

**THE CUBAN QUESTION
AND AMERICAN
POLICY, IN THE LIGHT OF
COMMON SENSE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649277704

The Cuban Question and American Policy, in the Light of Common Sense by Various

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

VARIOUS

**THE CUBAN QUESTION
AND AMERICAN
POLICY, IN THE LIGHT OF
COMMON SENSE**

77
21.5

x THE CUBAN QUESTION

AND

A MERICAN POLICY,

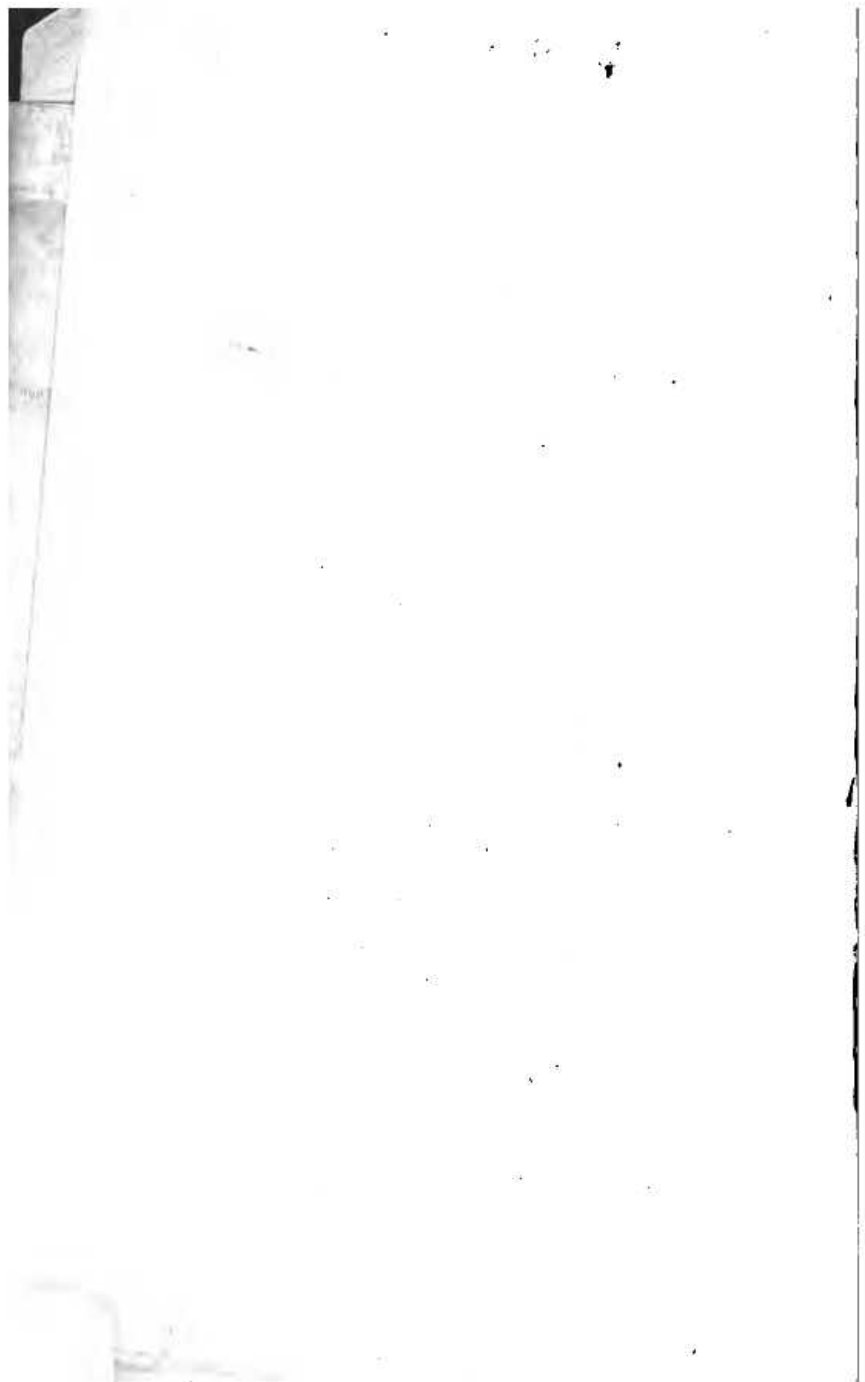
IN THE LIGHT OF COMMON SENSE.

"Yes, I have something more to say. There is Cuba—poor, struggling Cuba. I want you to stand by the Cubans. Cuba must be free. Her tyrannical enemy must be crushed. Cuba must not only be free, but all her sister islands. This Republic is responsible for that. I am passing away, but you must look after this. We have been together; now you must look to this."

Dying Words of GENERAL RAWLENS to Secretary Crosswell.

NEW YORK

1869.



THE CUBAN QUESTION.

The United States Responsible for the Fate of Cuba.

The fate of Cuba rests with the United States. The Cubans have struck the blow for freedom, and for more than a year have maintained a most heroic struggle. Without effective arras or munitions of war, and without organization, preparation, or military training, they bravely proclaimed their liberty, risking their lives, property, and all they hold dear for that inestimable blessing. They were goaded to this step by intolerable tyranny and grinding exactions. They had no voice in the government over them; they were heavily taxed without their consent; they had no control over the enormous revenue exacted from them; they had not only to support a host of hungry officials in the island, who were sent out from Spain, and who had no sympathy with the colonists or interest in the colony, but they were compelled also to contribute largely to the support of their oppressors and of that very government in Europe which denied them even the shadow of political liberty. No people ever had greater cause for revolt. None ever behaved more bravely, and, considering their want of means, the difficulties they labored under, and the vast organized military power against them, none ever made greater success, within so short a period. Yet, if unaided, directly or indirectly, by the United States, the conflict must be long and doubtful, and would only end with the utter ruin of the island. Hence, as was said, the fate of Cuba rests with this country.

The Cubans may maintain the struggle to the bitter end, and, no doubt, have made up their minds to do so. The die is cast, and it would be better to suffer death in the effort to be free than to be subjugated, for Spain is cruel and unforgiving. They would have no hope in the future from the magnanimity or promises of the Spanish government. Their painful experience, throughout

1100/17

628423

their whole history, of the unfulfilled promises of Spain, and the persistent refusal of that country to listen to their appeals for some show of liberality or justice, must convince them that whatever government is in power at Madrid, whether monarchical or republican, they can expect no concessions, no change for the better, no toleration. Doubtless, then, they will fight to the last, and rather than submit, carry universal desolation over the country. Their determined purpose to do this no one can doubt, who looks at the sufferings they now willingly endure, at the sacrifices they make, and at the fact that they are applying the torch to all sugar plantations and other property which might be appropriated by their enemies and used against themselves.

Nor would Spain leave Cuba without desolating it, and, as far as human power goes, making that magnificent island worthless, both to the Cubans themselves and to America, unless the United States should interpose and prevent the calamity. If the Spaniards see that Cuba can no longer be of value to them as a colony, they would do all in their power, probably, to make it valueless to others. Disgraceful as such conduct would be to any civilized nation, and to that Spain which was once so famous in history and for its chivalry, there is every reason to fear the most vindictive course toward Cuba. The statesmen of Spain—such men as Serrano and Dulce—might not desire it, but the Spaniards on the island, and the ignorant masses of the old country, who know nothing about Cuba, and are systematically deceived as to the condition of things there, would force these statesmen even to measures they might abhor. The vindictiveness, cruelty, and assumption of the Spanish volunteers in Cuba, with which the American government and people are familiar, show what may be expected in the future. A governing class or oligarchy becomes merciless in revolutionary times, when there is danger of its power and privileges being lost, and there is no people more vindictive, cruel, and reckless than the Spaniards under such circumstances.

Then, the so-called pride or haughty vanity of the Spaniards would blind them to reason and lead them to excesses even where there might be no hope of saving their fancied honor. Besides, old Spain has no sympathy with American republicanism or American progress. Notwithstanding the late revolution in

Spain, the overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy, and the profession of liberal principles, the old European prejudices and jealousy of America are strong in the Spaniards. While they profess admiration and friendship for the United States they are as jealous of this country and as ready to throw obstacles in the way of its progress as the ruling classes or governments of other countries in Europe. Nothing will be left undone, therefore, to prevent Cuban independence, the acquisition of Cuba by the United States, or the desolation of the island, so as to make it as worthless as possible to any other people than the Spaniards.

But the desolation of Cuba—the destruction of the sugar, tobacco, and other plantations, burning of towns and villages, and the ruin of all the material interests and commerce of the island—would not be the only evil of a prolonged and vindictive war, dreadful as this must prove. Want and anarchy would necessarily follow. The passions which revolution lets loose would find their vent, probably, in a war of races and factions, and we might see the horrors of San Domingo revived. The richest and most productive country in the world would be utterly ruined and left a prey to frightful disorder and carnage. The vast negro population, amounting to over half a million of souls, or near forty per cent. of the whole population of the island, are like the negroes of the Southern States, docile, peaceable, and industrious when under proper control; but they are ignorant and capable of fearful excesses, as was seen in San Domingo, when aroused by suffering or wicked leaders. Should the war continue long, and, consequently, the people be reduced to want and anarchy, there is reason to apprehend a state of things that will make the civilized world shudder. Such is the terrible prospect, unless the United States, for the sake of humanity and from a principle of high public policy, stop the war by claiming the independence or annexation of Cuba. The revolution has assumed such proportions, and all the circumstances connected with it are such that either freedom or utter ruin must be the consequence. The American republic can only decide which shall be the alternative, and upon it alone rests the responsibility.

What the United States ought to Do.

Here the question arises, then, what should the United States do in the case of Cuba? The answer to this involves many considerations bearing upon international obligations, the material and political interests of the country, the claims of humanity, the cause of republican freedom in the world, particularly in this hemisphere, and the progress and future of the great American republic. Should the United States Government interpose to secure the independence of Cuba? And if it should, on what grounds? Or, taking a less decisive course, ought it to recognize the Cubans as belligerents? The last proposition of conceding belligerent rights would carry probably the first with it, for the American Government is not likely to take any such decided action without feeling assured that it would lead to the independence of Cuba. Nor can there be any doubt of the result should the United States recognize the Cubans as belligerents. That act alone would do much to secure the independence of Cuba. Though not bound by the mere recognition of belligerent rights to aid the Cubans the American Government would hardly permit itself to be placed in the humiliating position of seeing Cuba subjugated afterwards.

Ought the United States to recognize the Cubans as belligerents? Nine-tenths of the American people, at least, say, yes. Probably there are none, except a few Spanish agents, and a few narrow minded men who are opposed to all progress, who would say, no. The generous and liberty-loving citizens of this great republic would proclaim at once the independence of Cuba, and act in a manner to secure it, if they would follow the noble impulses of their own hearts. There is no question as to the popular sympathy and will on this subject. It seems strange, in fact, that the government has not acted in this matter more in accordance with public sentiment, for public opinion is the basis of our republican institutions and law of our national existence. But the executive administration is naturally conservative, and properly so, as far as relates to maintaining the laws. Still, under the American form of government, the will of the people should be obeyed on

great questions of national policy. There is, however, a large degree of latitude allowed to the executive in this country on all matters of an international character, and the people are disposed to be patient till they understand fully the motives or object of the government, or till their representatives in Congress can speak. With regard to recognizing the belligerent rights of the Cubans the administration has followed up to this time its conservative instincts rather than the popular will.

Is it wise to pursue that course any longer? Has not the time arrived when the Cubans should be recognized? Does not every consideration of national policy, interest, and humanity call for recognition? There is no positive international law or rule of action to govern nations as to the time or circumstances when a people struggling for liberty shall be recognized as belligerents. The only principle generally acknowledged as a guide for governments in such cases, is, that those fighting for independence must have been able to sustain a war for some time with reasonable prospect of success. But each nation or government judges for itself, and that generally in accordance with its own interests or some policy it favors. Great Britain and some other European nations recognized the Confederates at the commencement, or during the first months of the late civil war in the United States. True, they did so on the plea that the magnitude of the war justified it. But a plea is never wanted whenever state policy and the supposed interests of a nation are to be promoted by such a course. The European governments looked with jealousy and disfavor upon the growing power of this republic and the consequent progress of republican ideas, and they seized the opportunity for doing what they could to dismember the country. This was their state policy. This was the State policy of monarchical Europe. Yet the Confederate States were an integral portion of a friendly and mighty nation, where all the people were free, prosperous, and happy. The South was not a distant possession or dependency like Cuba, or like the American colonies before the war of independence. There was no grinding oppression or military despotism as in Cuba on which a plea of recognition or interference could be made. The action of Great Britain and other European powers in the case of the Confederates was simply State policy based on hostility to American institutions, jealousy and