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 46.

⁴⁷ "Los Estados Unidos y la Guerra Europea," *El Tiempo*, November 19, 1914, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=iGIqAAAAIBAJ&sjid=u1EEAAAIBAJ&pg=686%2C851219> (accessed November 26, 2017); for Roosevelt's opinions on the war see Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest*, 276-284.

⁴⁸ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 111.

simply called himself a Colombophile and only focused on the interests of his homeland. While he was impartial to any one side in the war, he made his feelings clear about any nation who would or already had wronged his homeland. He commented that no matter the situation, “I cannot sympathize with nations that have made bad to my country.” While this could easily be interpreted as a slight against the U.S., he stopped short of such a statement. However he finished his interview with a warning that no matter who won, Colombia would possibly one day be at odds with them, and the most fearsome of such would be Germany, who had shown already her successful abilities in colonizing smaller states.⁴⁹ Restrepo’s statement expressed the feeling of many in Colombia, that while there were obvious concerns over a victorious Imperial Germany, hard feelings still existed toward the U.S. and this may become a significant factor in Colombia’s war stance. This situation of continuing anti-Americanist opinion in the country would soon be made loud and clear to U.S. diplomats.

As the leading supporter of the treaty in the Committee on Foreign Relations, Democratic Senator William Stone was the recipient of many letters detailing examples of Colombian unwillingness to support American interests. A recent government auction in Colombia in which three ships were up for sale, of a value the writer confidently stated should reach at least a quarter million (U.S.) dollars, had been unfairly rewarded to a buyer underneath an American bidder. At the beginning of the auction a New Yorker bid a starter of \$30,200 before leaving the room for a brief moment, and in this short time a British bidder raised the price by a mere \$50. The letter stated that before the American was able to return the Colombian authorities had rewarded the ships to the British bidder at the miniscule sum of \$30,250, far below what was

⁴⁹ “La Guerra Europea en Colombia,” *El Tiempo*, December 15, 1915, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=TSshAAAAIBAJ&sjid=wFEEAAAAIBAJ&pg=7270%2C4021489> (accessed November 26, 2017).

expected. Not only did it undermine the New York bidder's chances, but showed the extreme conditions at which even public officials were taking to withhold helping American interests, even at the detriment of their own country. The letter concluded that this event should be used as an example to promote the treaty's necessity to the U.S. Senate.⁵⁰ This was just one case which illustrated the resentment alluded by Carlos Restrepo and proved that despite the economic efforts being promoted by Bogota, general sentiments in Colombia were still very anti-American due to a continued contempt over Washington's actions in 1903.

The reality was obvious that Colombians still held animosity over Washington's actions and as well over the earlier attempts to disregard this anger. In March of 1917 an article run in the *New York Tribune* reported on a recent appearance in New York by Colombian ex-President General Reyes. The article began by stating that Reyes still held great prestige in Colombia and was commonly seen as the country's top statesman. While this first section already proved a level of American ignorance toward Colombian opinions, it was Reyes' statements that lead to an official reaction. Reyes audaciously called Roosevelt a "superman" and claimed that anti-American sentiments in his country were over exaggerated.⁵¹ In response to his comments, *El Tiempo* ran an article brusquely entitled "General Reyes in New York: Deplorable Declarations from our Ex-President." The article denounced the tarnished General's words and claimed he had no agency to represent their government, nor did he reflect Colombian public opinion.⁵² The newspaper made it clear that such statements were not at all insightful of Colombian perspectives, continuing the certainty that until the treaty was approved, antipathy would remain.

⁵⁰ Letter to Stone, Letter, February 19, 2017, SEN 65B B1, *Miscellany*, Box 22, "Colombia Treaty," RG 46, NA.

⁵¹ "Reyes Lauds T.R.; Seeks \$25,000,000," *New York Tribune*, February 17, 1917, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575688873?accountid=14524> (accessed March 2, 2018).

⁵² "El General Reyes en Nueva York," *El Tiempo*, March 16, 1917, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=fY8bAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=7FEEAAAIAIBAJ&pg=1155%2C1729437> (accessed November 27, 2017).

A concerned U.S. citizen picked up on this point and wrote to Senator Stone to address this public opinion on the treaty he experienced while in Colombia throughout the previous year. The letter stated that many of Colombia's intelligent classes believed the treaty to be a petty indemnity for the crime committed. Be that as it may, the passage of the treaty would vastly increase "American Prestige and Commerce throughout all of South and Central America as a direct consequence." While he knew many Americans viewed the issue as insignificant compared to other matters of the time, the letter warned, the treaty truly is "of vital importance for our future International Relations."⁵³ The writer explained that despite continuing pessimism in the country, the treaty would bring clear benefits to Washington's stature in the region and therefore pressure to support the treaty should be continued.

This was well known in Wilson's administration and by those in Washington who cared to pay attention to the issue. Recognition of a looming danger presented by an angry Latin America in the face of German pressures caused Wilson to once again push for the treaty's ratification in the Spring of 1917. Wilson's previous warning to Germany that Washington would cut ties if unreserved submarine warfare continued came to fruition in February when Germany once again restarted their internationally condemned U-boat campaign. War was expected shortly thereafter in the U.S.⁵⁴ With this surprising series of events, attention hastily shifted to concerns over relations with their Latin American neighbors, and particularly to the safety of the Panama Canal, which brought Colombia's stance explicitly into focus.

As the country possessed borders on each side of the Panama Canal's entryways, heavy anxiety over Colombia's position in the war arose. The canals worth to the U.S. for both economic and military strategy was critical, therefore many officials feared that it would be a

⁵³ Geisecke to Stone, Letter, January 1, 1916, SEN 64B B1, Foreign Relations, Box 12, RG 46, NA.

⁵⁴ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 113; Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest*, 317.

prime target for any future enemies. On February 20, Barrett expressed to the Wilson administration that the passage of the treaty was of “vital importance, especially in connection with the defense of the Panama Canal.”⁵⁵ Wilson requested Senator Stone to urge the treaty’s approval due to these new circumstances and days later informed him to press the committee over a “serious” and “dangerous” level of intrigue in Colombia’s stance. Recent revelations exposed that the German Embassy in D.C. had been passing telegraphs of thousands of dollars to Colombia “for some time.”⁵⁶ This would be exposed later as a German propaganda funding scheme that involved multiple countries in Latin America. German embassies sent \$48,000 to Bogota, \$400,000 to Buenos Aires, \$96,000 to Mexico City, and \$32,000 to Havana among others.⁵⁷ It was well known by Spring 1917 that there was growing German interest in Colombia and Latin America altogether. Wilson wanted to move quickly to ensure Bogota’s loyalty away from the Central Powers.

Colombia’s case was not rare, though, as German and Allied influences alike viewed Latin America as an important part of their global war strategies. By the first years of the war, the belligerent nations found success in gaining patriotic recruits from Latin American cities with substantial immigrant populations such as in Buenos Aires, Valparaiso, Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro.⁵⁸ By late 1914 German and British naval forces were already locked into cat-and-mouse chases off the coasts of Argentina, Chile and Brazil. Most importantly, this scene revealed the earliest wartime instances of intelligence networks operating in Latin America. In the southernmost town in the world at the time, Chile’s Punta Arenas, intelligence agents working

⁵⁵ Barret to undisclosed, Summarized note, February 20, 1917, *WWP*, Reel 218, LC.

⁵⁶ Robert Lansing to Stone, Letter, February 28, 1917, SEN 65B B1, Box 22 “Colombia Treaty,” RG 46, NA; Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 112.

⁵⁷ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 92.

⁵⁸ Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War*, 43.

for both sides of the naval battles operated extensively to give their nations the upper hand. This included running local fishing boats to provide supplies and communications to the warships at sea and setting up secret communication stations on land.⁵⁹ Stories like this may sound like exotic instances of patriotic immigrants in the Americas acting independently for the pride of their homelands, but in reality, these types of events became very normal and extensively planned products of the global effects of World War I.

Colombia would not escape these intelligence influences. Their geographic importance and wealth of resources would make them a first-hand project of the German war machine. The funding of propaganda in local newspapers by the German legations has already been discussed in this section, but other subversive plans also took hold during the same time period. Late 1914 fielded a purported covert wireless station that was used to relay information to German squadron Commander Vice Admiral Maximilian Graf von Spee offshore of the whereabouts of his British rival Admiral Sir Christopher Craddock.⁶⁰ This may correlate directly to the earlier discussed French and British complaints of the German wireless station in Cartagena, but it is not known for sure. Yet, it should be noted reports of further activity appear to stop after late 1914, exactly when Colombia ordered the shutdown of the German station. Further discerning events of the war's first months came in December when arguments between pro-Allied and pro-German groups erupted into an intense nature. The resulting clash in Bogota's Olympia Theater garnered police intervention to separate the groups before it sparked further violence.⁶¹ The first

⁵⁹ Telegraph to, *The Tribune*, "Bases Sought near Panama" *New York Tribune*, Feb 14, 1916, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575525424?accountid=14524> (accessed March 2, 2018); Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War*, 49-52; Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 19-21.

⁶⁰ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 16. Intelligence also showed that this was just one of many covert wireless stations run by German agents, with others reported in Chile, Ecuador and Peru.

⁶¹ Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War*, 102; Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 33.

months of war was a polarizing time for many in Colombia, and showed that Germany was already well infiltrated physically and mentally into Latin America.

As the war continued Germany's needs heightened, giving way to greater effort toward expanding their war schemes into the Western Hemisphere. Specifically, in Latin America the Central Powers competed with the Allies in extracting political support, logistical support, and access to much needed natural resources to fuel their war technology.⁶² Diplomatic reports have shown that the German government attempted to increase political and commercial ties with Bogota. German officials suggested to Bogota that Colombia would be a great source of natural wealth to their own country, promising that their government was highly interested in purchasing Colombian coca leaves to help fuel their soldiers.⁶³ Although lucrative, coca leaves were not the most significant resource the German government was after in Colombia. As war developments intensified the need for a very specific metal that happened to be found in abundance in Colombia's western mountain range: platinum.

Platinum was necessary for the production of numerous vital war materials. The chemical element was used in the production of sulfuric acid (for explosives), amplifiers (communication technology), shell primers, magnetos (used commonly in air craft engines of the time), electrical equipment, and for the fixation of nitrogen to produce sources of ammonia (explosives).⁶⁴ At the time there were only two countries that had the ability to extract major amounts of this metal, Colombia and Russia. Russia's involvement in the war in Europe and their rising internal conflicts, which would break out in the famed Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917, caused

⁶² Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 31; Richard Lael and Linda Killen, "The Pressure of Shortage: Platinum Policy and the Wilson Administration during World War I," *The Business History Review* 56, no. 4 (1982): 546, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3114310>.

⁶³ Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War*, 153-155.

⁶⁴ Lael and Killen, "The Pressure of Shortage: Platinum Policy and the Wilson Administration during World War I," 546-547.

their platinum output to steadily decrease throughout the war, paving the way for Colombia to step into the role as the metal's primary exporter.⁶⁵

Unfortunately for Germany, Colombian platinum sources were nearly impossible to access in an official manner. The Allies blacklisted German firms in the Americas and held a steady blockade of merchant and commercial vessels heading into Central Power ports. Thus, once again covert means were employed to surpass the circumstances. Allied discoveries of German platinum purchasing operations happened inadvertently, owing to continuing unverified rumors and reports of a clandestine German telegraph station operating somewhere in western Colombia. The government in Bogota became frustrated by such reports and to prove their abidance of The Hague Conventions they contracted Allied experts to investigate for themselves. One such expert was British agent Charles Waite who arrived under secret orders in 1917. Waite's mission was influenced by vague murmurs of German businessmen being seen in rural towns and his curiosity of the stories eventually led him to the Platinum producing mines in Choco. Here, Waite saw first-hand that undercover German agents were purchasing Platinum directly from the mines and sending them to the port towns of Barranquilla and Cartagena, where they were smuggled on ships as contraband to Germany via Spain.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 15-16. Russia's share in the trade early on was widely dominant compared to Colombia. In 1907 Colombia produced 5,000 ounces of crude metal while Russia put out a massive 300,000 ounces. However, war pressures and internal conflict would take its toll. By 1914 the gap had closed to an estimated 17,500 ounces versus 241,000 respectively, then 18,000 to 124,000 in 1915, 25,000 to 63,000 in 1916, and 32,000 to 50,000 in 1917. By 1918 Colombia would be seen as the primary source for Platinum exports and U.S. Interior Department estimates put their output at 35,000, still far from Russia's previous capabilities but nonetheless the best producer at the time. Figures from Rausch, and Lael and Killen "The Pressures of Shortage," 554, note #26. The Interior Department estimates have some discrepancy from the Colombian estimates of exports, specifically in the year of 1916 which the Colombian estimates place production at just 19,000 ounces. Nonetheless Colombia's position in the year as second largest producer is strongly held as the third largest producer, the U.S., only put out 742 ounces that year. See Jorge Posada Callejas, *El Libro Azul de Colombia* (New York: J.J. Little & Ives Co., 1918), 102-103.

⁶⁶ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 231-234.

This discovery may not have garnered much surprise among the Allies but still amounted to concern. When Waite arrived back in Bogota in 1918 he sent an urgent message to British Intelligence forces stating “OPPOSITION IS BUYING LARGE QUANTITY [of platinum]. ADVISE SENDING BUYERS.”⁶⁷ While the detection of German platinum smuggling operations troubled Waite, it was not the only finding of concern during his expedition. Waite noticed threatening amounts of pro-German propaganda while stopping at various mountain towns, and specifically within the town of Manizales, in close vicinity of the platinum districts. In this town, Waite claimed he experienced “by far the most rabid Pro-German Propagandists of any town in South America.”⁶⁸ German propaganda newspapers such as Gomez’s *La Unidad*, *Transocean* and *Germania* had continuously caused trouble for the Colombian government, which was trying to censor papers that spread open support for belligerent nations. Minister Suarez on multiple occasions had ordered such papers to soften their tones in order to uphold Colombia’s notion of neutrality.⁶⁹ Yet, in many rural areas and towns out of reach of Bogota’s enforcement, like Manizales, these papers could easily continue their propaganda efforts.

Agent Waite’s undercover mission and U.S. intelligence reports prove an active German presence in Colombia during World War I. Despite their neutrality and distance from the fighting in Europe, Colombia and the rest of Latin America still played an important part in the belligerents’ global war strategies. Significantly for our purposes, events such as the ones described increased Wilson’s fear of German influences in Colombia, and helped spark his campaign to pass the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty in the U.S. Senate in March 1917.

⁶⁷ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 233.

⁶⁸ Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 232.

⁶⁹ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 68-69.

Wilson's narrow victory in the 1916 presidential elections over Republican opposition candidate Charles Hughes bred frustration and further disdain against the Wilson regime among his opponents as they headed into the new year. In January Secretary of State Lansing proposed to delay the treaty once again due to this Republican "resentment" over their campaign loss.⁷⁰ However, Wilson's concern over the rising tensions with Germany caused him to ignore this proposal. In the beginning of February Wilson wrote to Senator Stone asking him to push the treaty once more, stating that he would be surprised "that there be any objection to its consideration or to immediate action upon it," as there was "this only too obvious consideration, that we need now and it is possible shall need very much in the immediate future all the friends we can attach to us in Central America, where so many of our critical interests center."⁷¹ Wilson hoped that the acknowledgement of German influences in Latin America could convince the opposition to reverse their attitudes as the likelihood of U.S. involvement in the war improved.

Wilson's decision to immediately push the treaty owing to anxieties over security issues prompted other major characters to voice their support in the face of this new wave of fear. James T. Dubois, former Minister to Colombia under the Taft administration, wrote to Wilson in late February in support of pressing immediate ratification of the treaty due to similar worries. Dubois stressed that Colombia's possession of two good harbors in both the Atlantic and Pacific meant "she practically dominates the canal." With this significant position around Panama, he worried that "In times of stress she could do us infinite harm if allied to an enemy of the United States." Therefore, the passage of the treaty would only help benefit the "true and vital interest, not only of the American people, but also the Western Hemisphere."⁷² Dubois' distress echoed

⁷⁰ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 111-112.

⁷¹ Wilson to Stone, February 17, 1917, Letter, *WWP*, Reel 297, U.S.-Colombia Treaty, LC; Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 112.

⁷² Dubois to Wilson, February 26, 1917, Letter, *WWP*, Reel 297, LC.

that of many other people in the U.S. who began to review the negative identity their country held within Latin America, and the subsequent security situation this could cause if tensions with Germany kept growing.

The major points Wilson pushed in the Senate focused on these safety concerns over the canal. Particularly his team implied the possibility of a vengeful Colombia allying with the Central Powers and offering them a base to launch attacks on the canal. The question would arise in the Senate whether this possibility should be dealt with through an aggressive stance or one of retribution and friendship toward the Colombian government. This problem, however, further alienated clear Colombian sympathies that had already denounced any more aggression from Washington.

The Colombian Minister to the U.S., Francisco Urrutia, voiced this consensus a year earlier while responding to an editorial published in the *Washington Post* on January 24, 1916. The article stated that even a potential desire by Colombia to ally with the Central Powers in order to attack the Panama Canal was a major concern and even “a possible source of war.” With this worry in mind, the editorial declared, “It would be the duty of the United States to forbid the making of an alliance between Colombia and any European or Asiatic power having for its object an assault upon the Panama Canal...” Urrutia disavowed the ridiculous tone of this recommendation and warranted that such language interpreted Colombia not as a sovereign nation with rights similar to the U.S., but as more of a protectorate. He made clear that this type of attitude would not help solve the relationship between the two countries:

...the fear that the Panama Canal might be attacked some day from Colombian territory may be averted in due time by the United States, should a danger really exist, not by means of a policy of aggression which the Colombian people, firmly and fully conscious of its rights, would always reject, but by means of a policy of fraternity, fellowship and justice which will unite the two countries in common ideals, common interests, and common sentiments. Such a policy calls for

the restoration – by means of the reparation of past grievances – of the ancient and traditional goodwill and friendship between the United States and Colombia.⁷³

Urrutia's responses to the *Washington Post* nevertheless went unpublished by the paper, but were present in the hands of Senator Stone and other treaty supporters in the Foreign Relations Committee. Wilson would proceed with a mindset clearly influenced by Urrutia upon pushing the treaty in early 1917, marking his determination to make amends with the Colombian people.

The debate over the treaty with Colombia publicized the many looming concerns over hemispheric security in the face of the Central Powers. Additionally, apprehensions over Colombia would be further dramatized after the massive reaction caused by the Zimmerman telegram in late February 1917. Coming to many in the U.S. as a shocking apparition of a massive secret German ploy to directly harm the U.S., it was in reality a representation of a long running unofficial relationship between Germany and Mexico's Carranza government, that had already opposed agreeing to such a radical idea.⁷⁴ No matter the true inclination behind the telegram, its publication lit a fire underneath the American public and their leaders, and President Wilson used this opportunity to emphasize his predisposition that Germany was out of control and war would likely be inevitable.⁷⁵ His campaign now continued with extra determination behind the new fears produced by the Zimmerman Telegram despite facing continued hostility.

Wilson hoped that this new atmosphere would sway enough of the opposition to help his cause. Before this could be doubted, he soon received a major piece of support as the former Secretary of State, Senator Philander Knox suddenly switched to the pro-treaty side in early

⁷³ Francisco Urrutia, "Letters to the Washington Post," February 10, 1916, SEN 64B B1, Foreign Relations, Box 12, Letters to Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, RG 46, NA.

⁷⁴ Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War*, 112-115.

⁷⁵ Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 76-77.

March, marking the first Republican member of the Foreign Relations Committee to do so.⁷⁶ While this garnered hope for treaty supporters, Lodge and company stood unhindered. The opposition leader still claimed the treaty was blackmail, despite stating that he did not doubt “German intrigue and German influence have been active in Colombia,” and that he was well aware of the concerns Colombian ports harvested against the canal. He staunchly renounced the current treaty and believed that “we should have no more security against Colombia’s helping our enemies after giving her \$25,000,000 than after refusing to do so.” Lodge maintained that he would allow no treaty to ever be “extorted from the United States by threats of war or alliance with Germany.”⁷⁷ Lodge’s remarks swept away what momentum Knox’s reversal had offered, but his arguments against the treaty as extortion did not disregard the threat of Colombian animosity toward the U.S., rather Lodge soon showed that his concerns over Colombia were significant enough to warrant consideration of the treaty after all.

On the surface Lodge exhibited that his position was entrenched, but Wilson’s determination led to a proposed compromise which brought Democrats and Republicans together to discuss amendments for the treaty in order to come to an agreement.⁷⁸ Lodge’s inclusion in these discussions sheds light on the powerful concerns over the war. His willingness to work on a quick compromise showed that the pressing needs to ensure U.S. security had indeed budged his position enough to offer a concerted effort to establish better relations with Colombia and possibly all of Latin America.

⁷⁶ "Republican Leaders Still Dislike Colombian Treaty No Filibuster Likely but 30 Senators Are Pledged to Vote Against Measure," *Pueblo Chieftain*, March 14, 1917, infoweb.newsbank.com (accessed March 15, 2018); Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 113-114.

⁷⁷ "Asserts Canal Rights," *Washington Post*, March 14, 1917, News Article, SEN 64B, B1 Box 12, RG 46, NA.

⁷⁸ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 115.

The amendments pressed by Republicans in the discussions exposed their concern over the nation's safety. Clauses specifically included limiting Colombia's preferential treatment concerning use of the Panama Canal in case of war between Colombia and the U.S. or Panama. As well in the case of a U.S. war with a nation other than Colombia, the amendments guaranteed preferences of the article would not be used by Colombia to help an enemy of the U.S.⁷⁹ This amendment displayed obvious anxiety around Colombia supporting German actions as it ensured that if this alliance were to happen despite a settlement the U.S. would have legal rights to revoke Colombia's usage in accordance to the treaty.

Further evidence of this concern was shown in a proposed article which offered the U.S. control over the Colombian Caribbean Islands of San Luis de Providencia and San Andres. Both islands lay less than 300 miles off the coast of Panama and had long been desired by officials in Washington to use as coaling and security stations for approaching ships into the canal.⁸⁰ With control over these islands, Washington also could quell fears fueled by the rumors that German forces were using these islands for telegraph stations. The changes promoted by the Republican opposition clearly explains that they held concern over anti-American sentiments that had continued in Colombia since 1903.⁸¹ Their attempts to use the treaty as a forced guarantee of Colombian friendship and as a method to gain control over further strategic Colombian territory for the canal's safety directly resulted from these rising anxieties.

The two groups ultimately agreed on the compromise. Pro-treaty members were excited to finally have support to settle the Panama dispute and anti-treaty members now had the safeguards they wanted in case of a Colombian double-crossing. However, it was soon made

⁷⁹ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 115-116.

⁸⁰ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 116-117.

⁸¹ Telegraph to the *Tribune*, "Bases Sough near Panama," *New York Tribune*, Feb 14, 1916.

clear by U.S. diplomats with connections to Colombia that the amendment changes would be viewed unfavorably in Bogota and thus the compromised treaty was scrapped.⁸² Nonetheless, despite the ultimate failure of this compromise, the event marked an essential point which displayed a common consensus in Washington for the need to settle the Colombian dispute owing to security worries produced by the war raging in Europe.

Rumors Spread Fear as the War Reaches the U.S.

The anti-treaty contingent made their concerns of Colombia helping Germany clearly known as opposition-lead amendments constantly included insurances against Bogota supporting any future enemies of the U.S. Yet, it deserves noting that the argument promoted by Lodge concerning Colombia's fledgling neutrality was based on unfounded and overexaggerated information. Concha's administration consistently displayed favorability to the U.S., or specifically against German sentiments, and any coldness expressed to Washington was generally a tactic to maintain pressure on the treaty's ratification. However, American media reports ignored these displays and consistently overblew any and every rumor of a Colombian-German alliance.

An early 1916 article in the *New York Tribune* reported that Germany was in talks with Colombia and had agents in the country working on a possible inter-oceanic canal project. It also stated that German agents had been seen constructing a powerful new wireless station on the San Andres island.⁸³ This article powered alarms over Germans creating a competing canal and intensified pressure on concerns over Colombia's Caribbean islands. In early February 1917, the *Boston Evening Globe* reported that Germans had purchased land on Colombia's northern coast

⁸² Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 117.

⁸³ Telegraph to the *Tribune*, "Bases Sough near Panama," *New York Tribune*, Feb 14, 1916.

and hastily began constructing piers and a coaling station. The paper forewarned this could “in the twinkling of an eye be transformed into a naval station within a few hours’ steaming distance from the canal.”⁸⁴ While the paper reported that this problem could be eliminated with a passage of the treaty, its information only helped fuel opposition arguments. Weeks later the *New York Tribune* reported that President Wilson himself had been informed that if the senate did not quickly pass the treaty that Colombia would “harbor German propagandists, who could launch filibustering expeditions against the Panama Canal.”⁸⁵ Colombia’s strategic position adjacent to Panama, and therefore to the canal, was used repeatedly by these media rumors to inflame paranoia among Washington and their citizens.

During this same time and in the immediate focus of Wilson’s treaty push, the *New York American*, run by the media mogul William Randolph Hearst, ran headlines of a Colombian-German alliance that held even more significance for Germany’s true war plans than did its attempts with Mexico. The report claimed that Germany would be able to use Colombian ports as a base on which to attack the Panama Canal. This, the paper concluded, was a result of the mounting post-1903 anti-American view within the country.⁸⁶ In March, the *Tribune* reported that Colombia’s hatred of the U.S. was leading it to look for support from not only dangerous forces in Europe but also in the East, specifically mentioning Japan.⁸⁷ These articles preached misinformation that heightened the paranoia over Colombia’s sentiments, and did so by combining topics that caused the most reaction during the time: Mexico, Japan, and Germany.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ *Boston Evening Globe*, February 2, 1917, News Article, SEN 64B, B1 Box 12, RG 46, NA.

⁸⁵ "Wilson to Urge Colombia Treaty," *New York Tribune*, Feb 20, 1917, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575678825?accountid=14524> (accessed March 15, 2018).

⁸⁶ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 66-67.

⁸⁷ "Colombia Considered Invoking the Aid of Europe Or Japan Against United States," *New York Tribune*, Mar 15, 1917, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575682191?accountid=14524> (accessed March 14, 2018).

⁸⁸ Despite being on the Allied side, Japanese sentiments during the war also bred fear for Americans due to rising tensions over contested territories in China and the western Pacific. Therefore, by rumoring that the Colombian

The Colombian government refused to let these rumors go unchecked, as they knew such reports negatively affected the treaty's chances in the U.S. The Concha administration's steady attention on news reports to maintain strict abidance to neutrality was not just upheld within their borders. They were determined to debunk any and all sources of possible aggravation against their neutral standing and therefore the reports published by American newspapers received no less care than did reports from their own media outlets. The article published in the *New York American* detailing a Colombian-German partnership became an example of this effort. The Colombian Minister to Washington, Julio Betancourt, immediately protested the article claiming that any rumored alliances with Germany or any other nation at war were "absolutely false." He then cited the continual Colombian pushes for an agreement on the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty as evidence that Colombia only wanted closer relations with the U.S. and would not risk treaty hopes by reversing their neutrality.⁸⁹ Days later, Foreign Minister Suarez went so far as to discuss the issue with officials at home in Colombia. He sent a telegram to governors of all the departments stating that the reports in the *American* were false and that the matter had been completely cleared up with Washington on any concern over Colombia's neutrality.⁹⁰ Suarez did not want to risk these rumors causing conflict or confusion at home.

Thanks to the Colombian government's quick denials of these reports, many rumors would be subdued. Furthermore, a report quoting the ex-German Ambassador to the U.S., Count von Bernstorff, aided Bogota's repudiations when he denied any interactions, stating that "All American assertions about such intrigues in... Colombia are fairy tales."⁹¹ However, this would

government may be looking to Japanese influences, it created worry over increasing Japanese expansion not just in Asia but in the Americas as well. See, Hannigan, *The Great War and American Foreign Policy*, 38, 78-81.

⁸⁹ "Denies Colombia is Ally of Germany," *New York Times*, Mar 07, 1917, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/99934592?accountid=14524> (accessed March 20, 2018).

⁹⁰ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 67-68.

⁹¹ "Bernstorff Defends Plot with Mexico," *New York Tribune*, Mar 14, 1917, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575685325?accountid=14524> (accessed March 20, 2018).

be ignored by Wilson's opposition on the treaty and despite the Colombian government's constant work to reverse the momentum of these rumors, the misinformed news reports still succeeded in fueling anti-treaty arguments.

Senator Lodge took advantage of the added paranoia disregarding the lack of validation for the reports. In March he was quoted as saying that "...even if he favored it [the treaty] he would not support it because he was not willing to have the country blackmailed." Repeating the blackmail argument, Lodge attempted to remind the public that it was Colombia who was clearly in the wrong by threatening to support Germany. He argued that he would rather spend hundreds of millions to protect the Panama Canal with nets and mines against German U-boats and then bolster the navy to look in upon Colombian shores "in a friendly spirit." Lodge stated he would offer Wilson "every power he needs... to help us win the war as soon as possible," but would never vote to betray his country's honor by submitting to "naked coercion from Colombia."⁹² By reiterating the concept of a greedy Colombia trying to levy blackmail from the U.S., Lodge cleverly tapped into the longstanding Roosevelt-ian view of 1903 when Washington tried to come to agreements over canal rights with Bogota. Roosevelt regarded the Colombian government's hesitations as a method to extract more money from the reasonable U.S. offers, and now Lodge was using more rumors to do the same.

Unfortunately for Wilson, his tactic in the March treaty push of highlighting the threat of Colombia supporting Germany backfired. It was not viewed by the treaty opposition as a legitimate reason to vote for ratification, but rather as a hardline reason to distrust Colombia and oppose any settlement. In reality, the rumors that fueled the opposition's arguments were not only unverified sensations but officially denounced on various occasions by the Colombian

⁹² "Asserts Canal Rights," *Washington Post*, March 14, 1917, News Article, SEN 64B, B1 Box 12, RG 46, NA.

national government. The Concha administration and Foreign Minister Suarez worked night and day to deny such outlandish reports as they viewed them as detrimental to the treaty's popularity in Washington, and were faithfully invested in remaining neutral. Nevertheless, Bogota's unwillingness to accept the Republican amendments to the treaty, the reinvigoration of opposition arguments caused by the spreading of Colombian-German paranoia, and the U.S. entrance into the war on April 6, 1917 would once again halt the treaty's discussion in its tracks.⁹³

Colombia's experience after the U.S. declaration of war would be defined by economic decline, and a balancing act of active neutrality in the face of international pressure. The day after the U.S. declaration of war, *El Tiempo* published a reassuring telegram from the Colombian legation in Washington. The telegram focused on the false news reports of Colombia's pro-German sentiments, and stated that the American government and peoples had easily ignored such ridiculous rumors and in fact viewed Colombia's neutrality as unflinching.⁹⁴ While the legation attempted to calm fears of further American overreaction against these pro-German rumors, as the days passed Colombia's staunch position of neutrality would become the next highlight of American interest. To the frustration of Washington, Colombia's government, along with those of Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Venezuela, Paraguay and Salvador, would maintain neutrality for the remainder of the war.⁹⁵ However, Colombia's neutral standing did not mean they were unaffected by the war, nor did it mean they were uninterested in wartime concerns.

⁹³ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 117.

⁹⁴ "La Legacion de Colombia en Washington y la prensa Calumniadora," *El Tiempo*, April 7, 1917, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=kI8bAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=7FEEAAAAIIBAJ&pg=2886%2C2201558> (accessed December 4, 2017).

⁹⁵ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 65.

El Tiempo's articles in the days that followed Washington's announcement of war detailed a diplomatic event that many countries would experience during World War I: active neutrality. This type of neutrality called for proactive measures to abide by and adhere to the laws of neutrals during a conflict that saw agents across the globe enacting belligerent influence wherever they could gain an upper hand. On April 10 *El Tiempo* analyzed the viewpoints of another paper, *El Liberal*, to discuss disagreements over Colombia's course now that the war had spread to their hemisphere. Specifically acknowledging popular rumors of potential outside threats, *El Liberal* rationalized that there should neither be concern over U.S. intervention in their country for wartime security purposes or of German submarine presence off their coasts. Overall, *El Liberal* stated there was nothing for Colombia to act upon at the current point as there was nothing it *could* really do. Owing to this last statement, the editors of *El Tiempo* critically disagreed, saying it would be worse to die while doing nothing, and that in fact Colombia could do much. The editors explained that the country should be ready for anything and everything as their coast is "today a front" of the belligerent parties.⁹⁶ This was not a proposal to announce changes in neutrality, but instead to hold onto it as an offensive action.

Days later *El Tiempo* ran another article which expressed its belief that now more than ever, Colombia should maintain neutrality, even despite their pro-allied sentiments. The article enlightened that unlike Brazil and the U.S., Germany had not attacked nor caused losses to Colombia up to that moment. A stance on neutrality was not just a rational diplomatic move, but would exhibit a show of independence against Yankee power by refusing to break relations with a friendly Germany only because the U.S. had done so.⁹⁷ These articles largely detailed how the

⁹⁶ "Hay algo que hacer?," *El Tiempo*, April 10, 1917, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=k48bAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=7FEEAAAIAIBAJ&pg=4562%2C2271384> (accessed December 4, 2017). Emphasis added to statement my own.

⁹⁷ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 68-69.

government would act during the war. By establishing a strategy of proactiveness against threats to their neutral standing, and by using their position to make a political point, Bogota exhibited an active form of neutrality.

Bogota's strategy displayed brilliant levels of tact in maintaining their position during the war without experiencing extra unwanted physical or diplomatic conflict. German influences operating in Colombia previously described in this chapter such as illegal wireless communication operations, propaganda campaigns, and platinum smuggling all wreaked havoc on Bogota's attempts to steady their specific diplomatic course. Percy Martin, an American Professor who studied the war's impacts in Latin America at the time, explained that Colombia's experience during the war was abnormally difficult. He argued, "To a greater extent than any other of the Hispanic American Republics she was the object of a systematic and often malevolent campaign to distort her neutrality into an attitude distinctly favorable to Germany."⁹⁸ Bogota's handling of every situation required exceptional precision to uphold its neutrality while preserving pressure on the U.S. to ratify the treaty. While Colombia may have indeed had subversive German interests working within her territory, the actions of the government worked to uphold their commitment to neutrality during the repeated cases of diplomatic scrutiny and erroneous rumors.

The Concha administration and its successor, Marco Fidel Suarez, did not adhere to this strategy of active neutrality on the sole premise of a political faith in the importance of The Hague rules of neutrality. While they surely did not want to involve themselves in World War I, the emphasis placed on ensuring their nation's obedience to these rules was also a significant part of their mission to promote the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty's ratification in the U.S. Concha

⁹⁸ Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 435.

and Suarez knew that the economic situation was dire with the loss of their European markets, and the U.S. was the last major market accessible. Owing to these concerns, starting with Triana's pitch to commercial investors during the 1915 Pan American Financial Conference, Colombia began a full-blown economic propaganda campaign centered on natural resources and commercial opportunities.⁹⁹ In 1918 a Colombian "Blue Book" was published which touted Colombia's vast resources and included details of specific raw material and economic opportunities in each department. This book was explicitly designed to attract foreign investors and included both Spanish and English translations of the material to make it more accessible to American markets.¹⁰⁰ These tactics caught the attention of investors and Colombian-U.S. economic ties grew dramatically over the course of the war.

Due to the increasing limitations for Colombian exporters, the U.S. quickly became the dominant force in their economy during the war. By 1917 the U.S. was accepting nearly 80% of Colombia's total exports, while England and France only fielded about 3%.¹⁰¹ Colombia's economy was surviving thanks to the U.S. serving as a friendly outlet. Despite the outbursts early in the war that showed continuing animosity against the U.S., the impending reliance on U.S. trade convinced Concha and Suarez to maintain a favorable commercial relationship while at the same time preserving diplomatic pressure on the Senate for the treaty's ratification. Therefore, the Colombian government's determination to maintain a textbook neutrality periodically fell short in instances where sentiments wavered clearly in favor of the United States.

Officials in Bogota commonly adhered to Allied causes and U.S. demands when it came to war time concerns. In late 1914 this was demonstrated when they ordered the

⁹⁹ Rippy, *The Capitalists and Colombia*, 113-114.

¹⁰⁰ See Callejas, *Libro Azul de Colombia/ Blue Book of Colombia*.

¹⁰¹ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 122. At this point German influence was at rock bottom, dropping to nil from nearly 10% of the share of trade before the war started.

dismantling of the German wireless station in Cartagena upon U.S. request, while coincidentally leaving the American station in Santa Marta untouched throughout the war's entirety. Bogota as well looked directly to Washington for advice on how to handle neutrality laws about armed commercial ships. One example of this occurred over whether the Colombian government could purchase an interned German merchant vessel stationed at the Gulf of Uraba. When Suarez received recommendation from Washington that it could breach laws of neutrality, Bogota subsequently removed themselves from the purchase.¹⁰² While these instances may sound trivial, they absolutely demonstrated a favoritism to Washington's opinions on the official level, but this favoritism would not stop there. Other events which pitted Bogota against the Colombian populace as well exhibited partiality to U.S. concerns.

In late 1915-early 1916 when Colombia experienced an outbreak of yellow fever it accepted a group of U.S. health officials to analyze the problems. The group became fearful of the outbreak being spread to their own nation byways of UFCO banana boats exporting products to American shores. The subsequent U.S. installation of health representatives in the Port of Santa Marta to ensure the safety of each shipment caused many Colombians to view the situation as a breach of their country's sovereignty. Instead of transitioning the health monitoring into native hands, Bogota ignored citizen concerns and worked around accusations by declaring the U.S. agents as Colombian employees.¹⁰³ Time in again the Colombian government consistently displayed a reliance on and adherence to U.S. leadership. It should also be noted that the administrations in place in Bogota were fortunately-suited for this tense time in world affairs and their relations with the U.S.

¹⁰² Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 44-45.

¹⁰³ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 45.

Concha's Foreign Minister Suarez has been long understood in history as one of the most ardent government supporters of the U.S. during his time. Suarez viewed the U.S. as the *Estrella Polar*, and saw close ties with Washington not only as inevitable but beneficial to Colombia's future. Therefore, Suarez's rise to the presidency in mid-1918 further amplified the government's adherence to U.S. policies and requests during the last months of the war. These policies defined an interesting political course for Colombia compared to many other countries in Latin America at the time who had also experienced hostile U.S. involvement into their affairs like Mexico.¹⁰⁴ Concha and Suarez put themselves in a peculiar and difficult position; while their government intended to stay neutral and maintain a level of diplomatic pressure on the U.S. Senate to help promote the need to ratify the treaty, they also did not want to completely aggravate Washington, nor did they entirely hide their inclination toward the allied side of the war.¹⁰⁵

The Colombian government was only able to keep its neutrality throughout the war's entirety through a vigorous effort. Owing to this political tact exhibited by the officials in Bogota, the treaty once again would find itself in a favorable position in the midst of the war. The most significant chance for ratification came in early 1918. As the war opened opportunity for U.S. economic expansion into Latin America, New York business interests lobbied for approval of the treaty to support a more favorable atmosphere for U.S. commercial interests in not just Colombia, but in the whole region.¹⁰⁶ However, once again a promising chance for the

¹⁰⁴ Rodrigo Pardo and Juan G. Tokatlian, *Politica Exterior Colombiana: De la subordinacion a la autonomia?* (Bogota: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1988), 96-98.

¹⁰⁵ Upon Germany's declaration to continue unrestricted submarine warfare in the spring of 1917 Colombian officials reacted with a resolution denouncing the German plan in October of that year. What is even more illuminating about the resolution passed in the Senate in Bogota was that its principles were even supported by the Archbishop of Bogota, whose power over many questionably pro-German clerical units was overwhelming. Colombia's actions toward the end of the war began to teeter on the edge of clear pro-allied sentiment. On July 13, the Colombian Congress passed a resolution sending greetings to France in the approach of Bastille Day. The resolution not only sent warm greetings but celebrated their long-standing intellectual and philosophical connections. See, Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 13, 428.

¹⁰⁶ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 136-137.

treaty's ratification in the U.S. Senate was thwarted due to international events. In late 1917, Russia's internal turmoil finally erupted into the famed Bolshevik Revolution. Owing to the civil conflict taking place, the disorganized Russians would sue for peace in the face of the driving German forces in March 1918.¹⁰⁷ With the Russians out of the fight, and their platinum resources drastically in decline, the world turned to the only other major platinum producing nation, Colombia.

Colombia may have been the second-largest platinum producer during the time, but their industry was still vastly unprepared to take center stage. Washington pressured Bogota for this matter and requested that its mining sectors focus more on platinum than the domestic money supply-backer of gold. U.S. stress over the matter caused officials to threaten an ultimatum: if Colombia did not fulfill American platinum needs, they would decrease imports of Colombian goods.¹⁰⁸ Once again the American news rumors created adverse effects when reports surfaced on a Colombian ploy to monopolize platinum sources in order to extract more revenue from the U.S.¹⁰⁹ This caused Washington to react by cutting imports from Colombia, further depleting an economy that had already suffered greatly from general war decreases and the drop in agricultural exports as UFCO's fleet was taken away from commercial work to be transitioned into U.S. naval forces.¹¹⁰ More importantly this became yet another piece of kindling for the waning anti-treaty groups and held up the treaty for the remainder of the war.

Luckily the war's end came earlier than expected as the platinum debacle quickly increased tensions between Washington and Bogota. Washington felt that Colombia was indeed

¹⁰⁷ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 138.

¹⁰⁸ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 72.

¹⁰⁹ Special Dispatch to *The Tribune*. "Colombia to Create Platinum Monopoly." *New York Tribune*, June 05, 1918, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575924532?accountid=14524> (accessed March 22, 2018).

¹¹⁰ Bucheli, *Bananas and Business*, 31.

holding up its platinum supply lines and this sparked many officials to call for intervention if matters got worse. In reality, Concha and Suarez's administrations attempted what they could to increase production with their lackluster infrastructure and were providing the U.S. with over 52% of their total platinum imports by the wars end.¹¹¹ Washington officials would take this situation as a dire lesson to be more prepared in the future.

The platinum dispute proved a contradictory point when it came to the passage of the treaty. While Washington's anxiety and overreaction caused the treaty to be stalled during the conundrum, it also proved that if the U.S. had better relations with Colombia they could have better influenced the platinum output. U.S. business interests had urgently brought to attention that if they could receive more favorable trading positions with Colombia by ways of support from Washington, they could heavily increase the shipping efficiency of the product and hopefully gain exclusive rights from Bogota to exploit the platinum deposits.¹¹² Informal talks between Colombian and U.S. officials over the matter proved unproductive due to Washington's ultimatum which resulted in decreased imports of critical Colombian products in retaliation for the lack of platinum production.¹¹³ The tense situation caused U.S. policymakers to respond in a detrimental manner to their actual intended purposes of extracting more platinum, and as a side effect once again ratification of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty stalled. Nevertheless, the

¹¹¹ Theodore M Knappen, "Platinum to be Denied to Jewel Trade," *New York Tribune*, Jul 29, 1918, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/575928860?accountid=14524> (accessed March 19, 2018); Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 138-140; Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 72.

¹¹² Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 141.

¹¹³ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 143; Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 104; The ironic part of the platinum misunderstanding was that much of the output was produced by a joint U.S.-British mining company, Choco Pacifico, who in turn were the true beneficiary of the price hike of the metal. U.S. retaliations to cut imports on Colombian leather consequently hurt the country's cattlemen. Therefore, the Colombian state found nearly no benefit from their sudden position as the world's primary platinum producer but instead experienced more financial turmoil, see Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 54-55, 72.

Colombian government still responded in the best way it could, attempting to quickly increase platinum production and quell growing U.S. stress over the material.

The political skill exhibited by the Colombian government during the war could not have gone without notice in the United States. Bogota had played an excellent diplomatic game of displaying its preference to closer ties and enter into cooperation with U.S. governmental concerns, yet never surrendered on the principle of the country's patriotic mission to achieve a settlement on the U.S. offenses against Colombian sovereignty in 1903. Scenes in Washington as early as spring 1917 displayed that the Senate was willing to find a way to come to an agreement and had acknowledged a strong concern over Colombian animosity. The war had made it clear to U.S. officials and citizens that hemispheric relations needed to be repaired in order to escape similar experiences of the past years. However, Americans also faced a new reality introduced to them during the conflict, that of raw material access and the imminent threat of a domestic oil shortage.

Preeminence of Oil in Post-War Society

The oil concern in the postwar period would highlight an era of extravagant U.S. economic expansion abroad. In connection to U.S. relations with Colombia, oil policies have been long viewed as the preeminent crux of opposition that held the treaty's ratification hostage for so long.¹¹⁴ However, this overlooks the political developments that took place throughout the past five years of war. Oil policies would not serve as the primary reason, but rather as the topic of the day and the climactic finale to this development that had already convinced Washington of the needs to repair hemispheric relations for security and economic reasons, and of the trust that

¹¹⁴ This viewpoint is taken in Parks' *Colombia and the United States*, Rippey's *The Capitalists and Colombia*, Randall's *Colombia and the United States*, and as well emphasized in Lael's *Arrogant Diplomacy*.

could be placed in Colombia's loyalty. The commotion raised by anti-treaty officials in Washington against a proposed piece of oil legislation being introduced in Colombia's government chambers in 1919 was another overreaction, based on recent events, against a situation that posed little real threat. Furthermore, the qualities that produced this overreaction were created due to the effects caused by the war years: paranoia over anti-American sentiment, the reliance on economic dominance as a method to ensure peace, and a greater importance placed upon access to raw materials, specifically oil, amidst fears of an impending shortage in domestic production.

Stemming from different strategical attempts in the Roosevelt and Taft administrations, during the years of World War I America finally achieved a dominant economic position within the Western Hemisphere. As covered in the earlier sections, U.S. private business interests had expanded American influence and economic power over the second half of the nineteenth century. During this time and into Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, American successes in their crusade for manifest destiny solidified their continental control and, with the acquisition of the canal zone, commercial control of the hemisphere.¹¹⁵ With the general American consensus satisfied over the recent territorial attainments, policies then transitioned to find methods to safeguard their newfound power and ensure the democratic principles of the surrounding nations. Roosevelt's administration set out to achieve this by directing a so-called promotional state. This state saw Washington offer active assistance to U.S. businesses and entrepreneurs who sought to invest or set up operations abroad, as well as design economic policies to help reduce barriers in foreign nations against American influence. Taft's introduction brought similar policies and his

¹¹⁵ Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 41.

own program known as dollar diplomacy, which laid the faith of American strategic power in the growth of economic investments in foreign nations.¹¹⁶

The new economic-forward policies grew steadily over the first decade of the twentieth century but achieved unforeseen success during the war. As demonstrated earlier, Colombia was one of many Latin American nations who would face no other alternative but to rely on American economic interests to survive the shortcomings caused by the war. European countries found their markets crippled during the conflict and once displaced they were not able to fully retake the positions they had held in Colombia before the fighting. Not only did they need to focus first on repairing their own economies and infrastructure, but American industrial advancement and market proximity had created an advantage too heavy to overcome. Once the United States took hold of their position of economic supremacy in the hemisphere, they were determined to maintain it. However, the establishment of economic domination over Latin America did not relieve all fears in Washington over their commercial and strategic security.

The struggle for access to precious raw materials had been emphasized during the war, as exemplified in the stress caused by American platinum needs. The concern over platinum died down with the war's end, but the need and desire for oil, on the other hand, grew stronger. The first two decades of the twentieth century proved huge for oil usage as the most advanced countries viewed it as the fuel source for the future. The growing production of automobiles and aircraft had already sparked widespread interest in the new fuel and propelled conglomerates like the Standard Oil Company to worldwide notoriety. The advancements of the internal-combustion engine, specifically Rudolf Diesel's development of heavy-oil usage possibilities for the engine, made the world rethink the opportunities that lay in the resource during the war. The new diesel

¹¹⁶ Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 48, 58.

engines would be used to run the entire German submarine fleet during the war and its benefits would prove insurmountable. Diesel engines took up a fraction of the space that coal-powered steam engines did as they needed less manpower to run, and worked more efficiently. Along with the technical supremacy, ships burning oil-based fuel instead of coal-based emitted smoke at a lower level and consistency which made the visibility of an attacking ship a much shorter distance.¹¹⁷ New advancements in the fuel made it clear to any major power wielding a large motorized military force that its value was priceless.

The associated benefits to transitioning a modern military force to being powered by the new wonder fuel was too obvious to pass up, and the U.S. had already begun to convert its naval fleet to run on oil in the years immediately before the war broke out. While the navy did not serve an ultimately significant role for the U.S. in its efforts during the war apart from transportation, the importance of newly developed military technologies such as aviation warfare, tanks, and submarines further drove American desire for oil. During the course of the war the U.S. supplied nearly 80 percent of the Allied oil requirements and became heavily involved in the quest for and protection of oil interests.¹¹⁸ A 1924 book detailing the new international significance applied to oil entitled *The World Struggle for Oil* quoted a statement made by a British official tasked with acquiring oil rights for his country which echoed the sentiment of the time: “The country which dominates by means of oil, will command at the same time the commerce of the world. Armies, navies, money, even entire populations, will count as nothing against the lack of oil.” The book’s author followed this quote with the simple statement,

¹¹⁷ Pierre L’Espagnol de la Tramerye, *The World Struggle for Oil*, translated by C. Leonard Leese (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc, 1924), 13-18. It was stated that a vessel fitted with a Diesel engine could keep sail for 57 days without having to re-fuel, while a standard coal-powered steam engine could only keep a ship active for two weeks at a time.

¹¹⁸ David S. Painter, "Oil and the American Century." *The Journal of American History* 99, no. 1 (2012): 24-39. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41510299>, 24-25.

“The War proved it.”¹¹⁹ The fact that the U.S. controlled the main supply of oil during the war helped fuel the Allied armies while the Central Powers experienced detrimental effects due to their inefficient energy supply.¹²⁰ The benefits of controlling oil wealth were established due to the example set during the war.

The war years may have helped the U.S. utilize its oil wealth to mass effect in the conflict, but it also created a procurement of knowledge on raw materials important to the country that would breed deep concern over capabilities to preserve this powerful role in the future. President Wilson, upon deeming the available information on worldwide economic conditions to be highly insufficient, issued the first of many war time fact-finding circulars in 1917. These circulars requested American consuls across the globe to detail the economic conditions in their respective nations and as well to forecast America’s possible economic positions at the end of the war. Within this request Secretary of State Lansing specifically pressured support for oil interests in Colombia as he vowed to let no other country control such precious materials in close vicinity to the Panama Canal.¹²¹

Along with these circulars the State Department urged the newly formed War Trade Board (WTB), seen as the most important war emergency agency during the time, to also search for information on America’s economic positions abroad.¹²² One such report created by the WTB detailed the drastic changes in oil prices during the war. With price percentages weighted on the pre-war period of 1913-1914, the prices at the end of the war ranged from 50-67 percent higher than before the war.¹²³ Price increases definitely resulted in alarm due to this new importance

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Tramerye, *The World Struggle for Oil*, 11.

¹²⁰ Painter, “Oil and the American Century,” 25.

¹²¹ Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 67-69.

¹²² Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 69.

¹²³ “Price Tendencies: Coal and Oil,” War trade Board Report, 1918, WWP, Reel 468 “Peace Conference Documents,” Series 6, section K, LC. The increase in coal prices are even more staggering, especially regarding coke, which produced one of the more refined products. Upon the time of the U.S. declaration of war its prices had

offered to oil and its significance to the U.S. position of power in the world. However, the price increases were not the only cause for concern as new studies explained the domestic supply was in dire constraints.

As early as 1909 reports forecasted a depletion in American domestic oil resources, and in 1915 petroleum engineer Ralph Arnold estimated that the supply rested at under six billion barrels, which would be depleted by 1937. Other official studies over the following years were less critical but still predicted exhaustion of domestic oil resources by 1940.¹²⁴ No matter the report, Washington was convinced that it could not rely on its own domestic supply to power the massive increased needs for oil-based fuel products. The disheartening reports during the war and the increased focus on oil's importance for the future of America's prosperity would push officials and oilmen alike to place significant attention on finding and obtaining rights to foreign sources of this black gold.

For American oilmen, the closest sources of promising oil wealth appeared to be located in their own hemisphere, particularly in Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia. The former's internal political struggle would increase the anxiety over access to and security for American oil concessions in foreign nations. Oil fields in Mexico produced the majority of foreign based oil for the U.S., therefore the Mexican revolution bred nearly as much anxiety for oil outlook as the border skirmishes had been causing in the American Southwest. The revolutionary Mexican government's newly adopted constitution in 1917 would bring frightening news, as Article 27 of the document gave the Mexican government direct ownership of the country's natural resources

spiked to over 400% higher than before the war, followed by anthracite coal around 270% and bituminous at 120% which rose at a much slower but consistent rate. These massive increases may have been another reason Washington was more convinced on promoting an oil-based military.

¹²⁴ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 147-148.

including subsoil wealth.¹²⁵ This article created a wave of outrage by officials and oil-interests alike as this practically guaranteed the confiscation of American oil properties. Furthermore, this fashioned more nervousness amongst the American republic, which was already on edge over being dragged into the European War. Now, a questionably anti-American government directly neighboring their country and rumored to have ties to German interests could control vital oil sources.¹²⁶ The events in Mexico of 1917 would adversely affect how Washington perceived and handled the situation in Colombia two years later.

For years now, Colombia had promoted its oil wealth and the country's Blue Book predicted its resources to compete with that of Mexico.¹²⁷ American oil interests in Colombia were not new, despite how Washington officials framed the situation in 1919 when a new legislation tightening control over subsoil wealth was introduced into the government chambers in Bogota. In 1915, Roberto de Mares enlisted support of three Americans, who would eventually form Tropical Oil Company, for help in exploiting his concessions in Barrancabermeja and a year later his concessions officially passed into the hands of that American company.¹²⁸ Standard Oil also took part in a short stint in Colombia in 1914, and many "Colombian" Oil companies were organized and incorporated in the U.S. This was true for the Carib Syndicate (New York) who owned 1,250 square miles in North Santander and the

¹²⁵ H. N. Branch, and L. S. Rowe, "The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared with The Constitution of 1857," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 71 (1917): I-116, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1013370>, 15-25; Mark Hendrickson, "'The Sesame that Opens the Door of Trade: John Hays Hammond and Foreign Direct Investment in Mining, 1880-1920,'" *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 16, no. 3 (2017): 325-46. doi:10.1017/S1537781417000093, 336-337.

¹²⁶ Wilson and Carranza never quite trusted each other and American oil interests were largely situated in the Tampico Region where the largest remaining rebel forces held strong against Carranza's government. The oil firms here were said to have aided or at least give diplomatic support to the rebel forces and tensions would continue even after WWI ended. See Bisher, *The Intelligence War in Latin America*, 172-176, 277-283.

¹²⁷ Callejas, *Libro Azul de Colombia*, 34.

¹²⁸ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 53-54.

Colombian Petroleum Company (Delaware) which was organized to control, through stock ownership in another Colombian company, 1.5 million acres in Santander.¹²⁹

American oil entrepreneurs had interest in Colombia since before the outbreak of the war, but most success was not found until after the war's end in late 1918. This can be attributed to the greater amounts of effort placed on finding and investing in foreign oil wealth that came as a result of war time realizations of raw material needs. Due to the increased interests in their oil resources, Colombia had been slowly adapting changes to national laws concerning the material. As early as 1873 the government passed a law that related subsoil holdings as property of the nation, however, this did not explicitly mention oil or petroleum. In 1903 a new law which specifically touched on oil concessions was passed. The law declared their ownership to the state and required any contracts to receive consent and validity from the national Congress. Then the November 15, 1913 passing of Law 75 clarified that except for petroleum deposits in public lands and under property required after 1873, Colombian oil deposits had passed into private hands.¹³⁰ Therefore, as the boom in oil importance made its mark on American policymakers, speculations on possible deposits in Colombia began to foster massive interest.

This new wave of U.S. interest into Colombia's oil reserves was not received positively by all. Public opinion of American influence was still critical and many Colombians did not want to see more U.S. exploitation and profits off of their country's natural resources.¹³¹ With this in

¹²⁹ Rippy, *The Capitalists and Colombia*, 130-136. These as well as many other examples can be found in a specific list in the reference notes for the chapter on pgs 249-253 note #4. As a Delaware native I must tout the one reference to the first state and the interesting notion that many of the oil companies listed in Rippy's work are also organized or incorporated in Delaware. This is due to very friendly business and corporation laws in the state, such as no collection of corporate taxes from corporations that do not carry out business within the state itself. This is why still today more than half of all fortune 500 companies are incorporated in Delaware! See Lewis Black Jr., *Why Corporations Chose Delaware* (Delaware Department of State, 2007), https://corp.delaware.gov/whycorporations_web.pdf.

¹³⁰ Rippy, *The Capitalists and Colombia*, 127-130.

¹³¹ Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 115-116.

mind, a proposal was introduced to tighten control over the country's subsoil wealth and possibly declare government ownership of all hydrocarbons under the soil. Official reactions in Washington interpreted the mere proposal as a foreshadowing of events to come that would mimic the experience with Mexico.¹³² The overreactions that followed in the U.S. were a byproduct of the fears caused by growing dependence on oil for its primary fuel source, a dwindling domestic supply, and anxiety that opinions in Colombia were similar to those in Mexico. In Colombia's case, however, the proposal actually met heavy opposition in the government and Bogota officials were quick to reassure U.S. interests that their properties would be protected.¹³³

Some historians recognize that the 1919 law was merely a method to validate the policies that had technically been in place since 1873.¹³⁴ Yet the focus placed on the hysterical reactions pushed by American senators have since persuaded many that this event convinced anti-treaty officials like Senator Lodge to reverse their mindset. Lodge and other Republicans wanted to push the treaty but with an amendment guaranteeing the maintenance of American oil concessions. Suarez's administration refused to accept such ideas but continuously described their willingness to accomplish this with a separate protocol. Furthermore, the decree had already been negatively received in the Colombian Congress and it was deemed unconstitutional in November, as the Supreme Court ruled that the government did not have the authority to limit rights of private owners to develop their lands and mines.¹³⁵ There was soon in the works another piece of legislation that actually offered clear protections over American interests which passed

¹³² Rippy, *The Capitalists in Colombia*, 124; Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 449-450.

¹³³ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 450; Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 98-99.

¹³⁴ See Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 115; it is also alluded to in Rippy, *The Capitalists in Colombia*, 124; and Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 151.

¹³⁵ Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 154.

in December of 1919.¹³⁶ After the passage of this final decree, American oil interests and coinciding officials in Washington were finally convinced of the security of their Colombian holdings. Lodge's reversal helped foster enough approval in the Senate to promise a favorable view of the treaty.¹³⁷

The April 1914 negotiations that resulted in the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty may have expected a fight to pass the settlement, especially with Roosevelt and his greatest supporters still very relevant in the political scene. However, they did not foresee drastic changes in the political atmosphere of the world. For both the United States and Colombia, the years of 1914-1918 caused massive shifts in their governmental outlooks. For people like Marco Fidel Suarez, his presuppositions of America being the *Estrella Polar* that Colombia would inevitably lean on became an unavoidable reality. By the end of World War I, Colombia sold nearly 73 percent of its products to and imported about two-thirds of their products from the U.S.¹³⁸ These numbers would only grow as American investment in the country skyrocketed after the treaty's final ratification.

German actions in Latin America bred fear and paranoia amongst the American citizenry and government alike. Colombia's position next to the newly opened and strategically important Panama Canal, along with the ongoing feud with the U.S. over reparations stemming from the 1903 secession of Panama, made Colombia's position a focal point for concerned politicians. While patriotically stubborn anti-treaty officials in Washington helped delay the treaty's ratification, their entrenched policies were forced to change due to developments on the international stage.

¹³⁶ Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 449-451.

¹³⁷ For an overview of the Senate discussion see Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 451-457.

¹³⁸ Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*, 80.

In Washington it became clear that the government needed to make changes to avoid being placed in another tense situation over their own hemispheric security. Coincidentally the realization sunk in that they could no longer rely on their own domestic resources if they wanted to continue to expand their international power. In 1921 a report written by famous mining engineer John Hays Hammond and Cornell economist Jeremiah Whipple Jenks laid out the major threats facing the American nation after the war. One such threat, they explained, was that there was no possibility the U.S. could remain self-sufficient when it came to scarce and important raw materials. They further urged that changes must be made to adopt natural resource policies in order to provide an extent of national security and preparedness in case of another situation similar to that experienced during World War I.¹³⁹ The lessons learned from the war and the events with Mexico clearly emphasized this need. The chaotic situations that had to be managed when it came to securing platinum resources from Colombia first exhibited the new weight placed on having access to raw materials outside of the domestic supply. The Mexican policies over oil wealth, along with reports of a dwindling American supply, further emphasized to Washington the need to find and hold such resources in other nations such as Colombia.

Luckily for the United States, Colombia's government was faced with a comparable level of problems. The loss of European markets would have easily crippled the Colombian economy had the United States not been able and willing to step into the large role that they did. The national government under Concha and Suarez quickly realized this and did everything they could to win the favor of American interests. However, the treaty's tabling in the American Senate still weighed heavily on Colombia's patriotic pride. While this latter fact may have directed many to play into German hands, the government steered clear of acting in such a bold,

¹³⁹ Hendrickson, "The Sesame that Opens the Door of Trade," 325-326.

and ultimately detrimental manner. By skillfully working with the U.S. economically, while upholding their official position of neutrality in order to maintain diplomatic pressure on the American Senate, they were met with both punishment and reward. The former occurred by ways of rumors and misinformation spreading the idea that Bogota was pro-German and caused the government to spend much time and effort on handling this without openly offering to support the Allies. Yet, in the end of the war their ability to preserve this strict neutrality and bend more toward U.S. requests than any others was met with reward by convincing members in the U.S. Senate that they were an adamant but loyal people.

Conclusion

The history of affairs between Colombia and the United States stands as an outlier among Washington's relationships with other Latin American nations. Throughout the nineteenth century, the governments of the two nations experienced a strong relationship welded together between an equal desire to unlock the doors to the seas and benefit from holding the keys to the universe. When Washington broke down those doors to steal the keys it was likely that, without the common thread remaining between the two nations, their relationship would be permanently extinguished. However, as analysis of the 19-year period following this robbery explains, common assumptions of their relationship would not come to represent the reality.

After Washington's involvement in the 1903 Panamanian Revolution, Colombians vouched revenge along the lines of war, violence and disavowal of U.S. interests. President Roosevelt and most of the American populace easily ignored such cries. However, owing to the longstanding relationship the U.S. experienced with Colombia, many others in the U.S. understood the ramifications this involvement would bring within all of Latin America. The period following the secession displayed these ramifications on various levels, whether in Bogota's refusals to repair relations, or by the Colombian people's outward actions of hostility toward Americans and their businesses. The lugubrious trend of the relationship soon offered promise in 1913-1914 when Bogota interpreted the transition away from the old Roosevelt-Taft regime in the U.S. as a change in societal mindset over their past aggressive activities. Yet, the entrenched opposition in Washington soon explained that little had truly

changed. At this point in the narrative it would have once again been easy to assume an ill-fated end was forthcoming.

Had Europe not broken out into war in 1914 and dragged the globe into the affair, it would be unclear whether the treaty could have garnered the necessary support. The United States government could have been happy with its seemingly secure and stable position in the hemisphere. Did other situations arise that could have resulted in the early realization of future domestic resource depletion in the U.S.? If so, at that point concerns over access to Colombia's oil resources still may have brought the treaty into favor. However, increasing frustration among the Colombian government and its people might have forced them to prefer European markets and influences, which before the war had made up nearly two thirds of total imports and 40% of its exports.³²³ With this greater reliance on European ties, would Colombia have been more disposed to work with British and other European firms vying to obtain oil concessions? Or possibly the growing American commercial industry was destined to dominate the Western Hemisphere's economic relations. But even in this scenario, the U.S. likely would have found much greater adversity in doing so, at least in Colombia.

Instead of facing these innumerable questions, the world changed at an extraordinary pace during those four years. Washington experienced the detrimental force of anti-Americanism in Latin America and suffered from high levels of paranoia and fear in doing so. As the war called for rapid technological advancements to maintain the upper hand in an ever-industrializing world, natural resources not commonly sought after became exhausted and emphasized due to their peculiar, and sometimes obvious, benefits for a modern military.

³²³ Rausch, *Colombia and World War I*, 111.

With the obstruction of European markets Colombia, and much of Latin America, was forced to rely on the U.S. for economic support. As the U.S. became more powerful and influential within the Western Hemisphere, countries like Colombia aimed to please the behemoth's requests in order to serve their own domestic needs. The overall sum of these monumental developments within an abrupt timeframe ultimately tied Colombia and the U.S. back together. While the treaty was not always the major focus between Washington and Bogota, the atmosphere created by World War I directly aided the transition in mindsets needed by both governments to effectively view the settlement as an essential tool to foster both country's future needs.

As the newly passed Colombian oil legislation filtered its way through the hands of Washington officials during mid-1920, most deemed that not only was the legislation promising for American interests, but that the Colombian government had acted in good faith. Despite the approval of the full Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the treaty still lay waiting ratification as Congress adjourned in December. Upon Republican President Warren G. Harding's inauguration in Spring 1921, Senator Lodge was now ironically in the leader seat to push the treaty. The former opposition leader convinced his followers that the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty was essential for friendlier diplomatic and economic relations in all of Latin America.³²⁴ On April 12, 1921 the U.S. Senate voted to pass the treaty 69-19. It now went back to Bogota for final ratification. The Colombian Congress, understandably, took its time in reviewing the document but inevitably okayed the finished product. The two

³²⁴ One of Lodge's close allies, Senator Albert Fall showed his support in the treaty following Lodge's reversal. As expressed in Letter to Secretary, Letter, May 2, 1921, *Warren G. Harding Presidential Papers (WGHP)*, Roll 191, Presidential Case Files, AC. 15 957, LC.

governments came together on March 1, 1922 to exchange ratifications. The dispute was finally settled.³²⁵

El Tiempo ran the news of the treaty's passing in the Colombian Senate on the front page, exclaiming that the treaty was a "pledge of cordiality for the future." The Senate's vote was celebrated in the article and appearing directly next to its discussion in the center of the page, was the news of the death of Philander Knox. The paper printed a large picture of the former U.S. Senator and Secretary of State, reveling his accomplishments and finishing his obituary with an aide-mémoire of the Senator's strong support for the treaty's passage over the past months.³²⁶ Colombians were not ungrateful for his action in March of 1917 where he marked the first Republican in the Foreign Relations Committee to break ranks and offer his backing of the treaty and coincidingly of a political view.

The 1922 signing of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty patented a shift in Washington's foreign policymaking. Not only did the treaty symbolize an admission of wrongdoing on the American side, it offered the victimized government a large indemnity and transportation rights similar to that of their own regarding the Panama Canal. The treaty's details included nearly everything it originally started with upon first signing in 1914: The government of the United States would pay to the government of Colombia a \$25,000,000 indemnity, in gold; offer preferential commercial and military transport rights over the Panama Canal including charge-free transportation of troops, ships of war and war materials; and an agreement of a

³²⁵ President Harding to Colombian President Jorge Holguin, Letter, March 2, 1922, *WGHP*, Roll 191, Presidential Case Files, AC. 15 957, LC; Lael, *Arrogant Diplomacy*, 155-157; Parks, *Colombia and the United States*, 456-457; Randall, *Colombia and the United States*, 105-106.

³²⁶ "El alcance del Tratado," "Philander C. Knox," *El Tiempo*, October 14, 1921, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=ZHscAAAIAIBAJ&sjid=2FEEAAAIAIBAJ&pg=6870%2C1907521> (accessed March 20, 2018).

boundary line with Panama based off Colombian law. The Colombian peoples' patience had paid off and they now received favorable terms along with a moral victory. The only slight left was that Washington adamantly refused to preserve the statement of "sincere regret" as was first included in 1914. Now in its place the treaty's preamble read:

The United States of America and the Republic of Colombia, being desirous to remove all the misunderstandings growing out of the political events in Panama in November 1903; to restore the cordial friendship that formerly characterized the relations between the two countries, and also to define and regulate their rights and interests in respect of the inter-oceanic canal which the Government of the United States has constructed across the Isthmus of Panama, have resolved for this purpose to conclude a Treaty...³²⁷

Although no formal apology was included, this settlement marked a twenty-year transition in American opinion. Politicians and citizens alike who originally believed that this treaty tarnished the view of Teddy Roosevelt and of the American mission to rectify the hemisphere's problems, now had to swallow their pride in order to restore this historical, cordial friendship.

After the final ratification in early March, relations immediately displayed a noticeable improvement. Correspondence between Colombian and American officials exhibited a greater willingness to create and maintain close relations. However, they also represented the long, tumultuous past decades that the two nations had experienced. Just a day after Colombia's Senate ratified the final document on October 14, 1921, Colombian Ambassador to the U.S., Carlos Urueta wrote to President Harding thanking him for the personal gift of pictures from Harding and his wife, and that they would be "preserved in our Colombian home among our most valued treasures." The flowery language of holding such

³²⁷ "Amity; Canal Rights," from *Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776-1949* v. 6, compiled by Charles I. Bevans (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), 900-903.

gifts dearly to their Colombian home can be seen as a metaphorical instance of gratitude for helping the passage of the treaty put behind the past differences and look to the future in warm regards. Urueta made this sentiment of hope clear as he continued, declaring to “...renew [to Harding] the assurances of my acknowledgement, as a Colombian, for the noble and fruitful initiative taken by you, on inaugurating your administration, in favor of friendly relations between the United States and Colombia.”³²⁸

Days after the two countries came together for ratification in March 1922, Presidents Harding and Holguin exchanged words of cordialness. Harding urged the hope that the outcomes of the treaty would sweep away “all misunderstandings” and “all obstacles which could prevent a resumption of the historical friendship between the people of the United States and the people of Colombia.”³²⁹ A subsequent telegram from Holguin echoed similar sentiments. Holguin commented he took pleasure in assuring Harding that “the Government and people of Colombia have celebrated the performance of that solemn act in the assurance that it not only makes an end of every misunderstanding between Colombia and the great American Nation but that it opens a new era of cordial relations....”³³⁰ The respective presidents understood that this settlement marked a new period of restored relations and would be defined by the actions of graciousness toward one another.

With this renewed understanding of a necessary coexisting friendship, Colombia displayed extra precautions to maintain their reestablished relations. Upon the proposed appointment of a new Minister to the U.S., Dr. Enrique Olaya Herrera, the Colombian Legation asked the State Department for its acceptance. In informing the president, Secretary

³²⁸ Urueta to Harding, Letter, October 14, 1921, *WGHP*, Roll 191, Presidential Case Files, AC. 15 957, LC.

³²⁹ Harding to Holguin, Cablegram, March 2, 1922, *WGHP*, Roll 191, Presidential Case Files, AC. 15 957, LC.

³³⁰ Holguin to Harding, Telegram, March 6, 1922, *WGHP*, Roll 191, Presidential Case Files, AC. 15 957, LC.

of State Charles Hughes wrote to Harding explaining Herrera's background. The following discussion represented that while relations were reestablished, the events that transpired in previous years were still deemed important. In the bio Hughes wrote about Herrera, he felt it necessary to detail that Herrera's newspaper in Colombia, *El Diario Nacional*, had been deemed pro-German and the War Trade Board even recommended the prohibition of sending paper supplies to the newspaper. However, since the war, Hughes explained, Herrera had been clearly in favor of U.S. policies and his paper became one of the largest proponents for the treaty's approval in Colombia and he has since be viewed as one of the most important political personalities in the country. This fact, Hughes emphasized was a significant event, as "The desire of the Colombian Government to appoint one, who occupies an important political position in his own country, as Minister to the United States, following the exchange of ratifications of the treaty with this country, augers well for building up the good relations between our two countries..."³³¹

Hughes deemed Herrera's reversal in opinion on the U.S. persuasive and that his position in Colombia was one so revered that his appointment as Minister to the U.S. would only increase the prestige that Bogota was offering to the renewed relations with Washington. With the inauguration of Pedro Nel Ospina in May 1922, his involvement in past anti-American actions came to the surface. Upon his upcoming visit to Washington, where he would be met by Hughes and the prestigious General John Pershing among other officials, then subsequently escorted to the Colombian legation by a troop of cavalry in a prized display, his actions in 1912 were not forgotten. Ospina, as Minister to the U.S. under the

³³¹ Charles Hughes to Harding, Letter, March 18, 1922, *WGHP*, Roll 191, Presidential Case Files, AC. 15 957, LC.

Restrepo administration had caused a rift in Washington when he refused to permit a friendly visit by then Secretary of State Knox. This refusal, while possibly made out of concern for Knox's safety in a time of strong anti-American presence, nevertheless caused harsh criticism by officials in the Taft administration and eventually lead to Ospina's removal from his post. Despite this past conflict, the letter concerning his arrival stated that owing to the recent settlement of the treaty, "The Department of State is not of course allowing this incident to affect it in extending a welcome" to the president-elect in Washington.³³² Again, the passage of the treaty was used as a reason to triumph over past disagreements and grievances.

The relationship between the two governments clearly improved after the treaty's passing, yet the aura of past protests still hovered above. These incidents would become common as the renewed introduction toward friendly relations took place over the 1920s. Yet, each time the past conflicts were disregarded in order to generate and promote the rebuilding of relations, displaying that after the treaty's passage, both governments were indeed invested in rekindling their old flame. As the decade continued on, American presence in Colombia cultivated rapidly. By the end of 1929 American investments in Colombia reached \$280 million, a dramatic figure when reminded that in 1913, the year before the negotiation of the Thomson-Urrutia Treaty, American investments barely amounted to four million.³³³ With the warming of relations and newfound trust placed into the Colombian government and securities over U.S. investments in the country, the massive funneling of money would help propel Colombia into a flourishing economic period that its historians have dubbed "The Dance of the Millions."

³³² Letter to Junior Secretary to the President George B. Christian, Letter, May 2, 1922, *WGHP*, Roll 191, Presidential Case Files, AC. 15 957, LC.

³³³ Rippy, *The Capitalists in Colombia*, 152.

The two nations would go on to mimic their nineteenth century experience and intertwine themselves politically, economically and militarily. Over the next decades Colombia allowed the U.S. to build military installments on its shores during World War II, deployed troops to fight alongside the U.S. as a part of the United Nations security forces during the Korean War, and later on hosted the first U.S.-lead counterinsurgency training program in Latin America.³³⁴ At the same time, Colombia has remained free of the American military and political interventions that plagued much of the region, including Panama, during the twentieth century. The events which transpired between the nations during 1900 to 1922 created the affects that originally allowed this future to be possible, but there is no doubt that much more effort was required to maintain this close relationship as they moved forward. This research progresses an overall understanding of why Colombia and the United States hold such an important relationship through revealing what transpired during this critically overlooked timeframe. However, the events detailed here can still be expanded further in order to fully explain the two nations' twentieth century experience. This research hopes to contribute to a larger discussion of Colombia-U.S. relations by eventually establishing a concrete connection between the post-Panama efforts to create a settlement and how the benefits of this renewed relationship truly evolved. Furthermore, additional attention will hopefully be placed on the Colombian settlement within the broader scope of Washington's transitioning policies towards Latin American relations as the years continue into the Good Neighbor period and beyond.

³³⁴ David W. Dent, *The Legacy of the Monroe Doctrine, a Reference Guide to U.S. Involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 91-92.

Appendix: Illustrations



Figure 1.2: Endara, C. “Firma Del Tratado Que Puso Fin a La Guerra De Los Mil Dias.” Red Cultural del Banco de la Republica en Colombia. www.banrepcultural.org/biblioteca-virtual/credencial-historia/numero-117/el-tratado-de-wisconsin-noviembre-21-de-1902 (Accessed October 19, 2017).



Figure 1.3: “La Paz Inicia El Siglo: Los Tratados De Neerlandia, Wisconsin y Chinácota [1902].” Sala De Exposiciones Temporales Patrocinada Por Gas Natural Museo Nacional De Colombia, August 14, 2003, www.museonacional.gov.co/sitio/tdepaz/paz1.html (Accessed January 7, 2018).



Figure 2.1: Pughe, John S. “Sacre bleu!” Illustration. *Puck*, v. 54, no. 1384, September 9, 1903. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.25775> (Accessed January 12, 2018).

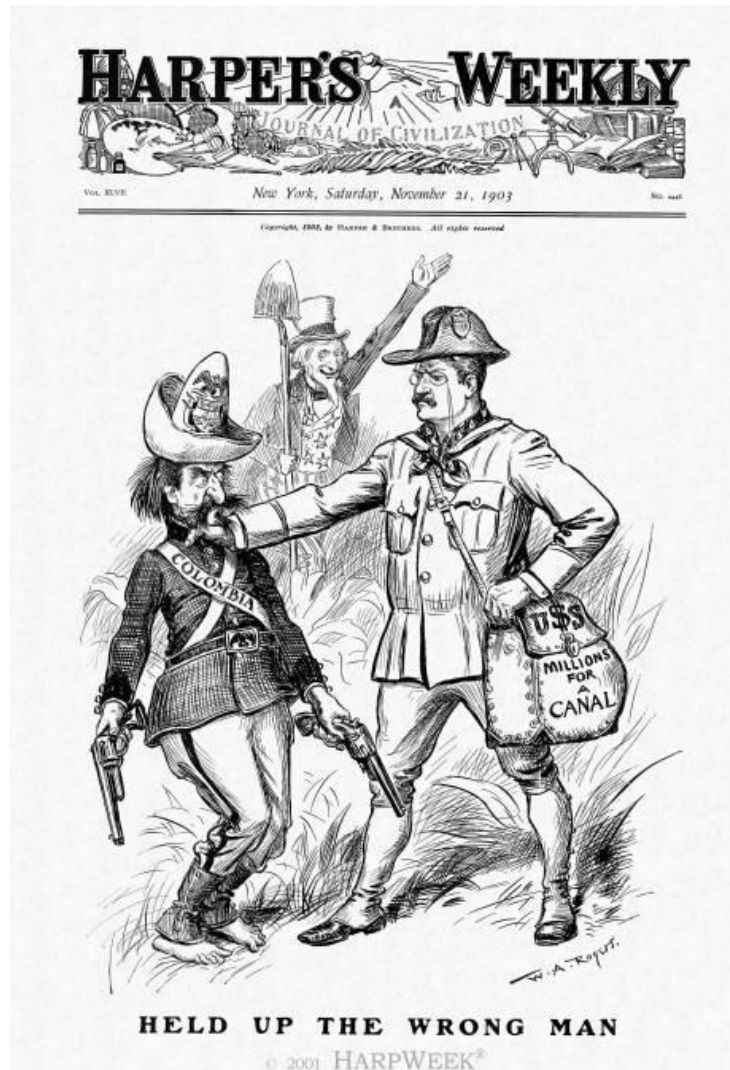


Figure 2.2: Rodgers, William Allen. “Held Up the Wrong Man.” Illustration. *Harper’s Weekly*, v. 47, no. 2448, November 21, 1903. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a42359> (Accessed January 12, 2018).



Figure 2.3: Keppler, Udo J. “A revelation in revolutions.” *Puck* v. 54, no. 1395, November 25, 1903. Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University <http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o277639> (Accessed January 12, 2018).

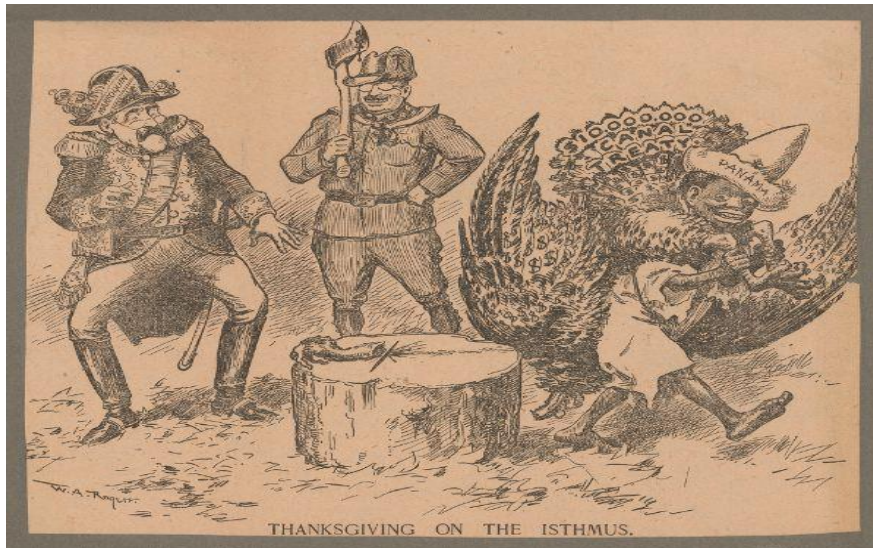


Figure 2.4: Rogers, William Allen. “Thanksgiving on the Isthmus.” Illustration. *New York Herald*, November 26, 1903. From Harvard University Library online archival search information service (OASIS), <https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/53668086?buttons=y> (Accessed January 13, 2018).



Figure 2.5: Rogers, William Allen. “Into the Ditch.” Illustration. *New York Herald*, December 26, 1903. From Harvard University Library online archival search information service (OASIS), <https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/53668137?buttons=y> (Accessed January 13, 2018).



Figure 2.6: Gillam, Victor F. "Drive the knife in up to the hilt." Theodore Roosevelt Papers. Library of Congress Manuscript Division
<http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o42989>. Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library. Dickinson State University (Accessed January 13, 2018).



THE MAN BEHIND THE EGG—From the *Times* (New York)

Figure 2.7: “The Man Behind the Egg.” *New York Times*, late 1903, in: Shaw, *A Cartoon History of Roosevelt’s Career*, 92.



Figure 2.8: Rogers, William Allen. “The News Reaches Bogota.” *New York Herald*, November 15, 1903, in: Albert Shaw, *A Cartoon History of Roosevelt’s Career*, 93.

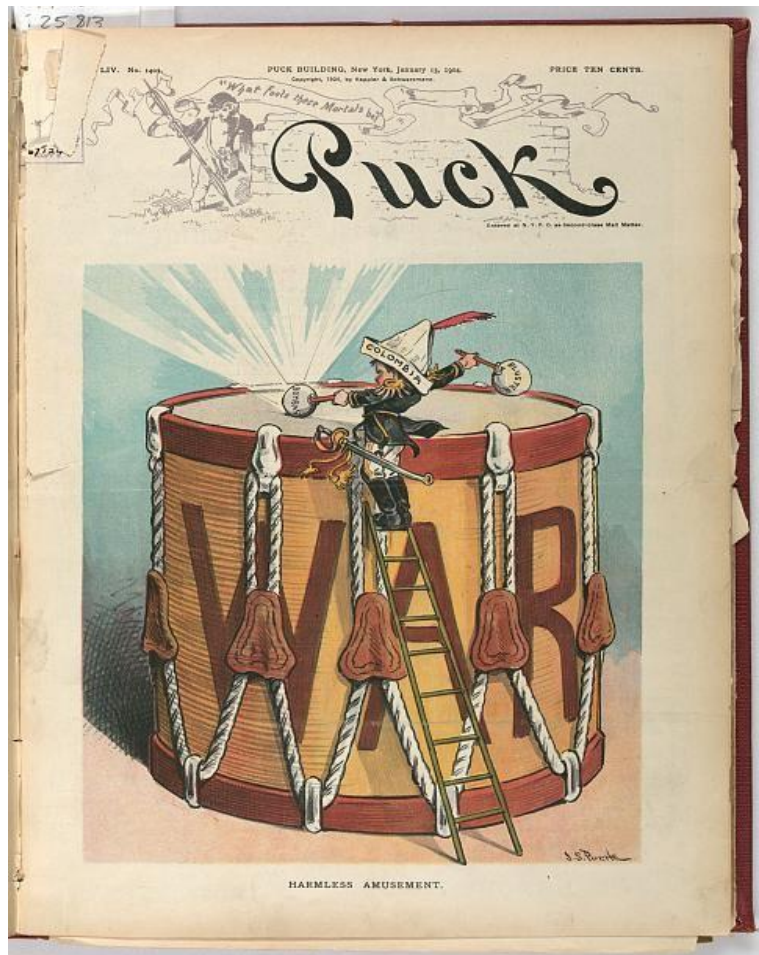


Figure 2.9: Pughe, John S. “Harmless Amusement.” Illustration. *Puck*, v. 54, no. 1402, January 13, 1904. Copyright 1904 by Keppeler & Schwarzmann. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.25812> (Accessed January 13, 2018).



Figure 2.10: Bush, Charles G. “Shade of the Immortal George – ‘Where’s my Hatchet’.” 1904. From Harvard University Library online archival search information service (OASIS), <https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/53668124?buttons=y> (Accessed January 13, 2018).

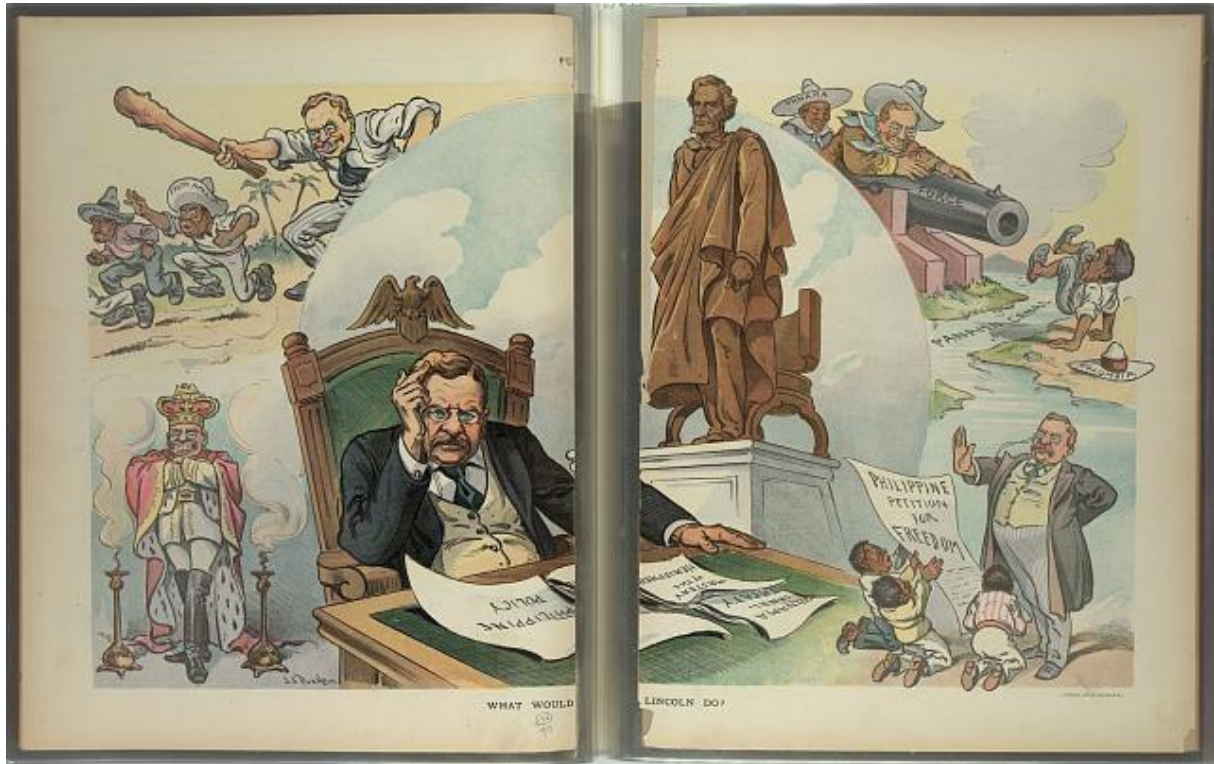


Figure 2.11: Pughe, John S. “What Would Lincoln Do?” Illustration. *Puck*, v. 56, no. 1439, September 28, 1904. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.25890> (Accessed January 13, 2018).

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