ASPECTS OF EXPANSIONISM IN
UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY
DURING THE GRANT ADMINISTRATION

A thesis presented for the
degree of Master of Arts in History
in the University of Canterbury,
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by
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**Personalities**
U.S. Grant is usually ranked among the three or four worst Presidents of the United States. For most people this fact seems to be sufficient proof that nothing worthwhile emerged from the eight years of his administration. I must admit that I shared this general indifference when first allotted this topic; though I knew something of the settlement of the "Alabama" claims dispute in the Treaty of Washington, I was not aware that President Grant had a distinctive foreign policy. But the Grant era has proved to be a fascinating period in American diplomatic history and it surprises me that it has not received more attention.

I was frequently faced with a shortage of secondary materials that was particularly frustrating in view of the inadequacies of the primary materials available to me. Nevertheless, it was possible to gain some insight into this period.

General diplomatic histories usually pass over the years 1865 to 1898, as a kind of flat spot between the surge of expansionist feeling glorified as Manifest Destiny, and America's brief venture into imperialism. In fact, this was a transitional period in which a very different social and economic order spelled the end of one kind of expansionism and prepared the way for
another. One can see elements of both types at work in the particular cases that the Grant Administration had to deal with.

My thanks are due to my supervisor, Professor A.A. Conway, and to Mr. B. Wearing who was temporary supervisor, both of whom provided considerable inspiration; to the librarians of the University of Canterbury who were endlessly helpful; to my typist who worked under the trying conditions of my absence; and to my husband without whose encouragement this might never have been completed.
## List of Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>L.H.Q.</td>
<td>Louisiana Historical Quarterly.</td>
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<td>N.A.R.</td>
<td>North American Review.</td>
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<td>P.H.R.</td>
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The foreign policy of the United States, even today, appears very often to be governed more by idealism than by pragmatism or practicality, and this peculiar trend is apparent throughout the entire history of American foreign policy. To understand the pressures which could be exerted on the administration during Grant's period, it is important to look briefly at the ideas which had become part of American diplomacy.

A result of the War of Independence had been, understandably, a self-conscious rejection of everything European, and more particularly of things British. This independent spirit was to become translated into the idea of two spheres, American and European, and into an avoidance of any alliances with European powers which could involve American co-operation in war. George Washington in his Farewell Address on September 17, 1796 expressed the policies of neutrality and non-entanglement which were to have considerable effect upon the foreign policies of succeeding Presidents.

"Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships and her enmities." (1)

(1) Dexter Perkins, Hands Off: A History of the Monroe Doctrine. (Boston, 1941) p.17
This separatism increased. The reaction of monarchical Europe to the French Revolution, which seemed to apply the principles embodied in the American Constitution, and the later disillusioning developments of the Revolution, made the differences between the United States and Europe more apparent. As far as Americans were concerned, this episode illustrated the advantages of democratic republicanism over the evils of reactionary monarchism, and the United States assumed the tasks of a "republican missionary" claiming, as Henry Clay did in 1818 in his discussion of the Latin-American States, "We are their great example. Of us they constantly speak as of brothers having a similar origin. They adopt our principles, copy our institutions and in many instances, employ the very language and sentiments of our revolutionary papers."(2) The United States, it was maintained, was the creator, and protector, of free government in the Western Hemisphere, a mission which was a reflection of the sense of that uniqueness of the country and its institutions.

The Monroe Doctrine was both a reinforcement of this belief and an extension.

(2) Perkins, Hands Off. p. 17
"The American continents by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."(3)

This was the first item of the Doctrine, and though it appeared essentially negative, it was, in reality, a nationalistic and aggressive belief which could be, and was used to justify considerable American activity in the area in following years. Its apparent success owed less to any strength inherent in the idea than to the reluctance of European nations to become further involved in the issues outside their continent during the troublesome years of the first half of the nineteenth century. Just how little it affected American thinking is illustrated by Dexter Perkins when he points out that of all the statements issued on the subject of the future of Cuba, not one referred to the Doctrine. The reason was that it was not a new principle; the only thing that was new was its expression in such explicit terms. In 1819 John Quincy Adams had claimed that the world

"must be familiarized with the idea of considering our proper dominion to be the continent of North America. From the time when we became an independent people it was as much a law of nature that this should become our pretension as that the Mississippi should flow to the sea"(4)

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This was an expression of national security, as was the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, yet the ideas were also closely linked to a doctrine far less introspective and far more deliberately expansionist, which was described in 1845 by John O'Sullivan, editor of the paper The Democratic Review, as "Manifest Destiny".

Like the Monroe Doctrine, Manifest Destiny was an expression of nationalism, but an expression much more excited and dogmatic. It claimed that nothing could hold back the spread of republicanism and the American way of life, and that annexation of territory was a natural development ordained by God. It translated old ideas of the perfection and superiority of American republicanism into a mission of territorial expansion.

"Let us leave events to take their own course. The North Americans will spread out far beyond their present bounds. They will encroach again and again upon their neighbours. New territories will be planted, declare their independence and be annexed! We have New Mexico and California! We will have Old Mexico and Cuba! The isthmus cannot arrest us - not even the Saint Lawrence! Time has all of this in her womb. A hundred states will grow up where now exists but thirty. Let us not anticipate. The end of all this shall come, and God only can tell what it will be and when."(5)

Manifest Destiny sprang from the opening of California the spread of population west, the advance of the railroad and the telegraph, and the exaggerated nationalism of a young, wealthy and successful nation, and the

acquisition of land only increased the demand for more. For political aspirants an advantage of the faith in this ideal was that it soon showed itself to be endlessly adaptable. From expansion within what is now known as the United States, it spread to include the entire North American continent, then the Caribbean, and then the South American continent. Some, no doubt, had even grander visions.

The most influential periods of Manifest Destiny were the decades of the 1840s and 1850s. As Weinberg points out in his study of the movement, the catchwords to describe the doctrine changed, and later it was variously called "inevitable destiny", "natural growth", "political gravitation", and "political affinity", but it was primarily an attitude of these two decades, growing out of the particular political conditions of these years. Like the Monroe Doctrine it was used as a justification for expansionism much later in the century when the political conditions had changed. Neither American nationalism nor the faith in the American political system had gone, but Manifest Destiny had been part of a different kind of nationalism. An aspect of American nationalism before the Civil War was its embodiment of the aims of the ruling Southern majority,

which included the need for land to sustain its agrarian way of life and the slave system upon which it was based; on the other hand, the nationalism expressed in public policy after the war was predominantly that of the North, looking to an industrial future, with assured markets, and commercial and mercantile consolidation. Undoubtedly the effect of the belief still lingered in those individuals who had grown up in the 1840's and 1850's and who were involved in the implementation of foreign policy after the civil war, but it could no longer be said to govern in the same way the policy-making of foreign affairs.

William Seward, Secretary of State under Lincoln and Andrew Johnson, was the greatest exponent of Manifest Destiny in the early post-war period. Even he, however, had been forced by the war to recognize that this belief, as a justification for expansionist intentions, no longer filled all requirements. He took the initiative in moves upon the Danish West Indies and Santo Domingo because of the need for strategic bases in the Caribbean to protect the southern United States, reasons which he acknowledged. Indeed, he discovered in the course of these operations an anti-expansionist swing in the country, caused by a weariness of war and a pre-occupation with reconstruction and the enormous war debt. Manifest Destiny, or at least the aggressive and warlike Manifest Destiny of earlier years, appealed to fewer.
"Let it rather be our province to act as peace-maker and gradually pave the way for more liberal forms of Government ... This is a more enviable and desirable position than that of the conqueror of nations,"

advised the Charleston Courier in 1865,\(^7\) and John A. Logan of Illinois in Congress ridiculed expansionist projects by suggesting facetiously that Seward be authorized to negotiate

"for the purchase of empires, kingdoms, rebellions, wars, volcanoes, icebergs, snow and rain storms, earthquakes, or submerged and undiscovered islands."\(^8\)

When U.S. Grant became President this concern with the healing of the scars of the rebellion was still apparent. His imperialistic ideals were to be met by a nation divided on the issue of territorial expansion; some denied any need for further acquisition of land, others believed, with the President, in the arguments of the past century, and still others looked to a new future to provide answers and justifications.

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\(^7\) Donald Marquand Dozer, "Anti-Expansionism During the Johnson Administration," P.H.R., Vol. XIV, (1945)
\(^8\) Congressional Globe, 40 Congress, 2nd session, p.1221
CHAPTER II PERSONALITIES

According to the Constitution of the United States, foreign affairs are the responsibility of the President. Aiding him, usually, is the Secretary of State, whose power and authority depends solely on how much is delegated by the President, and who requires the absolute trust of the President to manoeuvre at all. The most powerful Congressional agent of foreign affairs is the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a man who can effect or kill advocated policy by the power he wields. Frequently it is at this point that policy dies. During the administration of U.S. Grant, the men who filled these offices were vastly different in temperament and political experience, which had interesting effects upon the running of foreign policy.

The most important figure was President Grant himself. Of him it has been said,

"No-one had ever entered the White House with so little experience concerning matters of state, indeed with so little education of whatever variety fitting him for high public office, except Zachary Taylor, who in a similar manner, owed his political elevation to military service. But the gratitude of the country for what as a soldier Grant had been the instrument was great, and his very detachment from politics had filled right-thinking citizens with hope that his administration would be distinguished by honesty and commonsense."(1)

(1) E.P.Oberholtzer, History of the United States since the Civil War (5 vols, New York, 1922), Vol.II, p.213. See also W.B.Hesseltine, Ulysses S. Grant, Politician (New York, 1957); L.Lewis, Captain Sam Grant (Boston, 1950); Allan Nevins, Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration (New York, 1936); W.A.Thayer, From Tanyard to White House (London, 1892); H.B.Adams, "The Session", North American Review, Vol.CXI (July, 1870)
Hope for something new was the keynote of the American attitude to Grant.

"Grant's sagacity and force of character having sufficed to win the war, they must now suffice to make him a powerful President - so men argued."(2)

These arguments were based on nothing but his military achievements, for he was ill-equipped for the tasks confronting him. Born into a frontier family which placed great emphasis on material achievement, Grant had been a failure in every venture he undertook before the Civil War. Educated at West Point, he had not been a notable success as a soldier either in peacetime or in the Mexican War, and his post-war attempts at business and at farming ended in near-bankruptcy. Indeed, the Civil War saved Grant and his family from financial disaster, and was a turning-point in his hitherto undistinguished career. As a military commander he displayed unexpected strengths and talents that eventually carried him to the command of all the armies of the Union. By the end of hostilities Grant was firmly established as the architect of the Northern victory; even as the war ended, it was clear that he could, if he chose, be a candidate for the Presidency in 1868, with a good chance of election.

Grant himself appeared to scorn the prospect of political power. In the past he had shown little interest in politics and had allegedly exercised his right to vote only once in his life, when he had voted Democratic. He had also made a number of statements against the participation of military men in political affairs. Yet military heroes before him had gained the Presidency through public gratitude, and Grant cannot have been unaware of its attractions. Certainly his friends, especially Adam Badeau and John Rawlins, were aware of his potential as a candidate, and as early as mid-1866 were beginning to work to seat him in the White House.

For some time Grant remained silent and apparently uncommitted, serving the Johnson Administration in various capacities, advising Southern deputations to follow Johnson and avoiding any personal conflict with the President, even to the extent of accompanying Johnson on his 1866 election campaign. There were signs, however, that he was being advised to be more careful, and he broke his close association with the President by resigning from the Secretaryship of War soon after having been appointed, claiming, in deference to Congress, that acceptance was unconstitutional, a decision that may not have been his alone. His resignation was obviously the moment he made his political choice, or it was made for him. Certainly it was a necessary step
to preserve his wide appeal as a potential candidate.

In the growing conflict between Johnson and Congress, the Radicals were winning some important successes over the executive. It must have been obvious that the Radical Republicans were far stronger than the Moderates. If Grant cut himself off from them, his only alternative would have been to stand as the Democratic candidate, which was an unlikely choice since the Democratic party had been dealt a severe blow by the Rebellion and by Reconstruction, and Grant himself was the symbol of the Northern victory.

Just who was responsible for his decision is debatable. Undoubtedly he had some political ambitions; Gideon Welles recorded in his diary that Grant gave the impression that he felt certain of success and did not display any opposition to the idea of standing for office. (3) However, it is doubtful that Grant had the political acumen to have found his way unaided through the confusion of post-war politics. Much of his success must be attributed to Badeau, Rawlins and Radical leaders such as Benjamin Butler and Nathaniel P. Banks, who appealed to Grant and who found it easy to manipulate him. It may be true that he was led into office by such men, but it is equally true that he put up little

(3) Welles, Diary, Vol. III, P.183
resistance. The majority of Republicans welcomed him;\(^{(4)}\) some, notably Charles Sumner, had reservations about nominating Grant as party representative when his party convictions were anything but strong\(^{(5)}\), but they must have had considerable confidence in his chances of success.

The power of his attraction as a candidate disguised some fundamental flaws. Neither his upbringing nor his education prepared him for political power. He was retiring to the point of apparent shyness, honest to the point of naiveté, blunt and unsubtle. There seemed to be "an absence of vanity, of ambition, of pride in his success, of selfishness."\(^{(6)}\)

Conscious of his intellectual inferiority, he kept his opinions to himself and in any company which awed him, he would remain silent to such a degree that he was considered by some to be stupid.\(^{(7)}\) His lack of legal training and his ignorance of constitutional law were added handicaps. In January, 1867, Welles wrote

"... General Grant will very likely be the next President of the United States. I do not think he intends to disregard the Constitution but he has no reverence for it - he has no political principles, no intelligent ideas of constitutional government ..."\(^{(8)}\)

\(^{(4)}\) Hesseltine, Grant, pp.120-131; E.L. Pierce, Memoirs and Letters of Charles Sumner (London, 1878-93) 4 Vols. Vol.IV, pp.358-60
\(^{(5)}\) Pierce, Sumner, Vol.IV, p.358, note 1
\(^{(7)}\) Nevins, Fish, pp.132-3
\(^{(8)}\) Welles, Diary, Vol.III, p.15
In December, 1868, he expanded this further.

"He can no more foreshadow, or anticipate, or design a course of political action, than he can make a speech to a popular audience of the structure of the government, and a proper administration of its affairs, he is singularly and wonderfully ignorant ... and has really no idea that the Constitution is any more restraint upon him as President than as General."(9)

Although Welles was an acrid and antipathetic observer, these opinions were probably close to the truth. Grant had accepted the Presidency, as others had before him, as a reward for services rendered to the Republic. At the time, his only success in a lifetime had been military and the only control and leadership he understood were those of the army. A contemporary wrote:

"His own idea of his duties as President was always openly and consistently expressed, and may perhaps be best described as that of the commander of an army in time of peace. He was to watch over the faithful administration of the government; ... and as it was the duty of every military commander to obey the civil authority without question, so it was the duty of the President to follow without hesitation the wishes of the people as expressed by Congress ... (He) assumed at the outset that it was not his duty to steer; that his were only duties of discipline."(10)

It is probably true that he saw himself as a figurehead, but one, nevertheless, with considerable authority. If it came to a difference between himself and Congress, he felt, despite his attitude to Congress, that his should be the last word, for the good of the country.

(9) Ibid, p.483
(10) Adams, "The Session", N.A.R., pp.33-34
The times, and even the kind of role Grant envisaged for himself, demanded a strong President and a political wisdom which he did not possess. A power he needed most was the ability to deal with Congress, for it became obvious as his Presidency continued, that he had no understanding of authority as a force constitutionally distributed among the three bodies of government - the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary; nor did he appear to realize that ultimate responsibility was his, and he frequently blamed Congress, or individuals, for the failure of his plans. Casehardened by straightforward military strategy, he failed in two important ways to cope with Congress - he was neither strong, nor diplomatic. All his life he had had an almost superstitious regard for the power of Congress, which he saw as invested not so much in a constitutionally well-organized and authoritarian body, as in a romantic conglomeration of representatives of "the feeling, wishes and judgment of those over whom he preside(d)". Yet at the same time, when Congress disagreed with him he saw it then as a collection of individuals personally opposed to his authority, seldom considering that perhaps a large section of the country too did not endorse his actions. This ambivalent

(11) U.S. Grant, Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant (2 vols. London, 1886) Vol. II, p. 510. It is interesting to note that Grant used "feeling" and "judgment" as if the entire country thought only one way. He had little concept of Congressional opposition.
attitude illustrated his lack of understanding both of his role and of Congress, and hinted at his failure to recognize that Congress needed to be controlled and led as well as heeded. Congress, on the other hand, certainly understood and took advantage of this weakness.

Many difficulties he did, of course, inherit. Congress, under Johnson, had won a considerable victory in its fight for ultimate authority and was still attempting to maintain the measure of power it had wrested from the Executive. It was hardly to be expected that Congress would stand aside and let the new President exercise his constitutional right to control foreign policy unchallenged, but Grant's limited understanding of diplomacy and his imperialistic ideals were a positive encouragement to Congressional interference and obstructionism. While it must be accepted that his problems with Congress were not all of his own making, his tactlessness and political ignorance did nothing to placate his opponents.

His relationships with Congress should have been cushioned by his Cabinet; as Adams wrote in 1870:

"Knowledge somewhere, either in himself, or in his servants is essential even to an American President ... and thus, though it was a matter of comparatively little importance that the President's personal notions of civil government were crude ... it was of the highest possible consequence that his advisors should be able to supply the knowledge that he could not have been expected to possess."

(12) Adams, "The Session", N.A.R., p. 34
Grant's Cabinet, however, was not impressive and his choices only served to emphasize his political uncertainty. The hopes for a strong Presidency that many entertained were dealt a severe blow by this Cabinet; most of its members were army friends or those who had rendered some party service, and Grant seemed to avoid any who, as experienced politicians, could have helped him deal with a recalcitrant Congress. Hesseltine maintains that in his choice of Cabinet members Grant was ruled by two considerations. Quoting Badeau and Rawlins as authorities, he claims that Grant's first desire was that he should not feel obligated to politicians, and the second was to have no Cabinet member overshadow him. Welles, on the other hand, believed Grant was aiming at a rejection of all parties. Both these interpretations have weaknesses. Hesseltine takes no note of the fact that the President remained loyal to, and influenced by, men such as Hamilton Fish, who was widely regarded as the only man of ability in the Government, or of the fact that Grant not infrequently relied upon the opinions of men of acknowledged political shrewdness, such as Butler. Welles was assuming political acumen in Grant, a quality he had earlier categorically denied him.

(13) Nevins,Fish,pp.107-8; Hesseltine,Grant,pp.137-9
(14) Hesseltine,Grant,p.139
(15) Welles,Diary,Vol.III,p.545
(16) Ibid,p.483
which dictated Grant's choices. There was certainly no cohesion in the Cabinet and within a few days there were changes. He was forced to give in to Congressional insistence that Stewart, as one actively engaged in commerce, could not be allowed to accept the Secretaryship of the Treasury. (17) Then it was discovered that Washburne had been made Secretary of State as a gesture to an old friend, and he resigned within a few days. At least two men - Jacob Cox, Secretary of the Interior, and Rawlins, Secretary of War - had been soldiers with Grant, and Stewart and Adolphe Borie, Secretary of the Navy, had contributed to the party funds.

"No statesman and patriot with right intentions would have selected it (the Cabinet) or any other of untried men for such positions." wrote Welles. (18) To complete the rather unfortunate picture, he chose as Secretaries four men who had once been his staff officers - O.E. Babcock, Horace Porter, Adam Badeau and F.T. Dent, the last also being his brother-in-law. (19)

There were two important areas where lack of contact between Grant and his Cabinet members and advisors was seriously to affect the efficiency of the administration.

(17) Hesseltine, Grant, p.147
(19) Pierce, Sumner, Vol.IV, pp.373-4; Hesseltine, Grant, p.149. Hesseltine describes Dent as aide-de-camp, not Secretary.
Firstly, few of the administration's officers understood him. He was difficult to reach, and if criticized would become stubbornly quiet. No-one was sure how he would deal with the issues of the day, and during his Presidency this uncertainty increased. Even Badeau and Rawlins who claimed to be able to manage and control him, which to some degree they could, acknowledged that they did not know why he succeeded but believed in him because he did. More importantly, Grant aggravated this by refusing to take anyone into his confidence. He was nervous of discussion and uncertain of delegated authority, and trusted only those he had known for some time. Rawlins and Badeau could influence his thinking, but Rawlins died soon after the beginning of Grant's first term, and Badeau was never a trustworthy or disinterested advisor. Cabinet members, however, were seldom informed of Grant's ideas until the moment they were expected to endorse them. Each man ran his department with little interference from Grant; there was thus little Presidential leadership or discipline, and no apparent policy. This led to frequent differences of opinion and embarrassment, though Grant was fortunate that his Cabinet was loyal. Nevins, and Cox, considered that Grant's aversion to discussing ideas and policies was one of the more severe handicaps upon the efficient

running of the administration. By not turning to his Cabinet members for aid but remaining secretive, he lessened their usefulness, deprived himself of their advice and counsel, weakened the chances for success of numerous measures, and left himself to flounder alone in the responsibility of government.

Possibly the most successful individual in the Cabinet was the Secretary of State, Hamilton Fish. Just why Grant picked this man for this most important role was not obvious; the two men had been friends for some time, and recent hospitality to Grant may have kept him in eye, but Fish had been out of active politics since 1857. The choice was certainly a surprise to American political observers, but it proved to be a wise one, and he was to become the most highly regarded official of Grant's two administrations.

Hamilton Fish was a man of upper class New York background. Well-educated, reserved, cosmopolitan and sophisticated, Fish had grown up in a home in which intellectual and political discussion was encouraged. When he himself entered politics in the early 1840s, he was an established lawyer, well entrenched in the upper echelons of society, with an influential wife and a growing family. His education, his profession and his

(21) Nevins, Fish, pp.132-3; J.D.Cox, "How Judge Hoar Ceased to be Attorney-General," Atlantic Monthly, August 1895, p.173.
(22) Nevins, Fish, p.105
(23) Nevins, Fish, pp.8-12
wealth linked him with what was loosely called the "vested interests" of the city and like many of his group he chose to enter politics in the service of the Whigs. (24) His father, a staunch Whig and active in politics, no doubt influenced his decision.

In the 1840's the Whig Party of New York was developing as a defence against the onslaught of the Loco-Poco Democrats. These radical voices demanded the destruction of established incorporations to end the chance of America's becoming a land of "inert security for the wealthy". (25) The Whig Party manifesto appealed generally to the secure and the professional, men who had much to lose by the upsetting of established patterns of society. Usually pacific and conservatively traditional, the Whigs thus appealed to Fish, whose conservatism, ingrained in his background and way of life, was an important factor in his attitude to politics and political responsibility. (26)

He served in Congress, unspectacularly, from 1842 to 1845 as a Member of the House of Representatives, and between 1845 and 1851, when he was elected to the Senate, he served as Lieutenant-Governor, then as Governor of New York. His one term in the Senate was capably but not outstandingly fulfilled (27) and in 1857, cut off

(24) Ibid, Chap.1
(25) Ibid, p.23
(26) Ibid, Chap.II
(27) Ibid, Chap.III; Pierce, Sumner, IV, p.375
from many contemporaries by his deep conservatism and abhorrence of radical commitment, he found he could not compete with the candidates of the new, vociferous Republican party and lost his seat.

In the Senate he had been respected enough to be given committee service, the most important for his future role being his election to the Foreign Relations Committee. But he kept himself out of all great controversies, being so accommodating that he was virtually negative. Although an early apostle of abolition he found even this ideal distasteful as soon as it departed from what he considered rational and balanced debate, and became a political weapon of the radicals. As the warmth of argument increased so his ardour lessened.

"The reopening of the slavery agitation, and the proposed negation of a solemn compact between conflicting sections and opinions is in every point of view, to be greatly deplored ... with all the Northern sentiment on the subject of slavery strongly and even actively operating on my mind and my conduct as a private citizen, I have ever refused to obtrude my sentiments or to express my opinions so as to offend those who look at the institution of slavery from a different standpoint from that which I occupy," (28)

His concern was not to compromise his pacifism by taking sides. The expansionist mood of the late 1840s and of the 1850s also disenchanted him; he saw only its dangers to the Union. His reticence about discussing either slavery or expansionism and his complete withdrawal from

(28) Nevins, *Fish*, p.52
the heat of political life rendered him, if not an
oddity, at least rather uninteresting to observers. The
only issues which seemed to rouse him to any extremes of
feeling were the fate of the Union, and of the party.

His concern for party unity may help to explain his
political diffidence, and his relationship with Grant.
Always a staunch party man he showed that this loyalty
came, and was to come, before many personal friendships
and beliefs. Hence, the tempering of his anti-slavery
instincts by a recognition of the unfortunately destruc-
tive emotionalism of the period was part of his fear for
the future of the party. As Northern and Southern
differences became so much greater than their areas of
agreement Fish bemoaned their effect upon the Union, and
spoke against the agitators who, whether of the North or
the South,

"will raise the fell spirit of discord, and
let loose wild passions and sectional
differences which may rend in sunder the
bonds which have hitherto made us one nation."(29)

The splintering of the Whig party he found
profoundly disquieting, as a symbol yet again of the
greater disharmony of the country, and the rather melo-
dramatic union of the New York Whigs and Republicans did
nothing to ease his fears.(30) Although Republicanism
was absorbing much that was Whiggish, Fish bowed to the

(29) Nevins, Fish, p.52
(30) Ibid, p.55
change with reluctance. He had hoped for something based on "broader and more catholic grounds", and was dissatisfied with the sectional quality of the newly developing party. (31) The intolerant antagonism towards anything Southern which was part of the Republican outlook worried him, and he joined the party only after lengthy hesitation, probably because, as one deeply interested in politics, he felt a need or duty to follow some party. His concern and sense may be obvious today; it was then politically unwise for it cost him advancement. (32) And although he spoke publicly in favour of the Republicans, (33) he refused the chance of another term as Senator and left, in 1857, for a tour of Europe, thus avoiding involvement in the important years from 1857 to 1859.

The war left him as out of touch with Northern sectionalism as ever, and he prepared to interest himself solely in business and municipal matters. He was still interested in politics and once the war destroyed many of the more obvious Northern grievances against the South he felt he could commit himself with more enthusiasm to the Republican party. The usurpation of party leadership by the Radical wing, however, probably encouraged his decision to avoid active politics. He was, at 60, more than a little surprised to find himself

(31) Ibid, p. 56; Pierce, *Sumner*, IV, p. 376
(32) Pierce, *Sumner*, IV, p. 376
(33) Nevins, *Fish*, p. 62
Grant's next choice for Secretary of State, and he was very loath to take up the position. (34) He finally accepted "because the reasons presented seemed ... to affect high interests," (35) but it had taken considerable pleading by Grant and diplomatic argument on the part of Babcock. (36)

The general reaction of the public to his appointment was favourable, many probably regarding this choice the best of a predominantly mediocre selection for Cabinet. Certainly Fish was in the happy position of having antagonized neither one political side nor the other. There is no evidence of any enemies in Congress; no-one spoke against his inclusion in the Cabinet. Sumner was well-disposed towards him, and even Welles noted:

"Fish is a New Yorker of medium talents, a man of wealth, of some experience and fair accomplishments, a moderate Republican, an old Whig, not an extreme man, will be rightly disposed and be likely to do tolerably well, if things move rightly, but without energy or force to correct Presidential errors or to resent wrong." (37)

No-one, it seemed, expected great things of him yet he was to be a very successful Secretary of State.

He came to the office with very little enthusiasm. He was not sure that he was fitted for this task, and

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(34) Nevins, Fish, pp. 112-3; Pierce, Sumner, IV, pp. 374-80
(35) Pierce, Sumner, IV, p. 379
(36) Hesseltine, Grant, p. 147
(37) Welles, Diary, III, p. 551
did not intend to remain for more than a few months. (38) He had no formal diplomatic training nor even a thorough grasp of the issues of foreign affairs. The sum total of his experience had been two years Senate Committee service which had included a fact-finding mission to Cuba. He had had an extended period in Europe and during the war he had served as a Northern negotiator with the South for the exchange of prisoners. It was a flimsy basis for the eight years of concentrated diplomacy he was to be called upon to undertake. Moreover, though strongly anti-expansionist by nature and politics, he was to become the diplomatic instrument of an expansionist era. However, his strengths were his loyalty, his commonsense, and his awareness of political responsibility. He did not have the aggressive self-assertion of Seward, but was prepared to counter Grant's frequently ignorant dogmatism with his own caution and moderation, especially where administrative unity was in the balance. Armed with this, and a certain shrewdness, he was to prove himself the most consistently successful member of the Cabinet.

The office of Secretary of State is at the best of times difficult, for foreign affairs is the department of the executive, and the Secretary can work in only as

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(38) Nevins, Fish, p. 115. Grant suggested that he stay until the end of the Congressional session, and Fish suggested Edwards Pierrepont as successor.
much room as the President allows him. (39) Although, as in Fish's case, the Secretary may gain the President's confidence to such a degree that the latter will grant virtual autonomy of action, this is not a constitutional requirement on the part of the President, who may interfere as much as he likes or thinks necessary. Even Fish, whom Grant believed indispensable, and to whom he gave considerable authority, had to contend with Grant's frequent interference and secretiveness. When working smoothly, the President-Secretary relationship is one of partnership, but a partnership where a good deal of care must be displayed by the Secretary, firstly not to give the impression that he controls the President, and secondly not to become a mere figurehead.

Because of the importance and frequent delicacy of this office, it has often been considered that the Secretary should be above the run-of-the-mill trials and pettiness of politics, but this has seldom been practicable. The result is that the Secretary remains shackled by any Congressional antipathy, whether on the grounds of personality or of principle. Henry Adams lamented the relationship of Secretary and Congress:

"The Secretary of State has always stood as much alone as the historian. Required to look far ahead and round him, he measures forces unknown to party managers, and has found Congress more or less hostile ever since Congress first sat. The Secretary of State

(39) For this paragraph see L.H. Chamberlain and R.C. Snyder. *American Foreign Policy* (New York, 1948)
exists only to recognize the existence of a world which Congress would rather ignore; of obligations which Congress repudiates whenever it can; of bargains which Congress distrusts and tries to turn to its advantage or to reject. Since the first day the Senate existed it has always intrigued against the Secretary of State whenever the Secretary has been obliged to extend his functions beyond the appointment of Consuls in Senators' service."

It was this which Fish was to find so difficult. Half-way between a Congress and a President virtually at one another's throats, he had no real power to wield in order to maintain a balance or to keep the machinery of foreign policy working smoothly. Unable by the constitution to deal with Congress personally, either to lead or to explain his attitudes, his measures were transmitted by the President to a body antipathetic to the Executive. In these years of Executive-legislature conflict, the position of Secretary of State, totally dependent upon the President for authority, and requiring the support of Congress to achieve anything at all, was frustrating and difficult. Fish's closest contacts with Congress were through the foreign relations committees of both Houses; but these contacts with the most vital legislative bodies handling foreign policy were indirect and impersonal, and the tenor of Congressional antagonism towards the Executive and the latter's so-called encroachment upon their powers made

peaceful relations almost impossible. The more influential of the two committees was that in the Senate, because of that body's constitutional right to a part in the conduct of foreign affairs. The Chairman when the Administration took office was Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts.

Charles Sumner came to the Senate in 1851 after his brilliant speeches, particularly those against slavery, brought him to the public eye. He was an effective Senator, erratic in ability but enthusiastic and emotional in an age which paid much attention to such attributes. He gained more esteem than he warranted after the Preston Brooks attack in 1856 which made him a martyr in the cause of abolition and spread his fame internationally. Upon his return to his seat after a lengthy convalescence he was regarded as the Senate's spiritual leader, and his power grew accordingly.

In March, 1861, Sumner was made Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, possibly the paramount post in the Senate. Taking into account his political experience, his standing among his colleagues and his reputation in foreign political circles, his effect should have been one of considerable value, but its usefulness to the Grant Administration was blunted by growing personal faults which lessened his judgment.

By 1868 he was querulous, vain and troublesome, until even those who revered him found him trying. He
was no longer the fiery visionary of the 1850s. With abolition achieved, Sumner was like a crusader without a crusade. He could not find the same glory in Reconstruction, or economics, or the other realities of post-war politics and without his great cause he was too often reduced to personal spites. Even his oratorical fire was beginning to dim, and Pierce, a most sympathetic observer, acknowledged that Sumner's speeches were occasionally rambling and heavy. Yet despite these failings, he remained the most influential single individual in the Senate, if not in Congress. Equally important, he could still sway public opinion and publication of his speeches could affect the political thinking of many people who regarded him as the leader of the Senate.

At Grant's election it did not appear that there was likely to be any antagonism between the President and the Chairman, although Sumner did not view the incoming President with any enthusiasm. The two had little in common. But it was galling for a man of Sumner's education, experience and sophistication to be governed by one who increasingly revealed an alarming lack of political skill. Sumner also doubted Grant's political convictions, for he was a very determined Republican and found Grant's late conversion to the Party disturbing.

(41) Pierce, Sumner, Vol. IV, p. 264
(42) Pierce, Sumner, Vol. IV, p. 358
There have been other more selfish motives assigned to Sumner, none of which can be conclusively proven. (43) The only one which is supportable is that he desired the office of Secretary of State and was annoyed by his failure to receive it. (44) Whatever the reasons, Sumner undoubtedly harboured a latent distrust of Grant. This revealed itself fully in the Santo Domingo debates where the Chairman led a personal attack on the President which eventually resulted in his own downfall.

He was replaced as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee by Simon Cameron, a man of dubious honesty but one dedicated to doing the Party's bidding. Under his less inspiring but more acceptable leadership, the Foreign Relations Committee became more of an Administration machine.

(43) See Pierce, op.cit.,Vol.IV,pp.371-73; Heseltine, Grant,p.138,n.29
(44) Pierce, op.cit.,Vol.IV,pp.171 (note),371
CHAPTER III  

CUBA

In October, 1868, revolution broke out in Cuba. It cannot have been unexpected, for numerous attempts had been made by Cuban radicals to induce the Spanish to grant certain reforms, such as the right to representation in the Spanish Cortes, the relaxation of tariffs, and the abolition of slavery. The most recent application for these reforms had been in 1865, when the Cuban Reform Party submitted a petition to the Spanish government, which was at that time encouragingly Liberal. It appeared to many Cubans that their hopes would at last be fulfilled, despite the efforts of the Spanish Cuban "Moderados" to blacken such moves with the brand of "revolutionary", (1) and on July 9, 1866, the Cortes passed "A Law for the suppression and Punishment of the Slave Trade", which marked a beginning. The Cuban hopes, however, began to dwindle when, in August, 1866, the Liberal party fell to the Moderados who, linked by financial and economic ties to the slaveowners of Cuba and Puerto Rico, opposed the growing reformist sentiment. The fate of the convention which had been suggested as a method of investigating the Cuban demands seemed to be in the balance but the new government decided to proceed. This liberal gesture was rendered worthless by the naming of an additional twenty-one commissioners

representing the Spanish government, who were thus placed in the majority.

While the Cuban representatives in Spain extolled their case, the situation in Cuba deteriorated, with sporadic outbreaks of violence and the development of a Republican Society of Cuba which, encouraged by the Union victory in the United States and by the revolutionary successes in Mexico and Santo Domingo, called for "liberty for all the inhabitants of Cuba and Puerto Rico, without distinction of race and colour". (2) It was a hopeful cry and it was a sign that mere compromises were unlikely to be acceptable. The fall of the Spanish Monarchy in September, 1868, albeit to a liberal provisional government, did not change the situation. The provisional government made various promises and decrees, which included universal male suffrage, and freedom of religion, of association and of the press, but the Cubans had lost faith in Spanish reform movements. The royalists were firmly entrenched in Cuban politics and the fact that their leaders had fallen in Spain did not affect their continuing authority. Decrees were made hundreds of miles away by governments which could not retain power long enough to enforce these decrees were not likely to touch the Cuban situation. This, plus the fact that Puerto Rico had not waited for Cuban

(2) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 164
support before declaring itself an independent republic, encouraged the increased activity of Cuban revolutionary meetings. When the revolt planned for Christmas Eve was uncovered, the leaders chose to begin it immediately rather than face the consequences of disloyalty.

Although the revolt proclaimed its intention to free the slaves, it was not primarily a revolution of the lower classes. Rather, it was one organized by the educated Cuban bourgeoisie and landowners who were protesting against the competition of Spaniards on the island. Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, one of the leaders, was a lawyer and landowner, and the officers of the Cuban Junta in New York, Morales Lemus, Alfaro, Jose Mora, Goicuria and Basora were all men of ability and education. The Declaration itself indicated the middle class nature of the revolution. Its main complaints were those of economic strangulation caused by inhibitive duties, the inability of Cubans to gain positions in the government of their own country, the prohibition of meetings and gatherings, and the denial of political education, all of which reflected the frustration engendered by the collapse of the reform movement. Only in the last short paragraph did the subject of the abolition of slavery appear. It was first and foremost a revolution of thwarted office-holders, planters and merchants, and only secondly a movement for abolition.
The news of the outbreak of open violence reached Havana some weeks later, where it was regarded as inconsequential, as just a "handful of deluded, badly armed fellows". With only 147 volunteers, the revolutionary armoury consisted of 45 fowling pieces, 4 rifles, a few pistols, a number of machetes, and very little ammunition. The organization was limited to the eastern section of the island and the Spaniards were convinced that it could be contained there. Yet as the revolutionary force engaged the Spaniards in battle, it became apparent that this was a misplaced confidence.

Month by month the army grew in numbers from 147 to 9,700 by the end of October and to at least 15,000 by the end of the year. They remained ill-equipped but by December they had taken over the city of Bayamo, had cut internal communications and had defeated numbers of Spanish detachments turned out hurriedly to meet the surprise attack.

The Spanish responded remarkably quickly once the magnitude of the rebellion was clear. A recruitment programme was set into motion, and 90,000 Remingtons were purchased from the United States. On the island began the organization of the "Voluntarios", Spanish Cubans bitterly opposed to the demands of the native Cubans and vicious in their defence of the way of life.

(3) Foner, *Cuba and U.S.*, p.174
they knew and controlled. (5)

The reaction in the United States was one of widespread sympathy with the rebels, a reaction which became more vocal as the rebels began to suffer before the growing Spanish resistance. Many felt that the American past obliged them to go to the aid of those struggling to free themselves from the tyranny of European imperialism. (6) The rebels themselves awaited the results of the 1868 United States elections with interest, for they believed that should Grant be elected to the Presidency one of his first acts would be "to liquidate Spanish domination in the island of Cuba, leading eventually to its annexation to the United States", (7) a view which had many adherents in the United States where there had long been an interest in the annexation of Cuba.

As the largest island in the West Indies, situated at the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico and only one hundred and thirty miles from Florida, Cuba had naturally attracted American attention, though the concern was decidedly more offensive than defensive. According to Weinburg, (8) this interest was evident from the 1820's

(6) Nevins, op. cit, p. 180; New York Times, October-December 1868
(7) Foner, op. cit, p. 166
(8) Weinburg, Manifest Destiny, p. 65
when the theory of the sea as one of the most complete of boundaries began to break down before the new ideals of expansionism. To the exponents of expansionist theories Cuba and Puerto Rico became simply extensions of national territory which it was natural but imperative to acquire. One of the leaders of this attitude was John Quincy Adams who wrote in the 1820s:

"These islands, from their local positions, are natural appendages to the North American continent; and one of them, Cuba, almost in sight of our shores, from a multitude of considerations has become an object of transcendent importance to the political and commercial interests of our Union. It is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the annexation of Cuba to our federal republic will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself." (9)

This awareness of Cuba steadily became more acute and the years leading up to the outbreak of the Civil War saw numerous attempts to bring Cuba within the Union.

As the Union extended and consolidated along the Gulf of Mexico the policies and politics of Cuba became correspondingly more important to the United States. The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 was the first concrete sign of this awareness of the Caribbean and of Cuba in particular. However, the case of Cuba illustrated one of the weaknesses of the Doctrine, for it apparently did not intend to allow Cuba to throw off Spanish rule if

(9) Ibid, p.67; Langley, Cuban Policy of U.S., pp.11-12
this could give rise to a Negro Republic. The spectre of a black republic impressed itself upon American thought in the 1840s and 1850s(10) when the interest in Cuba was at its height, endorsed by the fear of the South that it would be surrounded by slave-free states. The resultant vigorous efforts of Southern politicians to encourage the acquisition of Cuba were defensive measures, given added impetus by the pressure of Britain upon Spain to declare Cuba slave-free. In 1848 the Polk Administration, alarmed by this British activity, offered to buy the island for $100,000,000, which it felt sure Spain would accept. The reaction was antagonistic, to the surprise of Polk who had failed to consider Spanish pride, a failure on the part of Americans which was to continue throughout later negotiations.

Conditions likely to encourage intervention were always present as the political situation in Cuba was, at best, unsteady, and revolt continually threatened to break out. However, this gained little sympathy or support from official American sources, which were instead bent on maintaining the authority of the Spanish until they could be either bought out or removed by force, leaving the United States to establish a Cuban

government more suitable to American policies. Under
the Whig government of Zachary Taylor the interest in
Cuba shown by the Democrats was not sustained; internal
power struggles dominated politics. (11) This lack of
official concern did not deter several filibustering
tries which, organized and often led by Narcisco
Lopez, a Cuban expatriate, and encouraged by the Cuban
Junta in New York, sailed frequently for Cuba from 1849
until 1851 when Lopez was caught by the Spaniards and
executed. (12) The romantic interest engendered by Lopez
and by his "martyrdom" made filibustering an appealing
exercise for the more active of idealists or arms-
rungers, and during the next decades it became an
adventure openly supported by many in the United States
and covertly encouraged by officialdom because of the
refusal to enforce its prevention.

Official interest in Cuba continued more positively
with the return to power of the Democrats under Franklin
Pierce in 1852. His determination to acquire Cuba was
apparent early in his presidency. Britain and France,
anticipating this, attempted to induce the United States
to co-operate in a tripartite convention in which all
three would individually and collectively renounce any

(11) Pierce, Sumner, Vol. III, p. 255
(12) Langley, Cuban Policy of U.S., pp. 27-33; Foner, Cuba
and U.S., pp. 90-93
aggressive intentions towards Cuba. \(^{(13)}\) This was avoided, for it would have crippled the United States' expansionist hopes.

Two years later the most determined attempt to date to acquire Cuba was made by American ministers in Europe — Pierre Soule in Spain, John Mason in France and James Buchanan in Great Britain — who met in October, 1854, to discuss the problem. The result was the Ostend Manifesto which, although not specifically ordered by the Pierce government, was justifiably regarded as being symbolic of the administration's intentions. It declared that the acquisition of Cuba by the United States was a foregone conclusion, that nothing could prevent it, and that any attempt by European powers to do so would be regarded as unwarranted interference. It caused a vehement reaction in Europe and it was quickly disowned by Pierce. \(^{(14)}\)

By 1856 the Southern dominance in Congress had been lost and it was assumed that the powerful Northern block would prevent any further Southern attempts to acquire Cuba. President Buchanan and his Southern-oriented administration were still concerned with Cuba, though nothing was done officially. Lord Napier, the British

\(^{(13)}\) Langley, \textit{op. cit}, pp.35-36; Foner, \textit{op. cit}, p.94; Van Alstyne, \textit{American Diplomacy in Action}, pp.537-538
\(^{(14)}\) Henderson, "Southern Designs on Cuba", pp.373-5
minister in Washington, was convinced that such was the
determination of the whole country upon the annexation
of the island that the United States must ultimately
succeed, and he encouraged the view that Britain and
Europe should resign themselves to the fact, (15) but
opinion was not as unanimous as Napier supposed. In 1858
there was another effort to buy Cuba which did get as
far as a favourable report from the Foreign Relations
Committee but, when presented to the Senate, it was
taken up by the Republicans to be talked to extinction
in the cause of abolitionism. The next session of
Congress was hopelessly divided, and the measure came to
nothing. Then the Civil War attracted attention
elsewhere and Cuba was ignored until 1865.

During the presidency of Andrew Johnson, Secretary
of State Seward expanded American interests both north
and south, but he did not see Cuba as one of the West
Indian bases he valued so highly. His vision of empire
included the island but like many others he believed that
it would fall naturally into American hands. (16) The
outbreak of open violence in Cuba forced the United
States to consider more carefully its relationships with
the island. Filibustering seemed to be committing the
government to a policy it could never afford to maintain;

(15) Henderson, "Southern Designs on Cuba", pp. 383-4
(16) Frederic Bancroft, "Seward's Ideas of Territorial
on the other hand, many Americans felt sincerely that their country had a moral obligation to support the Cuban rebels. So, too, did many of the rebels. The New York Times on March 11, 1869, recorded that "some ... Cubans declare their belief that as soon as General Grant is inaugurated he will recognize the belligerent rights of the Revolutionary Government in Cuba". The stand taken by Grant would be important.

The situation at Grant's inauguration was highly emotional. Since the news of the revolt had reached the United States in late 1868, scarcely a day went by without some mention of the Cuban fight for independence in some national newspaper. Americans were stirred by the apparent similarities of the Cuban struggle to their own experience. Anti-monarchical feeling was, if anything, stronger following the vindication of republicanism in the Civil War. Resentment of Spanish imperial presence on the very border of the United States ran high. The fact that Spain was chronically weak, poverty-stricken and governed by a provisional military government which was attacked on all sides by monarchists, liberals and republicans, made this seem a good time to wrest Cuba from its control.

(17) e.g. New York Times, New York Tribune, Boston Daily Globe
Taking advantage of, and encouraging, this wave of fellow-feeling was the New York Cuban Junta, the headquarters of a number of similar organizations all over the country, most of which were run by Cuban refugees. The New York Junta was not a new body, but the renewed revolt in Cuba increased its activity, which, as more refugees flooded into the United States, became widespread and highly organized. Their work involved training recruits to be returned to Cuba, maintaining an inflammatory newspaper in New York, organizing mass meetings and rallies, and undertaking anything that would raise money for their cause. One of the largest rallies in the early months of Grant's Administration was on March 25 in New York, and speakers included Mayor Hall and Henry Ward Beecher. (18) Money poured in from all quarters, women gave up their jewelry and organized women's rallies (19) and the call for intervention increased. Congressmen were approached by representatives of the Junta, and letters pleading for recognition of Cuban belligerency were sent to the President and the Secretary of State. Resolutions to this effect were submitted in Congress (20) and though they failed to pass, the movement was not discouraged.

Grant himself was warmly sympathetic to the cause.

(20) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 59, 86, 276
of Cuban freedom. Like many other Americans he was affected by the humanitarian and political arguments, but a more important influence upon his thinking was John H. Rawlins, the Secretary of War. Not only was he a widely respected member of the Cabinet, but he was one of Grant's trusted friends. Able and frequently tactful, he was also fiercely enthusiastic about Cuban independence, and exhorted Grant to take some action. The President's faith in his dying friend was considerable and Fish was well aware of the danger he presented. Rawlins' motives, however, were suspect. Although he was genuinely affected by the straits of the Cuban rebels, there later appeared proof of his having subscribed generously to the notorious Cuban bonds. These bonds, which aroused a cry of corruption from Congress in 1870, were issued by the Junta in order to gain money and were redeemable upon the success of the revolt, encouraged as this would be, it was hoped, by American aid. No mention was made of these bonds until well after Rawlins' death, when $28,000 worth were found among the securities of the impoverished general.

(21) He was spoken of by the Washington press as the ablest statesman in the Cabinet. The New York Tribune on March 12, 1869, described him as an "aggressive spirit", wanting to achieve hopes of "an ocean-bound republic".

(22) Rawlins and Grant served together during the Civil War.

(23) Rawlins died on September 6, 1869, of tuberculosis.

(24) To be fair to Rawlins, Fish had known of the bonds earlier (Nevins,Fish,App.III,p.921) but did not say anything, probably because he did not at that time consider that owning them was a sign of corruption.
This pro-Cuban influence upon Grant was not limited to Rawlins alone. Many national newspapers demanded commitment to the cause of Cuban republicanism (25) and so did numerous members of Congress, notably John Sherman in the Senate, and N.P. Banks and B.F. Butler in the House. (26) Grant was inclined to listen to these advocates in the belief that they represented the true tenor of public opinion.

Fish, on the other hand, was aware of the dangers to the United States inherent in a recognition of belligerency, and was concerned with the effect of pro-Cuban arguments on the President. Like many, he believed in Cuba's rights to freedom and abolition and he sympathized with the struggles against the cruelty of Cuban slavery, but he was unconvinced by the constant emotionalism of the arguments and he did not feel that the United States was morally obliged to give aid. He felt that American interests would be best served by a policy of tact and moderation to minimize the chances of entanglement in war. (27) He believed that while the

(26) Banks had long been an expansionist, and had become one of the most impassioned defenders of the Cuban rebels. Ben Butler, always adaptable to any situation, developed into a staunch supporter of Grant. Although it appeared that his sympathies were honestly with the Cubans, he was renowned as a schemer and as an unreliable ally. But he was good-humoured and appealed to Grant, whom he cajoled and flattered. Nevins, Fish, pp. 184, 585. Also George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years. (2 vols, New York, 1903), Vol. I, pp. 221-25, 329-32.
(27) Nevins, Fish, p. 180; Foner, Cuba and U.S., pp. 201-2
provisional government lasted in Spain there was a chance for the success of republicanism, which he hoped would lead inevitably to the independence and emancipation the Cubans demanded.\(^{28}\) The encouragement or recognition of the rebels could only harm this latent movement.

Fish was also aware of the possible repercussions of recognition on the pending "Alabama" negotiations, where a similar denial of belligerent rights was at the heart of the American case. Britain had extended belligerent rights to the Confederacy when the latter had had a capital, a working administrative system, a navy and a successful army, none of which the Cuban rebels possessed. To recognize the Cuban rebels would be to provide the British with ammunition.\(^{29}\)

Decision-making was complicated by the unreliability of the news, for contradictory reports came out of Cuba daily. As the early months of 1869 passed the news became only more garbled, and it was difficult to discern fact from propaganda.\(^{30}\) Every Cuban report was followed by denials from Spanish authorities. Under

\(^{28}\) Nevins, op.cit.,p.181  
\(^{29}\) Foner, Cuba and U.S.,pp.203-4; Nevins, Fish,p.181  
\(^{30}\) Nevins, Fish,pp.180-2. An example of this was the report from William Newton Adams, lately consul at Santiago, asserting that the rebel government was "simply a few men under a tree". The Cuban Junta strenuously denied this but could provide no corroborative evidence.
these conditions any American action on behalf of the rebels would have been diplomatic folly.

Fish's stand was a difficult one to maintain and it became more so as the policy he had decided upon was constantly being undermined. The Cabinet allowed Fish for the moment to continue along his cautious path. Rawlins was continually aggressive but Grant was undecided and endorsed Fish's suggestion that the only American action should be a naval enquiry into the real situation in Cuba. (31) The Cubans, the Spanish and the American press were not so willing to temporise.

Fish refused to recognize the Cubans but they came to the State Department anyway, with heated arguments about Spanish tyranny, and about what Cespedes termed "the duty imposed upon (the United States) by the political principles it proclaims and diffuses to take the leadership in this (fight)" (32). The Secretary's reply was cold; Lemus, the Junta leader, was told that any letters should be directed to the State Department, and that no audiences would be permitted:

"Whatever might be our sympathies with a people, wherever, in any part of the world, struggling for more liberal government, we should not depart from our duty to other friendly governments, nor be in haste to prematurely recognize a revolutionary movement until it had manifested a capacity of self-sustenance and of some degree of stability." (33)

(31) Nevins, Fish, p. 182
(32) Foner, Cuba and U.S., pp. 199-200
(33) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 201
The Spanish were treated with similar coolness. The Spanish Minister, Don Mauricio Lopez Roberts denied reports of cruelty and demanded constantly that something be done about American filibustering excursions to the island. (34) Both sides pressed for action.

Meanwhile the pressure from the country itself increased, and there was a limited but persistent demand for annexation. On March 18, the New York Tribune wrote:

"General Grant is aware of the importance of an early acquisition of Cuba and any other territory that is contiguous to the United States,"

hinting that the only thing that stopped him taking over the island was the fact that Congress had not yet given its permission. The New York Times gave considerable space to reports of Spanish violence and the treatment of prisoners, (35) and to the prayer meetings and rallies held to encourage the Cuban cause. (36)

Late in March came the news that the Provisional Government in Spain had decided upon the restitution of a monarchy, and though a week later it was reported that this would be a constitutional monarchy it disillusioned those in the United States who had hoped for a republic,

(34) Nevins, Fish, p.183
(35) New York Times, March 19, 20, 21, 22; April 9, 12, 16.
and encouraged the House of Representatives to pass on April 9 an aggressively worded call for a recognition of the Cuban republic. (37)

The public indignation was constantly inflamed by reports of Spanish outrages against American individuals and shipping. Commercial vessels had been seized both inside and outside Cuban waters and their crews treated as pirates, (38) and Americans resident on the island had had their persons and property threatened. (39) These reports not only excited the American interventionists, but increased Rawlins' effect upon Grant, who detested cruelty.

Any remonstrances against the Spanish, however, were greeted with their outcries against filibusterers. These expeditions were leaving American ports with considerable regularity, aided and abetted by the Junta, and the government took some time to deal with them. The Spanish legation, on the other hand, had a very efficient detective force maintaining a watch at major ports, and their reports sent a furious Lopez Roberts to Fish with complaints and long lists of suspect vessels. (40) Although federal attorneys in all ports were told to maintain a watch, the situation did not

(40) Nevins, Fish, p. 185
improve. Too often the officials were in sympathy with the filibusterers. Arrests were made as precautions tightened, but evidence was difficult to find and on at least one occasion the friends of one accused filibusterer overcame police and rescued him. Gradually the American Government made a more concerted effort to prevent expeditions leaving, but it was almost a year before filibustering was under control.

Naval vessels were moved into the area both to protect American shipping and to prevent American filibusterers from reaching Cuba. This movement not only reflected the tension but increased it. The orders to resist the seizure of American vessels unless actually landing contraband could be widely and aggressively interpreted, and the appearance of more American gunboats in the Caribbean promoted both Spanish belligerence and the possibility of a clash.

Fish saw now that he was obliged to take some action. He could no longer afford to remain silent, but he could no more afford to consider recognition. The alternative he chose was one which did not commit the United States either way but which ultimately led it to assume a more aggressive pose than originally planned. That was the offer to arrange a peace between Spain and Cuba.

(41) Ibid, pp. 185-7
(42) Nevins, Fish, p. 190
The opportunity to put this into effect came in June, 1869, when a possible agent was chosen. This was Paul S. Forbes, a shrewd businessman who had spent much of his life in international circles and spoke French and Spanish fluently. He worked mainly in Europe and while there in 1868 and early 1869 heard confidentially that General Prim, head of the Provisional Government, was prepared to sell Cuba. After journeying to Madrid to discuss this rumour with Prim and discovering that it was true, he hastened to Washington. His eagerness undoubtedly reflected the fact that he owned Spanish bonds and represented international interests with money invested in Spain, but the possibility of buying Cuba or of being financially responsible for the island certainly appealed to the Grant Administration.

Forbes had brought with him a report from Prim, which Fish and Grant read in secret on June 2. It acknowledged the monetary stagnation and the desperate straits of the economy of Spain, but pointed out that national honour was involved as well. Consequently, the report claimed, any sum decided upon would have to take into consideration the fact that Spanish blood had been spent in defence of its empire, and Spain would have to agree with the proposal before it could be regarded as official. To this Forbes had agreed and he

(43) Nevins, Fish, p. 191-2; Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 206; Pierce, Summer, Vol. IV, p. 410
suggested that the United States should either guarantee payment by Cuba or buy the island herself. Prim preferred the former, demanding only that Spain be allowed to put down the rebellion and that, "the object of the sale being to extricate Spain from her financial difficulties, the sum must be sufficient for that purpose". (44)

Taking advantage of this report, Fish pencilled a note for the Cabinet and presented it two days later.

"United States offers mediation on the basis

I Of the independence of Cuba.
II Cuba to pay to Spain $- as indemnity for loss of revenue, etc., etc., for the public property of Spain the Islands - forts, arsenals, public lands etc.
III Emancipation of the slaves to be decreed.
IV An armistice pending the negotiations.

Cuba to issue bonds for $- bearing -% interest, payable within 20 years.

The United States, if assent of Congress be obtained, to guarantee these bonds, principal and interest, and the customs duties (export and import) of Cuba to be pledged as security. A sufficient sum annually to be paid into a trust for a sinking fund to pay the principal at the end of 20 years, besides paying the annual interest.

Discriminating duties, prejudicial to American productions, to be abolished.

All other duties (export or import) to remain unchanged unless with the consent of the United States." (45)

It seemed to be a perfect solution and opened the way for future extensions of American authority which might

(44) Nevins,Fish,p.193
(45) Nevins,Fish,p.193
be felt necessary on the island. The Cabinet was relieved and enthusiastic, except for Rawlins who believed the measure did not go far enough. The Cubans, when approached, approved the plan and agreed with Fish on a sum of $100,000,000. After plans were drawn up in secrecy, and after everyone whose support was thought necessary had been approached, Forbes was appointed special agent on June 26. He left for Madrid on July 1.

On the same day, the new United States Minister left to take up his post in Madrid. Daniel Sickles was a strange choice and one in which Fish concurred only after considerable hesitation. He was a man of dubious character. He had been involved in a larceny scandal, censured by the New York State Assembly for immoral conduct, and had killed a man in a duel. He had blundered his way through the Civil War, been part of the anti-Johnson campaign and had lost money heavily by gambling. His choice as Minister was apparently recognition of the part he had played as a campaign speaker for Grant, for he had little if any diplomatic training, and had indeed been very vocal in his endorsement of the Ostend Manifesto.

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(46) Ibid, pp. 193-4. These were Lopez Roberts, Thornton, the British Ambassador, and Lord Clarendon, British Foreign Secretary.

(47) Nevins, op. cit., p. 189

(48) The Springfield Republican called him "an unprincipled adventurer whose appointment is a disgrace, and will prove a calamity to the country". The Senate was also hesitant; though appointed in 1869, he was not confirmed in office until March 1870.

(49) Nevins, Fish, p. 189
instructions were extremely full and were concerned with the organization of a conference between Spain, the United States, and Cuba. His bargaining power was increased by the addition of a supplementary note which stated:

"(You) may add, in a case of a protracted discussion, on the prospect of a refusal by Spain to accept the proposed offer by the United States, that an early recognition of belligerent rights is the logical deduction from the present proposal, and will probably be deemed a necessity by the United States, unless the condition of the parties to the contest shall have changed very materially." (50)

Despite this threatening tone, Fish himself encouraged the negotiations by taking preventive measures against filibustering which intercepted one of the largest expeditions to date. (51) All seemed to be progressing very well.

From the time that Forbes arrived in Spain, however, the situation began to deteriorate. He arrived on July 14, a week before Sickles, and, beginning the negotiations with Prim, quickly assumed a position of authority he did not want to give up. On July 16, he cabled that Prim now wanted $150,000,000 but would include Puerto Rico. Forbes felt sure that Prim would accept a lower sum and added, "Chief wishes to treat solely himself through me." (52) On July 20, in an explanatory letter to Fish, Forbes repeated this claim and continued:

(50) Nevins, Fish, p. 197
(51) This was the "Catherine Whiting" expedition on June 26-27. The vessel was captured just outside New York harbour.
(52) Nevins, op. cit., p. 199
"Mr. Sickles has not yet arrived. He seems unable to move quickly but meanwhile Cuba bleeds ... If diplomacy is slow humanity will not wait, the magnetic wires will do their duty, annihilating time and space - and those who tarry must find when too late that they come only to reap barren honors and harvest garnered fields." (53)

The observations he made upon the attitudes of the Spanish officials were encouraging, and Fish felt confident that the negotiations would soon be terminated. Sickles, however, found on his arrival that this optimistic state of affairs was illusory.

The Spanish officials had not made any decisions, and in fact Sickles experienced some hostility. Forbes was undermining the United States Minister and calling for more authority, (54) while Sickles was overcome by cables from Fish, pressing for results. (55) The Spanish, it appeared, were stalling for time while Prim looked for someone to take over the government, and both he and Silvela, the Minister of State, acknowledged later that the Spanish people could never have been convinced of the need to give up Cuba. (56)

Fish and the Administration became increasingly

(53) Nevins, Fish, p. 231
(55) Sickles later claimed that it was this pressure from Fish on Spain that defeated mediation as Prim wanted time to prepare public opinion. J.M. Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, (London, 1899), p. 377
(56) Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, pp. 382-3
disillusioned, and the delicate balance between war and peace in the negotiations with Spain was not helped by a revival of interventionist demands. The New York Times, which in April had been strongly opposed to any talk of annexing Cuba, was by May and June enthusiastically reporting annexationist meetings and by June 26 was actively supporting it. Grant, impressed by these views and by Rawlins' continual pressure for intervention, discussed the problem with Sumner. The Chairman advised him against any aggressive move, but by August Grant was convinced that he should issue the proclamation of recognition of belligerency which he had drawn up secretly with Rawlins in mid-July. Fish, fearful that he would not be able to stave off this step for much longer, cabled Sickles to hurry the negotiations. On August 14 Grant wrote to Fish that he intended issuing the proclamation "if General Sickles had not received an entirely satisfactory reply to his proposition to mediate between Spain and the Cubans".

It appeared that Fish's policy had failed, but on the same day, August 14, a cable arrived from Sickles.

(57) According to Callahan, op.cit.,p.381, even the European press was content to see Cuba fall to the United States.
(58) Pierce,Sumner,Vol.IV,p.409
(59) Nevins,Fish,p.239. Grant sent this proclamation to Fish in order to get the State Department seal. Fish delayed sealing it in the hope that Sickles would succeed in gaining some concessions from the Spanish. The proclamation was later locked away.
Spain had accepted mediation with a proviso. Prim's modifications of the original American plan were embodied in four propositions. Firstly, the insurgents were to lay down their arms; secondly, Spain would grant a full and complete amnesty; thirdly, the people of Cuba were to vote by universal suffrage on the subject of independence, and finally, if the majority chose independence and if the Cortes granted it, Cuba was to pay a satisfactory sum, guaranteed by the United States. From this point, mediation was doomed to failure.

Fish refused to accede to the first and third propositions on the grounds that they were impracticable. On August 16 he instructed Sickles to negotiate on terms which in effect ignored the Spanish proposals. Prim, however, refused to accept the propositions of the original American document and though the discussions continued, it was obvious that a deadlock had been reached.

Fish, like many others, failed to understand the pride of the Spanish. Prim had claimed that only if the financial offer was high enough to cover the Spanish investment in men and money would Spain sell Cuba, but this was more than a matter of pecuniary need; it concerned Spanish honour. To lose Cuba was to lose self-esteem. The conditions which Prim imposed upon the negotiations were impractical if their success was earnestly wanted. However, it is probable that he was

(60) Nevins, Fish, p. 239; Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, p. 380
still undecided about what the Spanish reaction would be; by delaying he hoped he could prepare Spain and still retain American interest, thus avoiding a recognition of belligerency. (61)

Meanwhile the chances of successful mediation faded even more as the Cubans refused to accept the Spanish terms and as the American press printed further articles on violence in Cuba. (62) In the Cabinet, however, Fish had achieved some degree of success. He managed to defeat Rawlins in an impassioned debate on Cuban independence, and Grant had agreed to withhold recognition for the time being, and to extend mediation until October 1. Fish was relieved, (63) especially when the pressure for intervention in Cabinet was lifted by the death of Rawlins on September 6, (64) and Sickles had sent encouraging reports to the effect that many in the Spanish Cabinet were "apparently in earnest for a complete accord with the United States". (65) Both men were being overly optimistic. Spain had no intention of agreeing to the American proposals, and any slight hope for a fruitful continuation of the negotiations was finally destroyed in mid-September. A garbled version of the American

(61) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 208
(62) Ibid, p. 209; Nevins, Fish, p. 243; Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, pp. 383-4
(63) Ibid, p. 244
(64) Ibid, p. 247
(65) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 210
plans was released to the Spanish press apparently by Bicerra, acting Minister of State. (66) The result was an immediate and bitter denunciation of the United States and of its interference in Spanish colonial policy. Mediation was over.

The next few months were taken up by the Dominican situation and Grant's attention was diverted from Cuba. The press, however, remained interested in Cuba, and the New York Times still discussed the possibility of annexation. (67) The pro-Cuban rallies continued, especially after United States released some gunboats built for Spain. The opening of Congress in December increased the pressure. Grant's December 5 Annual Message to Congress pacified no-one. After an initial struggle with the President, who included on his own volition a number of passages from a departmental report on Cuba which Fish had not intended for publication, the Secretary managed to restrain the message to sentiments of sympathy. It pointed out that

"The contest has at no time assumed the conditions which amount to a war in the sense of international law or which would show the existence of a de facto political organization of the insurgents sufficient to justify a recognition of belligerency." (68)

The message also included a paragraph which has been

(66) Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, p. 385, note (67) New York Times, September 6, 7, 1870
(68) J.D. Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents (Washington, 1897) Vol. VII, p. 31. All references are to Vol. VII unless otherwise stated.
interpreted as Grant's extension of the Monroe Doctrine; (69) like the Doctrine it attacked European influence in the area but did not preclude American acquisition of territories as dependencies. (70) Combined with a paragraph to the effect that "the principle is maintained ..., that this nation is its own judge when to accord the rights of belligerency", (71) the message appeared less as a statement of American policy than as a rather negative attempt to cajole and pacify the extremists expected to control the discussions on Cuba.

On December 10, the opposition in the House began the debates on Cuba. A letter from the Government of South Carolina "transmitting a copy of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the State relative to the recognition of the republic of Cuba by the United States Government" (72) was presented to the House, and on December 13 Ward of New York presented a petition signed by over 70,000 citizens of the state calling for the recognition of Cuba and of the "independence of her sons from the tyranny of foreign yoke which for more than a year they have maintained unaided by the triumph of their arms". (73) Fitch of Nevada took the floor on December 10 to deliver a long, emotional speech on Cuba,

(70) Richardson, op. cit., p. 32
(71) Ibid
(72) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 2 sess., p. 64
(73) Ibid, p. 100
which contained an attack on the President for his stand and exhorted the Congress to action. This, he felt, would force the Administration to recognize the island's independence.

"(But) possibly we should have more than this. Perhaps we should possess by the generous suffrages of a people whom we had helped to liberty, the right of ownership of that tongue in the Gulf of Mexico which can dictate commercial laws to the Caribbean Sea - the right to flaunt a banner of thirty-eight stars in the face of the equator, and to count among the brightest of the constellation the planet which symbolize the island States." (74)

The speech aroused a stirring round of applause which had to be quietened by the Speaker.

From January to late February 1870 scarcely a day passed without some reference to the situation in Cuba. Resolutions for recognition were regularly passed to the Foreign Relations Committees in both Houses. The New York Times on January 29 and February 4 ran articles on the strength of the rebel government which claimed that all requirements in international law were fulfilled. The arguments were remarkably restrained and illustrated the urgency felt in Congress. There were frequent references to international law and lengthy quotations from law books in attempts to define warfare, (75) and several speeches in both Houses won applause from the

(75) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 2 sess., pp. 192, 1206, 1265, 1266
floor and the galleries. The Legislature was pressuring the Administration and with effect, for Fish began looking for ways to quieten the opposition to his policy.

He had continued his attempts to gain something from Spain, but the failure of mediation and the evasiveness of the Spanish response to American overtures had frustrated him and angered the country. The Secretary had warned Spain repeatedly that the United States Administration could not long hold off the public demand for recognition, but meanwhile he made efforts to restrain this demand.

On January 7 the New York Herald published an article by the Washington correspondent, T.M. Connery. It claimed that the rebellion was on its last legs and that the Cuban Junta was a mismanaged failure. The President and the Secretary of State, it declared, had been willing to recognize the rebels but "disaster after disaster followed (for the rebels) and the President was reluctantly compelled to withhold his signature from the Proclamation". (76) Now the rebellion was over, it would not be needed. The article claimed that all this was beyond question; that the information had been furnished by "a high official". That official was Fish, who hoped to induce many interventionists to think again. But the effect on public opinion was minimal, and the clamour continued through March and April.

(76) Poner, Cuba and U.S., p. 214
What was needed, as Fish was aware, was some force to back the American demands, and on May 28, in desperation at the situation, he approached the British Minister, Thornton, on the possibility of Britain's siding with the United States in warning Spain that intervention in Cuba was imminent unless the war was ended. Thornton shrewdly pointed out that such threats were useless unless action was intended. Fish then suggested that Britain and the United States should declare that action would be seriously considered. Nothing illustrates more aptly both Fish's concern and the weakness of his position.

When Congress reopened the debate in June, this position became critical. He realized that the demands of the country could not be disregarded much longer. Not even accusations of bribery with Cuban bonds could dampen the determination of the interventionists. Attacks on Fish had increased and it was apparent that his resignation would be necessary if he failed to halt this trend. The agitation in favour of passing yet another resolution was so intense that Fish felt that its continuation could only mean war.

The only way possible to prevent the success of the Congressional moves was a firm Administration stand. The Secretary thus wrote for Grant a decisive message.

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(77) Nevins, Fish, p.347
(78) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 2 sess., pp.4224-4331.
on the Cuban situation which would point out the dangers of recognition and indicate the President's confidence in the State Department. The Cabinet's attitude was mixed,(79) but Grant was in favour of the message; he was still concerned with Santo Domingo and had for some time been allowing Fish to cope with the Cuban situation.

The next day, apparently on the advice of George Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury, who favoured action in Cuba, Grant changed his mind. He suggested instead that the message be sent to the Senate as a departmental report, with the addition of a Presidential endorsement. Fish pointed out that the paper would immediately lose any effect, but he could not get Grant to accept the original. Two days later, on June 2, he went to the White House and told the President bluntly that either the report went to Congress as a Presidential message or he would resign.(80) He refused any longer to bear the brunt of the attacks against the Administration's foreign policy while the President regarded the issues with indifference and undermined the Secretary's authority. Grant was impressed by Fish's annoyance and cancelled a trip to Annapolis in order to read the report again.

He kept it for eight days during which Fish heard nothing. On June 10 Ben Butler and Representative Orth

(79) Nevins, Fish, p. 354
(80) Nevins, Fish, p. 355
of Indiana called at the State Department to warn the Secretary that a vote on Cuba could be expected within the next few days and the margin would be close. The message was vital to preserve party unity and Fish's policy. On the morning of June 13 he presented a newly worded message to Grant, impressing upon him the urgency of the situation. After some hesitation, on the grounds that it would cost votes for his Santo Domingo policy, he gave in, and at four p.m. the message was sent to Congress. (81)

It had the desired effect, and caused a sensation at the same time. Acknowledging that the future might bring an opportunity to go to the aid of the Cuban rebels, the message stated firmly that such aid could not be considered at the moment. Reference was made to the distribution of Cuban bonds, and, more importantly, it was denied that the insurgents had any claim to the status of belligerents; they had no government, no army of any strength, no arms, no ports and no territory. (82)

Congress was amazed and on June 14 the debates began again. John Farnsworth of Illinois defended the message. He claimed that aid to Cuba could only lead to war with Spain and consequently to the destruction of American republicanism. (83) In the evening session Thomas Swann

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(81) Nevins, Fish, pp. 356-7
(82) Richardson, Messages and Papers, pp. 64-9
(83) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., p. 4436-7
of Maryland resumed the attack on the Administration, calling upon the United States to recognize its position as upholder of the rights of man, and went on more aggressively to voice the feelings of many interventionists:

"I would permit no interference with the great mission upon which we have entered. If Cuba, under the guardianship of Spain, stands in the way the consequences will be with herself. If she persists in the oppression of her people, in the violation of the rights of American citizenship, in the disregard of the common laws of humanity, she must be taught the example which this nation holds out to her ... Her soil will be invaded in the interests of freedom, and the American flag will float over her in spite of the combined powers of the world." (84)

There were assaults on the President's honesty and his republicanism, and there were attacks on his advisors. (85) Fernando Wood of New York reasserted the country's republicanism amid a lengthy applause.

"All feel and know that sooner or later our political system must spread round the whole of the Gulf, and Cuba must then be under our protection, if not eventually incorporated into our system. This is no question of greed or of domination, but simply of population and of geography." (86)

The message did, however, have equally staunch supporters. Butler argued against intervention, with the emphasis of his speech being on the rumour of bribery attached to the Cuban bonds. (87) Orth maintained that

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(84) Ibid, p. 4440
(85) Ibid, pp. 4446-8
(86) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 2 sess., p. 4481
(87) Ibid, p. 4483
the United States was not responsible for any action in Cuba and there was no need to force a war with Spain just because a few Americans had been killed. In opposition to the arguments of the interventionists he believed that hasty recognition would retard the inevitable gravitation of Cuba to the United States, a belief which was supported by Jacob Ambler of Ohio and Charles Willard of Vermont. The debate centred on the House as Logan's resolution for recognition was pending there. On June 16 the vote went against the resolution by 100 to 70, the only concession to interventionists being a call for a protest against the brutality of the rebellion. Fish had won.

Many agreed it was an Administration triumph and it certainly gave an appearance of unity and strength which previously had been lacking. Its effects were considerable. The attention paid to Cuba in Congress slackened and the remaining resolutions for recognition received scant consideration. The episode seemed to indicate that Congress had been seeking in the Cuban debates less an endorsement of their views than leadership.

Relations with Spain were more peaceful for the next few months and there was a return to the diplomatic attempts to gain a settlement of American claims against Spain for damage to American property in Cuba. These

(88) Ibid., App., pp. 504-6
(89) Ibid., App., pp. 507, 536-8
(90) Nevins, Fish, p. 362
were delicate and frequently infuriating negotiations but Fish was restrained. His success in reaching at last the point where a commission was accepted was due less, however, to his diplomatic skills than to a sudden desire of the Spanish to conciliate American opinion. In 1870 the obvious Spanish weakness was aggravated by two events, one internal, one external. Having decided that a monarchy was to be the political organization of Spain, the Cortes was finding it difficult to find a candidate for the throne. The uncertainty this imposed weakened the Provisional Government and left it more than usually open to attack from the Carlists, the Army and the Republicans, who were all vying for power in the interim. The search for a candidate had helped to precipitate a conflict between France and Prussia, which deprived Spain of one of her European supporters, and forced Britain to divert her attention from the specific Spanish problems to the general European situation. By mid-1870, therefore, Spain was without allies, and attempts were made to conciliate the United States.

In May a lukewarm gesture towards abolition was made in a resolution presented to the Cortes, "The Preparatory Law for the Abolition of Slavery in the Spanish Antilles". So few were its concessions that it appeared to be aimed
at delaying American action.\(^{91}\) No abolition policy was likely to succeed until the Spanish government was strong enough to withstand the demands of Spanish and Cuban slaveowners, plantation runners and businessmen. Prim was aware of this, but he was biding for time until the new regime was installed, and warded off American demands by agreeing to Fish's suggestion of a court of arbitration, then adapting its terms of reference.\(^{92}\)

On November 16, Amadeus, Duke of Aosta, was elected King of Spain,\(^{93}\) his regime to take effect on January 1, 1871. Until that time Spanish officials could afford to dally, as their responsibility would cease with the change of administration.

Fish continued to instruct Sickles to negotiate for the commission, though his patience was running out.

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\(^{91}\) Foner, *Cuba and U.S.*, pp.220-21. The law provided that all children of slave mother were "free but held in patronage" until 18. The master, or "patron" could utilise their free labour until they were 18, then pay them half pay of Whites. All slaves born between September 18, 1868, and the passage of the bill (July 4, 1870) could purchase their freedom for $50, which would mean that they would have to spend most of their working lives in servitude anyway. The only slaves freed immediately were those over 60, who now, after a lifetime of work, had to support themselves in their old age. Punishments, for example, whips, chains, manacles etc., remained.


\(^{93}\) *P.R.F.R.* (1871-2), p.730. Sickles to Fish, November 19, 1870.
Prim was not able to override the powerful interests in Spain which were determined to hold on to Cuba, though he was still considering selling the island to the Cubans. In November he sent agents secretly to the Cuban Junta in New York and to the rebels with plans for selling Cuba for $200,000,000, the sum to be guaranteed by the United States. (94) Such an arrangement would also help Spain to pay the reparations demanded by the United States. This scheme collapsed with the death of Prim on December 30, 1870, from injuries received in an assassination attempt three days earlier. (95) The situation appeared to have deteriorated again, but on January 26, 1871, Minister of State Martos agreed to concede to the demand for an arbitration commission.

Whether the new regime had intended submitting to American demands before coming to power never became obvious but in December a situation developed which may have influenced the decision. On December 5, 1870, Grant presented to Congress his second Annual Message. The section on Cuba did not add much to the special message of June 13, but it included a hope that arbitration would solve the difficulties between Spain and the United States, and added

(94) Nevins, Fish, pp. 617-18
"Should the pending negotiations, unfortunately and unexpectedly, be without result, it will then become my duty to communicate that fact to Congress, and invite its action on the subject." (96)

The international press seemed sceptical about the reality of this threat; most said they would wait and see. (97) Spanish papers were considerably more decisive. One, El Imparcial, believed the whole statement to be an elaborate political trick to retain the favourable opinion of an influential section of Congress, (98) but others, La Igualdad, La Epoca, La Discussion, and El Universal, felt, in varying degrees of anxiety that the President's statement signified a dangerous period for Spain if the threat was carried out. (99)

Though some accommodation had been reached with Spain, the situation in Cuba did not improve. Reports of murder, plunder and barbarity reached Washington almost daily. (100) Although Congress was comparatively quiet on the subject of recognition, the Administration's concern with Spain did not cease, for Fish took it upon himself to propose that the Spanish end slavery in their Latin-American colonies.

(96) Richardson, Messages and Papers, p. 98
(97) P.R.F.R. (1871-2), pp. 736-7
(99) P.R.F.R. (1871-2), pp. 738-9
(100) New York Times, January and February, 1871
The Secretary of State hoped that, by precipitating abolition in the Spanish colonies, he would be bringing about a cessation of the war in Cuba, and his beliefs were shared by many fellow-Americans. The intolerance in his instructions to Sickles was surprising in a man so avowedly peaceful, but it was only a reflection of the period. The faith of Americans in their way of life, endorsed as it seemed to be by the success of federal Republicanism in the Civil War, was vociferous, and the fact that their own emancipation of slaves had been belated did not prevent many from crusading this ideal aggressively. Since 1869 Fish had regularly urged abolition upon the Spanish government, and had discussed the problem at length with Lopez Roberts.(101) By 1870 these suggestions had developed into demands, and on December 21, Sickles, acting on Fish's orders, wrote to Sagasta, the Colonial Minister, a report on the American attitude to Cuban slavery. This message included a veiled threat.

"These sentiments ... coincide with the conviction more than once frankly declared to the Government of His Highness the Regent that the policy of political and administrative reform in Cuba is best calculated to restore peace to that island ... among the considerations which have most contributed to restrain the manifestations of sympathy felt in the United States for those ... struggling in Cuba for self-government, has been the confident expectation ... that ..."

(101) Nevins, Fish, pp. 344-5.
institutions in harmony with the Spanish constitution of 1869 would be extended to the Spanish Antilles." (102)

From this period there was an increase in the number of such statements, and a corresponding increase in the sharpness of tone. (103)

The Spaniards received such demands sporadically throughout 1871 but, as the larger part of American interest was taken up by the Geneva Arbitration on the "Alabama" claims, the Cuban situation did not attract considerable attention again until late in 1871 when one of the first diplomatic messages to be sent was a discussion on emancipation. (104) Meanwhile the political situation in Spain had declined once more. The machinery of government was barely working, governments rose and fell, and revolt was more common than peace. Carlists, Republicans and Liberals continued to attack the monarchy, and Sickles reported that sessions of the Spanish Cortes were frequently cancelled because of the uneasy situation. Taking advantage of these disturbances within the mother country, the Spanish Cubans kept up a vocal representation in the Cortes and used the press to encourage the defeat of any measures for abolition. (105)

(103) It is interesting that this increase in official pressure upon Spain on the subject of emancipation should have come so quickly after the announcement of the pending establishment of a monarchy.
"It is at least certain (wrote Sickles) that a league of Madrid and provincial journals has been formed with the avowed object of opposing the "filibusterers and internationalists", and it is believed that the real business of this association is to maintain slavery in the Antilles at all hazards and whatever the cost." (106)

The attempts by the United States to force emancipation upon the Spanish strengthened the opposition, which saw these attempts as unwarranted outside interference in domestic affairs. A writer in *El Emigrado* maintained that the aims of the United States were purely covetous and that they expected Cuba to fall into their hands. Independence would mean that the United States would bleed both Spain and Cuba.

"Let Cuba be independent tomorrow, and in a short time the fable of the wolf and the lamb would, at our expense, be re-enacted, for our beloved island would be found disturbing the waters of the Gulf which bathes the feet of the American Union. In order to be Cuba, Cuba cannot be independent." (107)

Martos was reported to have said

"if we lose Cuba by mismanagement and by alienating the affections of the loyal inhabitants, we should be looked upon as traitors; if the United States choose to deprive us of our colony, we may have to yield in the end to superior force, but we shall have preserved our national dignity." (108)

War was to be preferred to an enforced emancipation.

(107) *Callahan, Cuba and International Relations*, pp. 400-1
(108) *Nevins, Fish*, p. 619
As the relations between Spain and the United States declined once more it became obvious that not only Fish, but the American Minister to Spain, Daniel Sickles, was aggravating the situation. Admiral Polo de Bernabe, the capable new Spanish Minister to Washington, informed Fish that Sickles was involved in deals and intrigues with the renascent Republicans in Spain and that his behaviour was proving a political embarrassment. (109)

It was evident from Sickles' despatches to Fish that his sympathies lay with the Republicans and their attempts to gain power, and he became increasingly tactless during 1873 and 1874 as this involvement deepened. (110)

The American Minister returned to Madrid in June 1872, after leave in the United States, carrying with him orders to close the Legation if American demands were not met. The pressure from the United States for emancipation continued, (111) and Spain retaliated with protests against filibustering. At the same time American hopes for success rose with the accession to power of Ruiz Zorrilla, a Radical who favoured the Republicans. Zorrilla's premiership saved Sickles from recall. He had antagonized Sagasta, who had demanded his removal, but

(109) Ibid, p. 620; Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, p. 406. Sickles later admitted this involvement, though his interpretation of events did not correspond to that of Admiral Polo.

(110) Nevins, Fish, p. 621

Zorrilla asked that he remain. (112)

Americans were soon disappointed by Zorrilla. Although he had long attacked the efforts of political opponents to gain peace and stability, he soon found that the conditions of Spain, especially its economic exhaustion, and the power of the vested interests, precluded radical reform. He reported that he would not grant reforms in Cuba until the revolutionaries laid down their arms, (113) and the Spanish Minister in London claimed that Zorrilla believed this was being delayed only because American interference was keeping the revolt alive. Fish was indignant at this accusation.

"I think this government has done all a government can be called upon to do in such circumstances; that for nearly four years we have abstained from recognizing belligerency; we have exerted the inherent power of a government to arrest expeditions and seize vessels, (and) have broken up the Junta ... I state that ... unless Spain is more successful in subduing the insurrection than she has been ... I cannot say that we may not be obliged to adopt a different line of policy." (114)

He immediately instructed Sickles to press the demand for abolition, (115) and on October 24 warned Polo that recognition of belligerency was imminent. (116)

(112) Sagasta fell from power in June and Marshal Serrano took over the government. He was forced to resign within seven days. P.R.F.R. (1872-3), pp. 553-5, 559-60.
(113) Nevins, Fish, p. 623
(114) Ibid, p. 624
(115) Ibid.
(116) Ibid, p. 625
On October 29 he sent to Sickles a most outspoken document, so unguarded in tone that Sickles decided it was wiser to present only a precis of it. In it, Fish claimed that the abolition laws which Spain had passed "partly at our insistence", remained unexecuted, and declared that although the United States abided by the general rule which required a notion to avoid interference in the domestic policies of other nations, "circumstances warrant partial exceptions to this rule.

Governments (he continued) cannot resist a conviction so general and so righteous as that which condemns as a crime the tolerance of human slavery, nor can governments be in fault in raising their voice against the further tolerance of so grievous a blot upon humanity... A nation gives justification to resistance while wrongs remain unredressed."

After informing Sickles that he was to present this formidable despatch in such a way as to make it clear that the United States was in earnest, he finished with the threat that if redress was not forthcoming "Spain must not be surprised to find... a marked change in the feeling and temper of the people and the government of the United States."

Fish had hoped that this would prompt some action but nothing happened, chiefly because Spanish officials feared a political upheaval. Some reforms had been mooted earlier in the month but they had led to a

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conservative revolt, and the Spanish government thus suppressed Fish's despatch in the interests of peace. As it was, the Secretary of State was not prepared to go to the lengths of recognition or war. Threats had been made before and never carried out. "No. 270", as this despatch became known, was as empty as others.

Its failure forced Fish to think again about the policy he was pursuing. Threats of recognition had achieved nothing, but now he was committed to some action. He chose high discriminatory duties against all slave‐owning countries, notably Cuba, Puerto Rico and Brazil. The Cabinet endorsed the idea on November 21. Admiral Polo was advised of the situation and he immediately cabled to Spain for a rapid answer; the President's Annual Message to Congress would incorporate the decision, and the message was to be delivered on December 2.

On November 24, Martos pointed out to Sickles that reforms for the colonies were being considered and that American hostility could be embarrassing. (118) By December 2, the Spanish Ministry had decided to give in, and to avoid parliamentary complications it declared by executive decree that civil and military authority in Puerto Rico would henceforth be separate, and that a bill for the emancipation of slaves would be submitted to the

It would apply, however, only to Puerto Rico which was peaceful and wealthy. Cuba was not included.

Fish had won a small victory but had not achieved his aim of freeing Cuba from some of its Spanish ties. Slavery continued, American property was still embargoed, Spanish Cubans exacted heavy port duties, and Americans complained that the State Department was doing nothing. Newspapers took up this attack, and once again Fish found himself the scapegoat. To protect himself he published the correspondence with Sickles, including "No. 270". This relieved the pressure in the United States, but only increased the discontent in Spain. Many Spaniards were convinced the liberal reforms had been issued only because of American pressures, and the reaction against this affront to Spanish pride led to the downfall of the Zorrilla regime. In Cuba there was considerable resentment against the negative policy of the American Government.

In the United States, feeling gradually hardened against Spain. Calls for a stronger line resumed and on December 9, 1872 Representative Blair presented a bill for the emancipation of Puerto Rican slaves was submitted to the Cortes within three weeks. It passed in March, 1874.

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(119) P.R.F.R. (1873-4), pp. 835-6. Sickles to Fish, December 16, 1872. A bill for the emancipation of Puerto Rican slaves was submitted to the Cortes within three weeks. It passed in March, 1874.

(120) New York Herald, New York Tribune, the Sun and the Nation. Nevins, Fish, p. 631

(121) Nevins, Fish, pp. 632-3; Foner, Cuba and U.S., pp. 242-3
resolution calling for the annexation of Cuba. (122)

Fish was concerned that he was losing control in the face of this growing feeling and he approached Grant with a suggestion that the President should encourage influential Congressmen to forestall any Congressional attempts to bombard the Administration again with resolutions for action. (123)

In early February came signs of an easing of the situation. On January 30, Sickles had written to Fish to warn of an imminent change of executive. On February 11, Fish received a telegram from the Minister to say:

"At half past four this afternoon the two Houses unite under presidency of Rivero and declare themselves in the exercise of sovereign powers. Martos, in name of Cabinet, presents resignation of Ministers. Cortes accepts unanimously abdication of King." (124)

Later in the evening of the same day Sickles telegraphed:

"At 9 o'clock Cortes adopt republican form of government - 259 affirmative, 32 negative." (125)

The reaction in the United States was one of delight. Congress passed congratulatory resolutions, forgetting any claims for recognition of Cuban belligerency. (126)

A republic was something for which Americans had long hoped, and the Administration had no desire to destroy

(122) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., p. 76
(123) Nevins, Fish, p. 633
(125) P.R.F.R. (1873-4), p. 888. Sickles to Fish, February 11, 1873 (evening)
(126) Cong. Globe, 42 Cong., 1 sess., p. 1345 (Senate); p. 1980 (House)
it by undue pressure. The Foreign Relations papers show a decrease in the number and arrogance of demands from the United States as from this time. The republic was quickly recognized and Sickles who, unknown to Fish, had been actively involved in the plans for a republic, was showered with honours. The official and public reaction in the United States suggested that the republicanism of Spain, and not Cuban reform, had been the issue at stake.

So complete was the acceptance and support in the United States for the Spanish republic that not even the "Virginius" case aroused a great debate in Congress. This dealt with the capture by Spanish officials of an American-manned vessel which was chased into Cuban waters. Attempts by the American consul in Jamaica to help the men were blocked by the Cuban officials and, without trial or counsel, a large number of the crew and some passengers were summarily executed. (127) Fish submitted a protest, and the diplomatic warfare began all over again.

It was predominantly a diplomatic collision and displayed little of the emotional involvement of previous crises. There was a considerable number of indignant meetings and an increase in the discussions of the possible annexation of Cuba, but an economic depression and an awareness that the "Virginius" had long been a filibusterer

kept feelings at a lower level. The question of reparations became a matter of defining responsibility, and centred around whether or not the ship was an American vessel. When Spain agreed to reparations and Fish recognized the dubious legality of the ship's ownership the disagreement came quickly to an end.

The "Virginius" affair was hailed in the United States as a victory for Fish, and indeed he had carried out the negotiations ably and calmly, though some peremptory demands had been issued before he was fully conscious of the invalidity of the ship's papers. The episode revealed a unity of Administration force behind Fish and he was able to cope with the situation without interruption and interference. It also led to Sickles' downfall. The Minister's aggressive stands came close to upsetting the delicate balance between peace and war, and Fish was forced to take the move which should have been made earlier. He demanded Sickles' resignation, and ordered the negotiations to be conducted in Washington where he knew he could reach a satisfactory agreement with Admiral Polo.

These relatively calm relations continued throughout the short life of the Spanish republic and the fate of

(128) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p.245; Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, p.409. Sickles pressed for annexation at this point, claiming that Europe would not be opposed but would see it as a justifiable step. Callahan, op.cit., p.410

(129) Nevins, Fish, pp.691-92
Cuba was regarded as less pressing. Indeed, as one Cuban historian noted, "Fish adopted the attitude that the Republic of Spain should triumph, and for this it was necessary to condemn the Republic of Cuba to death." (130) The Secretary of State avoided any opportunity to pressure Spain. In 1874, for example, Colombia attempted to revive an earlier project to gain a Pan-American agreement to demand Cuban independence. Fish had refused earlier on the grounds of diplomatic procedure, and refused again.

"The measure would have been much acceptable to us whatever might be the probability of its success, if, before the Circular had been issued (to other Central American nations), we had been consulted as to our disposition to accept the function of an arbiter." (131)

The Latin-Americans considered this attitude cynical, a judgment which seemed justified when his orders to Caleb Cushing, Sickles' successor, became generally known.

Caleb Cushing took over the embassy to Madrid in February, 1874, and was to be one of the best United States Ministers of the period. On February 6, 1874, he received his instructions from Fish. These summarised Fish's view of United States policy.

"The desire of independence on the part of the Cubans is a natural and legitimate aspiration of theirs, because they are Americans. And while such independence is the manifest exigency of the political interests of the

(130) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 251
(131) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 250
Cubans themselves, it is equally so that of the rest of America, including the United States ... the President does not meditate or desire the annexation of Cuba to the United States, but its elevation into an independent republic of freemen, in harmony with ourselves and with the other republics of America."(132)

When this correspondence was published later in the year Latin-American states were considerably annoyed by this assertion and accused the United States of hypocrisy.

"If anything (adds Foner) this (period) in American diplomatic history proved that the government of the United States still clung to the traditional policy of opposing the independence of Cuba, and was still waiting for the laws of "political gravitation" to bring the island within the American Union."(133)

Meanwhile the demands for American action resumed within the United States. Fish claimed the instigator was the Cuban Junta and "the wonderfully persuasive influence of Cuban bonds scattered broadcast among the noble army of newspaper reporters."(134) Grant's enthusiasm was fired once more. He brought the topic of a Cuban policy before the Cabinet on October 26, and Fish noted in his diary later that the President was threatening to recognize Cuban independence.(135)

Congress was likely to acquiesce, especially as the Cuban Junta had $20,000,000 worth of bonds to issue among

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(133) Foner, Cuba and U.S., p.251
(134) Nevins, Fish, p.874
(135) Ibid, pp.874-5
Congressmen. A more telling argument influencing Congressional opinion was the collapse of the Spanish republic and the proclamation on December 29, 1874, of a monarchy under Alfonso XII, the son of ex-Queen Isabella. \(^{(136)}\) The pressure against Spain began in earnest again.

Fish drafted a strongly worded message against a recognition of belligerency or independence, which succeeded in forestalling many of the resolutions expected on the issue of the Cuban rebellion. \(^{(137)}\) However, it did not long satisfy public opinion and, in November, Fish sent to Cushing Instruction No. 266 which "constitutes one of the most curious episodes in American diplomatic history." \(^{(138)}\)

It embodied a decision to intervene, something which the Secretary had avoided for a long time, on the grounds that the situation had dragged on for too long. The fear that such action would result in war was circumvented by an application to European governments, particularly that of Britain, for joint action. The reaction from all quarters was far from what Fish had expected.

Firstly, before receiving notification of this despatch, Spain affected its impact by promising in specific terms to redress various grievances. \(^{(139)}\) The

\(^{(136)}\) Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, p. 415
\(^{(137)}\) Cong. Globe, 43 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 62, 206, 3109, 3203
\(^{(138)}\) Nevins, Fish, p. 878
\(^{(139)}\) Nevins, Fish, pp. 879-81
Secretary was "disappointed"; apparently he wanted action, and he did not consider that the Spanish gesture changed the situation. (140)

Cushing did not like No. 266, which he felt was unnecessarily aggressive, and delayed presenting it to the Spanish ministry until he had further instructions. He believed that if Britain supported the United States, Spain would capitulate in sullen despair, but that if no European power took action, Spain would be likely to attempt a last desperate war which many Spaniards would encourage as a remedy for domestic disturbances. (141) A few days later, on November 26, he pointed out that Spain was not the only country with faulty institutions; the United States could not prevent "corruption, public and private, financial frauds, a mercenary press, and the subordination of principle (including the highest interests of the country) to demagogy." (142) Fish was so concerned by this reaction that, though he directed Cushing and Robert Schenck in London to present the instructions, he conceded that it "was not intended as minatory in any sense, but in the spirit of friendship." (143) This was a radical change of emphasis, but one which

(140) Ibid, p. 881.
(141) Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, p. 422
(142) Nevins, Fish, p. 882
(143) Ibid
events proved timely, for the reaction of the European powers was anything but encouraging. Italy informed the United States that her relations with Spain were "delicate", France could not consent to any support for the Carlists which such a move would imply, and Britain offered her services as mediator but refused to put any pressure on Spain. Only Russia made any attempt to comply with the suggestions. (144)

Within the United States, opposition was just as widespread. Fish was attacked as having violated the Monroe Doctrine and the non-alignment ideal, which he strenuously denied. On December 30, 1875, he explained to the Italian Minister

"...that we desired the restoration of peace and good government, that we had no selfish or aggressive policy, did not invite or seek any forcible intervention by other governments, but simply asked an expression of their opinion as to the reasonableness of our attitude and demands on Spain." (145)

The wording of Instruction No. 266 did not completely support this assertion, for there he stated that the President "feels that the time is at hand when it may be the duty of other governments to intervene", and the directions to Schenck had suggested that if Britain exerted her influence "to induce a settlement", a faster settlement might result.

(144) Ibid; Callahan, Cuba and International Relations, pp. 422-3; Foner, Cuba and U.S., p. 257
(145) Nevins, Fish, p. 883
But later he felt it necessary to defend his action. He maintained that the Monroe Doctrine did not mean complete isolation from Europe and that, since Cuba was still a Spanish colony, the call for European action was within the confines of the Monroe Doctrine. There was a precedent, he pointed out, in the American suggestion that Russia mediate between Spain and the South American governments in 1824, only a year after the Doctrine had been advanced. (146) His defensive stand suggested that he was aware of the dubious constitutional legality of his moves.

Even more interesting was the fact that this came so soon after the refusal of the Latin-American proposal. This had included the proviso that the basis of this pressure on Spain should be the independence of Cuba and the abolition of slavery. Fish's scheme had not laid down any such conditions. The chances of a united front in Latin-America had been extremely good; the hopes for European action had not been investigated and were in fact unjustified.

The policy of the Grant Administration towards Cuba was radically different from that demanded by much of the country and with which many members of the Cabinet sympathised. These attitudes were held in check by the commonsense and determination of Fish who feared the

(146) Callahan, *Cuba and International Relations*, p. 429
eventuality of war with Spain. Yet even he displayed some representative qualities in his arrogant republicanism and his failure to understand or to accept Spain's pride in her nation and her empire. Cuba occupied a place in the history of American foreign policy that was deep-seated and there was a continual consciousness of the island's importance to the United States. Added to this was the aggressive expression of newly acquired abolition and proven republicanism. The idealism of expansionism tended to clash with practical diplomacy and brought Fish's policy, pacific at heart, close to failure.
CHAPTER IV  SANTO DOMINGO

In the early months of the new Presidency, Grant showed no sign of the expansionism which was to characterize his foreign policy. At the early Cabinet meetings Grant's attitude was cautious. He avoided any commitment on the Cuban question, and turned down the Raasloff treaty for the purchase of the Danish West Indies, (1) which meant that it was defeated easily by an unenthusiastic Senate. (2) However, by the end of 1869 certain newspapers were speculating with considerable interest on the possibility of annexing Santo Domingo, (3) and within a few months the Administration was deep in negotiations with this very possibility in mind. These negotiations were to be the cause of much ill-feeling in government circles, and the furore they created came close to destroying both the Administration and the party. Yet what Grant attempted was nothing new; he was expanding an interest displayed by others, particularly Seward.

(1) This treaty, so-called after the Danish Minister to Washington, General Raasloff, was one with Denmark for the sale of the island of St. Thomas in the Danish West Indies for $7,500,000. It was never a popular move, but the chances of its success declined still further after an earthquake and tropical cyclone devastated the islands early in 1868. (2) Nevins, Fish, pp. 126-7; D. M. Dozer, "Anti-Expansionism during the Johnson Administration", P.H.R. Vol. XIV (1945) (3) For example, New York Times, New York Herald, Boston Daily Globe; Nevins, Fish, p. 310
Seward was conscious of the need for strategically-positioned American bases in the region which could be used both to extend American commercial and political interests and to keep to a minimum European interference in the Western Hemisphere. Americans generally had reasons for interest. Trade with the whole region was lucrative, and it was natural for merchants to fear competition. The world wide emphasis upon shipping lent force to renewed demands for a link across the central American isthmus, and the continually mooted suggestions for a canal kept attention focussed on the area. In many Congressional debates upon Caribbean developments, there was noticeable concern for American interests in the region in the face of the proposed canal. (4) Seward's main concern, however, remained the question of bases, and the two possibilities he considered were the Danish West Indies and Santo Domingo.

The island of Santo Domingo was the second largest in the Caribbean, and was divided into two small republics, Haiti and Santo Domingo, which had been independent since 1844. The Dominican Republic was larger than Haiti but had a smaller population, and was constantly subject to Haitian raids. Potentially Santo Domingo was a country of great wealth, with reserves of

gold, silver, iron, copper and tin, and a plantation system of agriculture which was readily adaptable to coffee, sugar, cotton or tobacco. The failure of the republic to expand economically after its independence was not therefore due to a poverty of materials, but to continual civil war; indeed, so continual were the conflicts that they were almost a way of life. They were the result of constant competition for authority between aspiring politicians, mainly Pedro Santana, Buenaventura Baez, and later Jose Maria Cabral. Dominican government was thus a creaking machine which threatened to collapse at any moment. In such a defenceless state it attracted the attention of various powers, especially Britain and France who had commercial interests in the republic. Their respective policies from the 1840s seemed to be aimed at discouraging the other from taking control.

The United States inevitably reacted to the appearance of European powers in the Caribbean, and in 1846 investigated the possibilities of using Samana Bay as a naval base, but the Mexican War diverted American attention. In 1850, after another Haitian invasion, there was a tentative suggestion from a portion of the Dominican population that the United States should be offered the

republic, but President Baez was not prepared to give up his power. It is doubtful, in any case, whether the Whig administration would have been in favour of the proposition. In fact, little attention was paid to the republic during Taylor's Presidency, and a British suggestion that the United States join with Britain and France to guarantee Dominican independence was rejected on the grounds that this was a denial of the policies laid out in the Farewell Address and the Monroe Doctrine.\(^6\)

Franklin Pierce, whose Presidency began in 1852, was, on the other hand, extremely interested in the Caribbean, and may have seen Santo Domingo as a step in his attempts to annex Cuba.\(^7\) He acted by sending an agent in 1854 to enquire into the republic's potentialities; the agent was William L. Cazneau, apparently a strong supporter of American political and economic penetration into the Caribbean.\(^8\) That he was sent as a special agent indicated that the Administration's interest was deeper than mere curiosity, for he was ordered to report on aspects of governmental organization and on commercial prospects. His report was enthusiastic and he returned to the island with Captain George B. McClellan in July 1854 to negotiate a treaty which included, among commercial and mercantile considerations,

\(^{6}\) Logan, *Haiti and the Dominican Republic*, pp.36-7; Van Alstyne, *American Diplomacy in Action*, p.543

\(^{7}\) Van Alstyne, *op.cit.*, p.544

\(^{8}\) Nevins, *Fish*, p.252
a clause allowing for the use of Samana Bay as a coaling station. (9) The Dominican President by 1854, however, was Santana, who was not enthusiastic about this arrangement in the face of British and French antagonism, and he burdened the treaty with so many amendments and provisos that the American government lost interest. (10)

Cazneau decided to settle in the republic, and bought a plantation. In 1859 he became the partner of Joseph Warren Fabens, another of Pierce's special agents, in a scheme to gain a land grant from Santana in return for a loan and the promise to encourage American emigration and American investment. (11) An opportunity arose in 1862 when Congress discussed the appropriation of funds for the colonization of former slaves; (12) Cazneau and Fabens, with others, took advantage of the mood of the moment, and floated the "American West India Company" which invested only $4000 but published an elaborate prospectus claiming they had acquired magnificent tracts of land valued at over $2,000,000. (13) Gullible speculators paid out, and even more gullible settlers left for their new paradise. Most died and the

(9) Nevins, Fish, p. 252
(10) Ibid; Logan, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, p. 38; Van Alstyne, American Diplomacy in Action, p. 544
(12) Nevins, Fish, p. 253
(13) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 313
scheme collapsed, though its promoters apparently gained handsomely.\(^{(14)}\) The two men, "full of schemes, and of money, and devoid of scruples",\(^{(15)}\) organized other such projects with varying success, and waited for future opportunities. "I am awe-struck with the brilliant prospects", wrote Fabens to Cazneau at one time.\(^{(16)}\) They were obviously nothing but adventurers, yet they were to be trusted by both Seward and Grant.

Seward was interested in a West Indian naval base, but was undecided whether to favour Samana Bay or St. Thomas.\(^{(17)}\) Although action did not come until 1866, it is apparent from a reference in Gideon Welles' diary\(^{(18)}\) that Seward was interested in Santo Domingo in 1864, for he was considering giving aid to the Dominican rebels in their fight against the Spanish.\(^{(19)}\) At the same time he was disturbed by continuing British and French activity around the island,\(^{(20)}\) and sent the

\(^{(14)}\) Ibid, pp. 314-5  \(^{(15)}\) Nevins, Fish, p. 254  \(^{(16)}\) Ibid, p. 254  \(^{(17)}\) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 316  \(^{(18)}\) G. Welles, Diary, Vol. I, p. 519  \(^{(19)}\) In 1860 bankruptcy and political chaos forced the Dominicans to offer the republic to the Spanish. The offer was accepted, and the United States was too concerned with the Civil War to object. Within a few years, however, the Dominicans realized their error and fought to regain their independence. In 1865, after a half-hearted attempt to hold back the rebellion, the Spanish gave in.  \(^{(20)}\) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 316
British a terse reminder to keep out. (21) In January 1866, with the excuse of a recuperative trip, he sailed for the Caribbean with his son Frederick, assistant Secretary of State, and arrived in Santo Domingo on January 15, where Cazneau took over the job of showing them around the republic. The official paper reported that Seward's visit to the President was one restricted to an open exchange of opinions, adding that:

"the details of this interview provided the most satisfactory preliminaries for negotiations tending towards a frank understanding between the United States and the Dominican Republic." (22)

Because of the pressure of work, Seward did not bring this matter before the Cabinet until December, (23) and Welles recorded the event with disapproval:

"First ... (the area) is very sickly; second ... it lies off the direct route to Aspinwall, - the bay itself being thirty miles deep; third, but few inhabitants and no markets; fourth, the condition of the Treasury." (24)

Seward continued to work strenuously for his scheme by gaining the support of Congressional leaders, notably Thaddeus Stevens, William P. Fessenden and James Grimes; Welles, however, felt that Seward's object all along was merely to get on good terms with these men, and to

(21) Van Deusen, Seward, p. 529
(22) Welles, Naborth's Vineyard, p. 317
(23) G. Welles, Diary, Vol. II, p. 631
(24) Ibid
gain a spectacular diversion of attention from internal discontents.\(^{(25)}\) There was, as far as he could see, no object "naval or commercial" in getting Samana.\(^{(26)}\) Seward had mentioned political reasons, which Welles could not fathom; there was a suggestion that these could allude to the "Negro problem", but whether or not this meant a scheme of emigration was not explained.\(^{(27)}\)

At all events the Dominicans proved to be harder bargainers than anticipated, for the Dominican Cabinet was divided on the idea of alienating land to the United States. Cabral, currently in power, procrastinated, adapting and amending the American proposals and, though negotiations continued, Welles felt that by February 1867 the episode could be considered a failure.\(^{(28)}\) Congressional opposition too was growing. Disheartened, Seward ordered the negotiations terminated.\(^{(29)}\)

In 1867, however, the political situation in Santo Domingo changed again. Cabral's declining power was further undermined when the rebellious Baez reached an accommodation with the new Haitian President, Salnave. To bolster his authority Cabral offered the lease of Samana Bay to the United States. Seward was sceptical about the offer and was annoyed by the inconsistent attitude of the Dominican leaders, but negotiations were

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\(^{(25)}\) Ibid, p. 643  
\(^{(26)}\) Ibid  
\(^{(27)}\) G. Welles, Diary, Vol. II, p. 643  
\(^{(29)}\) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 332.
reopened, despite his pessimism. (30) Cabral, however, had delayed too long; his position was hopeless, and on January 21, 1868, he capitulated to Baez. (31)

The seesaw of Dominican politics steadied for a while, but Baez was as much as in need of aid as had been Cabral. The agreement with Haiti was not likely to remain in effect for long, (32) the economy was in ruins, and Baez was without funds. He turned to Cabral's method, and offered to the United States the Samana peninsula and bay for $1,000,000 in gold, and $1,000,000 worth of armaments, attempting to browbeat Seward by hinting that the offer would be made to England, France or Spain in the event of the United States turning it down. (33)

The situation was complicated by the continual interference of Fabens and Cazneau. By 1868 they held vast land and mineral concessions which promised considerable returns on investments should the republic, or the peninsula, much of which they owned, become American property. In the fever of speculation, they had involved Spofford, Tileston and Company (a New York banking house), various merchants and a steamship line, (34) and consequently a considerable core of wealthy investors was

(30) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p.338
(32) The rebellion against him began almost as soon as he took office, and there were tentative advances to Salnave by the rebels.
(33) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p.348
(34) Nevins, Fish, pp.255-6
vitaly interested in the fate of the proposal.\(^{(35)}\)

Fabens, with his confidence and his polished and suave Boston manners, came to Washington in January 1869, prepared to lobby in Congress.\(^{(36)}\)

By this time, however, tolerance of the project in Congress had long since departed. The time lag had given opposition the chance to become organized and considerably more vocal. The hostility was personal as well as political, aimed at Johnson and his secretive Secretary of State and the proposition was doomed. Two quick attempts were made to rally Congressional support. N.P. Banks on January 12 introduced in the House a joint resolution aimed at extending a protectorate over Haiti and Santo Domingo. This was tabled by a vote of 126 to 36.\(^{(37)}\)

On February 1, S.P. Orth proposed the annexation of Santo Domingo. After some reaction against the way it was being pushed upon them, the Representatives tabled this also, 110 to 63.\(^{(38)}\)

This concerted indifference killed the scheme. The Dominican leaders could only hope that the coming change of Presidency would yield better results.

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\(^{(35)}\) It is surprising that men of such dubious character should attract the investors they did. Seward continued to deal with them despite repeated warnings from Smith, Commercial Agent in Santo Domingo, and other representatives in the Caribbean.


\(^{(37)}\) Congressional Globe, 40 Congress, 3 session, pp. 317, 333

\(^{(38)}\) Ibid, p. 769
When Grant took over the Presidency the Dominican question was thus still fresh in public minds. There was a body of opinion in favour of annexation; indeed, there was more interest in annexation than in a protectorate, as the reaction to the resolutions revealed some saw annexation as more profitable; others saw it as a positive stepping stone to Cuba. (39) Nevins records a number of examples of favourable opinion - there was mention of "new and great results" that it would yield, and of its strategic value. (40) But there was also strong opposition to the idea, notably from the World, the Tribune, and the Nation in New York. Their main contention was that the whole project contained an element of chicanery, and that the move to annex the republic was "a large speculation in real estate and colonial debts". (41)

Fabens and Cazneau continued to rally support for annexation. Fabens, in Washington, had gained the sympathetic attention of Banks, who had agreed, among other things, to speak at a Dominican meeting to be held in New York in May. (42) Fabens also maintained and extended links with American financiers, speculators and companies already interested in Santo Domingo. (43)

(39) Nevins, Fish, p. 259; New York Times, September to December, 1869
(40) Nevins, Fish, p. 259
(41) Ibid, p. 256
(42) Ibid, p. 261; Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 357; Pierce, Sumner, Vol. IV, p. 428
(43) Nevins, Fish, p. 256
Cazneau remained in Santo Domingo, sustaining Dominican determination. His wife, all this time, was publishing in the New York Herald picturesque and enthusiastic articles on the republic.\(^{(44)}\)

In April, Fabens made his first direct approach to the Administration. On the first of the month he wrote a highly coloured report on the resources of Santo Domingo, extolling its virtues as a commercially strategic acquisition, and sent the report to the State Department. A few days later on April 5 he called to see Fish, who greeted him coldly, and presented to the Secretary a memo which he claimed he had been instructed to present as the confidential agent of Santo Domingo.

"The Dominican Government is disposed to enter fully into the American Union as a free and sovereign state, and is prepared to assert that the question when submitted to the people will be approved with enthusiasm. Nevertheless, it cannot take the initiative. It appears most suitable that the United States Congress, advised of the true situation of the Dominican Republic, should accept the Dominican Republic as one of its states."\(^{(45)}\)

This was mentioned to the Cabinet, and passed over with very little interest.\(^{(46)}\) Though Fabens bombarded Grant with letters and visits, the President did not seem particularly interested.

\(^{(44)}\) Nevins, Fish, p. 256  
\(^{(45)}\) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 365-66; Nevins, Fish, pp. 128, 216. Welles claims the date was March 9, but as Fish was not yet Secretary of State by that date, Nevins' date of April 5 is more likely.  
\(^{(46)}\) Nevins, op. cit., p. 216
Meanwhile, within Santo Domingo, the economic situation declined still further. Desperate for money, so much so that he could not wait for the campaign in the United States to bear fruit, Baez turned to a London financial house, Hartmont and Company, for a loan. This was beset with difficulties from the beginning. Edward H. Hartmont was a man with a criminal record, and a reputation among financial circles in London that made it surprising that he was still working in the financial world. The loan he engineered was so ringed around with amendments and commissions that, of an agreement for £757,000, the Dominican Government seemed destined to gain only about £320,000. An intriguing aspect of this deal was the fact that Fabens was appointed Hartmont's agent in Washington, and the New York agents of the firm associated with Hartmont were Spofford, Tileston and Company. 

In Washington, Fabens and his associates were beginning to have some effect upon Grant. Their concentration upon the President and his closest advisors was shrewd; they had quickly discovered that he was easily influenced. As early as April 22, 1869, Fabens reported to Cazneau that Grant seemed "very favorably disposed" and that Porter, Rawlins, Logan, Banks and Fish would

(47) Nevins,Fish,p.261
(48) Ibid
all co-operate in the arrangements for either the lease of Samana Bay or the annexation of the republic. (49) That much of this was the exaggeration of an entrepreneur was obvious by his inclusion of Fish, who was always far from enthusiastic about the scheme. There may have been an element of truth in his references to the other men; Rawlins especially was a believer in Manifest Destiny, and his influence upon Grant was very powerful. (50)

Congressional opinion at this time towards the measure was not so much antipathetic as uninterested, as it had been at the end of Johnson's term. Orth's speech of April 5, 1869, encouraging annexation, had met with little response. (51) On May 17, Thornton, the British ambassador, wrote to the British Foreign Office in reply to a query about American designs upon Santo Domingo that in his opinion nothing at all was intended, especially "without first consulting the feeling of Congress upon the subject - a step which could not be taken without giving publicity to such a subject." (52) On that same day, however, Grant was asking the Navy Department for a warship to be sent to Dominican waters to enquire into the commerce, finances and political condition of the republic. (53)

(49) Nevins, Fish, pp. 262-3
(50) Ibid, p. 263
(51) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 523-27
(52) Nevins, Fish, p. 262
(53) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 371
The President was impressed by the desperate situation of Santo Domingo, and he came to the belief that only annexation and its benefits could save the republic. This, like most of the arguments he used and expanded in his messages to Congress, \(^{(54)}\) was a reiteration of ideas presented to him by advocates of annexation. It was apparent that what was most responsible for his interest was the influence of individuals, such as Rawlins, Banks and Fabens. It seems reasonable to discount as rationalization Grant's later claim that he sought in annexation an end to racial disorder, and looked forward to the establishment of an independent black state peopled by Negro emigrants from the United States. \(^{(55)}\)

Once he had decided to act Grant was determined upon annexation; he certainly became deeply involved in the negotiations. He sent Commander Selfridge in the "Nipsic" on a naval investigation, a common method of probing for information which should have sufficed, but before Selfridge's return Grant went ahead, without advising Congress or Cabinet, with alternative arrangements - the sending of a special agent, a move prompted by new developments.

\(^{(54)}\) J.D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Vol.VII, pp.61-2, 96-112. All references are to Vol. VII unless otherwise stated.

During June and July 1869 the State Department was under increased pressure from Santo Domingo where the economic situation had deteriorated further, leading the Baez Government to encourage Fabens to push the scheme with more vigour.\(^{(56)}\) The position was further complicated by rumours that Salnave in Haiti had considered ceding some Haitian territory to the United States if a naval station was all the United States wanted. Without an American commitment, the Dominicans felt the republic would collapse. Fabens went to Fish, pleading for action and secrecy, intimating that some other, but unspecified, power would be approached if the negotiations collapsed.\(^{(57)}\) In his meeting with Fish on June 9, ostensibly to discuss the so-called degradations of a rebel vessel, the "Telegrafo", against American shipping, Fabens in desperation suggested that he should act as the American agent, despite the fact that he was already the representative of Santo Domingo.\(^{(58)}\) Early in July, Spofford, Tileston and Company suggested to the State Department that someone should be sent secretly to the Republic to acquire a better understanding of the situation.\(^{(59)}\) Implicit in

\(^{(56)}\) Welles, *Naboth's Vineyard*, p. 367

\(^{(57)}\) Ibid, p. 368

\(^{(58)}\) Ibid, p. 369. It is interesting that the company which complained about these "degradations" and called for action against them was Spofford, Tileston and Company. See Nevins, *Fish*, p. 265

\(^{(59)}\) Nevins, *Fish*, p. 264
this appeal was the view that affairs in Santo Domingo warranted more than a naval commission. Fish was annoyed by the suggestion and concerned about ignoring Congress, but Grant was convinced that a special agent was necessary.

The agent he chose was an old friend, Benjamin P. Bunt. The first intimation the Cabinet had of this action came when, at Bunt's falling ill, Grant chose his secretary, Orville Babcock. The reaction was not at all favourable, especially as it had been agreed in Cabinet

"that a cordially friendly attitude to the actual government in San Domingo, with decided discouragement to all intervention and filibustering, should be the policy."

Many felt the sending of a Presidential agent on such a mission would unnecessarily complicate the situation. However, the Cabinet acquiesced; no-one could think of any legal reason why Babcock should not go.

Fish's orders to Babcock were strictly limited, and he was given no diplomatic authority at all, but was

"to endeavour to obtain full and accurate information in regard to the disposition of the Government and people of the Republic toward the United States; the character of the Government, whether it be military or

(60) J.D. Cox, "How Judge Hoar Ceased to be Attorney-General", Atlantic Monthly, August 1895, p. 165
(61) Nevins, Fish, p. 264
(62) Cox, op.cit., p. 165
(63) Ibid
(64) For the Cabinet's attitude, see Cox, "How Judge Hoar Ceased to be Attorney-General", p. 165
The Secretary of State had no idea that Grant would augment these instructions by asking Babcock "to consult the Dominican leaders on the subject of annexation. If he found them favorable, he was to ascertain the terms on which they desired annexation."(66)

The President also took control of the arrangements for Babcock's travel and showed a lack of diplomacy and a tactlessness which alarmed the Cabinet. He suggested that the vessel to take Babcock to Santo Domingo should be the "Tybee", one owned and run by Spofford, Tileston and Company, and mentioned that some New York merchants had offered the agent free passage. Fish remonstrated vociferously, and Cox felt that not only did this episode show "that somebody was giving publicity to the mission, but it had greater significance in showing that the State Department had no part in its management."(67)

The Cabinet had been led to believe that the negotiations would be secret; that this was not so was obvious from the fact that Babcock was being accompanied by Fabens, Columbus Cole, a noted enthusiast for annexation, and

(65) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p.371
(66) Nevins, Fish, p.265, note 4
(67) Cox, "How Judge Hoar Ceased to be Attorney-General", p.166. Grant finally gave in and ordered that the Navy give Babcock transportation.
"Judge" O'Sullivan, a concession holder in Santo Domingo and an acquaintance of Grant. (68) From his arrival in Santo Domingo Babcock was treated with care and attention. The day after he arrived in Santo Domingo City, accompanied by Fabens and Cole, Babcock spent the evening with Baez, Cazneau and Gautier, Dominican Minister of State, an event which Mrs. Cazneau recorded with enthusiasm for the New York Herald. (69) The sending of additional warships to support Babcock's authority and the rumours concerning annexation which were developing in the United States must have warned Fish that something was afoot; yet he did not tackle Grant on the subject until late August at the earliest. (70) It is possible that, though suspicious, he did not believe Grant foolish enough to attempt such a scheme without approaching either the Secretary, Cabinet or Congress. He apparently did not gain any illuminating answers from the President, for his astonishment on hearing of Babcock's treaty negotiations was quite genuine. One Cabinet member recalled that Fish had exclaimed:

"What do you think! Babcock is back, and has actually brought back a treaty for the cession of San Domingo; yet I pledge you my word he had no more diplomatic authority than any other casual visitor to the island!" (71)

(68) Ibid; Nevins,Fish,p.266
(69) Nevins,Fish,pp.266-8
(70) Ibid,p.267
(71) Cox,"How Judge Hoar Ceased to be Attorney-General", p.166.
The Cabinet was as shocked as Fish, and certainly did not think that:

"the President would assume responsibility for the illegal act of his messenger." *(72)*

Cox claimed that he and Fish decided the proper thing to do was to regard the treaty as null and void, "and insist upon burying the whole in oblivion as a state secret". *(73)* Nevins, on the other hand, believes that Fish decided instead to treat the protocol as merely a collection of unofficial opinions, giving Grant the opportunity to back out. *(74)* This was more likely, for Fish was aware that too many people knew of the mission for the treaty to remain a secret for long.

The terms of the treaty were straightforward, and probably more in the Dominicans' favour. For the cession of the Republic, minus public lands, Baez was asking $1,500,000, with $100,000 in cash and $50,000 in arms and supplies payable immediately. Should the treaty fail ratification at either end the amount given in cash and materials was to be credited on account for the sale of Samana Bay, which would be sold to the Americans for the sum offered by Seward, namely $2,000,000. *(75)* However, the agreement carried the extraordinary and unconstitutional addendum that the President:

*(72)* Cox, "How Judge Hoar Ceased to be Attorney-General", p. 166
*(73)* Ibid
*(74)* Nevins, *Fish*, p. 269
*(75)* For the text of the treaty, see Welles, *Naboth's Vineyard*, pp. 977-82.
"should use all his influence with the members of Congress to popularize the idea of annexing the Dominican Republic to the United States and that he would withhold from them all official communication on the subject until certain of its approval by a majority."(76)

Fish, despite his anxiety and annoyance, was calm and non-committal in his dealings with Grant, hoping that the President would recognize the unconstitutionality of the measure and allow it to expire.(77)

Grant, however, was ardent for annexation. He told Fish that Babcock's action had his approval, and that the Secretary should draft a treaty along the lines suggested. At the next Cabinet meeting Grant, departing from his usual custom of allowing each member to deal with the matters in his own portfolio, brought the subject of the treaty to the attention of the Cabinet.(78)

Casually acknowledging that Babcock's action had been "informal", he called for support to make it legal, by arranging for the treaty to be signed.

"This took everybody so completely by surprise that they seemed dumbfounded. After an awkward interval, as nobody else broke the silence, (Cox) said, "But, Mr. President, has it been settled, then, that we want to annex San Domingo?" The direct question evidently embarrassed General Grant. He colored, and smoked hard at his cigar ... As the silence became painful, the President called for another item of business, and left the question unanswered."(79)

(76) Ibid, p.375.
(77) Nevins,Fish, p.270
(78) Cox, "How Judge Hoar ceased to be Attorney-General", p.166. Cox claims that Grant's reason for taking the initiative was that Fish, had he brought up the subject, would have disclaimed all part in the matter, and would have stated that it had been utterly illegal.
(79) op.cit., p.167
The Cabinet obviously was not in favour of the scheme. Further evidence of the attitude of members was found in the final Cabinet meeting to discuss Santo Domingo, on October 19, 1869, when the treaty draft was considered. Only one member, John A.J. Creswell, Postmaster General, was definitely in favour; the others were either actively opposed or politely doubtful, and Boutwell was very concerned that Congress had not been approached. Grant's reaction to the opinion of his Cabinet was silence; he did not broach the subject again.

Meanwhile encouragement was being given to the supporters of the scheme. Fabens had suggested giving Babcock a material interest in the Republic, which Babcock very rightly refused; however, Fabens' correspondence with Fish gives the impression that Babcock was intimately acquainted with the management of the negotiations. In the Republic, opposition was being stifled. The Baez Government insisted on the recall of the American Commercial Agent, Mr. J. Somers Smith, who, unwisely as far as his career was concerned, wrote to Fish on September 2 accusing Fabens and Cazneau of being nothing more than speculators "who (would stop) at nothing to bring about their own selfish ends". He believed that the United States should avoid any interference:

(80) Nevins, *Fish*, p. 271
(81) Nevins, *Fish*, pp. 275-6
"In the dissensions in this revolutionary country while the permanency of its government is precarious. The prisons are filled with political offenders, and several hundred of the most respectable men in this city are in exile." (82)

It was a wise observation, but caused a demand from Baez for Smith's recall, with which the State Department had no choice but to comply. His successor was Major Raymond H. Perry, an adventurer with no talent for diplomacy and even less inclination for it. (83)

Babcock returned to the island not long after, with Rufus Ingalls, a friend of Grant and an associate of O'Sullivan and Fabens. Babcock's instructions, besides acknowledging that he would be supported by warships, included an order to keep the object of the visit and the treaty's terms as secret as possible. (84) On November 29, the treaty and the convention were signed, (85) and Babcock and Ingalls continued on to Samana Bay, of which they took possession. Leaving Fabens and two soldiers in charge, they then sailed for home. The country remained ignorant of the scheme, and Cabinet had promised to keep silent until after the New Year; its members waited anxiously for Congressional reaction.

The President was completely sure of the integrity of his actions, and he is generally regarded as having

(82) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 375
(83) Nevins, Fish, p. 277
(84) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 377
(85) The text of the convention is found in Ibid, pp. 982-4
acted in good faith. The Republic was wealthy, it did have potential, it did offer a defensible naval base, and it had pleaded for help. However, if Grant's motives for considering the annexation of Santo Domingo were most plausible, the dogmatism inherent in his attitude led to difficulties. Personally incorrupt, he was yet incapable of recognizing corruption in others, but this did not excuse his failure to ensure a thorough investigation before carrying on with a project which he must have known was likely to be controversial. The uncertain political stability of Santo Domingo and Baez's obvious plight, plus the numerous though not always specific rumours of speculation, bribery and violence, should have suggested to Grant, as it did later to Congress, that a careful scrutiny was needed of all aspects of the case. That this was not done provided the opposition with a considerable weapon against the Administration.

Perhaps some of the pitfalls could have been avoided had Grant not been so secretive. His Secretary of State was not told of the scheme until it was well under way, and, as was obvious from both Fish's diary and Cox's

(86) Charles Sumner, in later debates, accused Grant of being party to the corruption. See Pierce, Sumner, Vol.IV, pp.437-87; Cong.Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., pp.227-31. There is no evidence to support such accusations.
description of the episode, the Cabinet was equally ill-informed. Even after it had been told of the annexation measure and after its members had signified their disapproval or at best, their lack of interest, Grant persisted. His secrecy astonished and worried them, especially as they were expected to maintain this secrecy and leave public opinion and Congress ignorant of developments; the latter, particularly, would not be inclined to take lightly this apparent sign of disregard.

Grant's stand can be interpreted as symbolic of his definition of his role as President. Convinced that his programme was essential, commercially, strategically and politically, he went ahead in military fashion, keeping the numbers of those in his confidence at a minimum, and demanding and expecting obedience. It is possible that his failure to inform Congress until the treaty was drawn up was an attempt to avoid the development of organized opposition such as that encountered by Seward, but it seems more likely that he did not imagine that Congressional opinion would be vociferously antagonistic. He felt sure that he represented the people, as the election had shown. Furthermore, a number of able, successful men were advocating the proposition, and at least some newspapers supported him. He may have felt that Mrs. Jane Cazneau's articles, published so regularly, were signs of American and Dominican approval. (87)

(87) Welles, *Naboth's Vineyard*, p. 370
Fish, meanwhile, was in the invidious position of being a Secretary of State in ignorance of a presidential scheme which he was expected to support. From the beginning he had been opposed to the idea of annexation. He disliked and distrusted Fabens, and was shocked by Babcock's usurpation of authority. His support for the project was given reluctantly, but unshakeably, as his concern for the Administration was greater than personal considerations. He had remonstrated with Grant, but there was little he could do once the President had assumed control of the situation. The initiative for foreign policy lay with the executive, and the delegation of authority was the President's concern. If he decided to carry on alone, Fish could do nothing to regain control without forcing his own resignation and thereby threatening the already uncertain harmony of the Administration.

His anxiety over annexation, however, was partly assuaged by the thought that the scheme could not succeed. The Senate would ultimately have control of it, and the chances of the treaty passing were remote, he felt. (88)

On December 5 Congress assembled and the President's

(88) Nevins, Fish, p.313. Nevins believes that Fish left Grant to deal with Santo Domingo because he was concerned about the delicate relations with Spain; he would rather keep Grant's attention away from Cuba.
speech on the State of the Union was presented to them. It mentioned nothing whatsoever about Santo Domingo, though newspapers were discussing rumours that the United States was playing an important role there.(89) This was only speculation but it kept the issue in the public eye until January 10 when the treaty was finally presented to the Senate for action, the first public announcement of annexation.(90)

Between the opening of Congress and its return on January 10 after the Christmas recess, Grant had not been idle; instead he had begun rallying support for the treaty, and early in January(91) he visited Sumner, for he recognized the Chairman's standing in the Senate, and his appeal to the public. To attempt to sound out Sumner was shrewd political strategy, but its possible effects were negated by Grant's clumsiness. He arrived unannounced in the middle of a small dinner party Sumner was giving and, without copies of the treaty, of which Sumner was ignorant, launched into a discussion of the topic. His nervousness and confusion was such that he apparently addressed Sumner as Chairman of the Judiciary.

(89) New York Times, November-December 1869, January 1870; Nevins, Fish, p. 309. Thornton, the British Ambassador, believed that the United States was playing such a role, and wrote to the British Foreign Office that this movement would not stop with the acquisition of Santo Domingo, but would go on to include Haiti, Cuba and Puerto Rico. Nevins, op cit., pp. 309-10.
(90) Richardson, Messages and Papers, p. 46
(91) The date is uncertain.
Committee. He left the house believing he had the Chairman's wholehearted support, which Sumner later denied. Probably it was a straightforward misunderstanding but it was to have a significant effect upon the relationship of the two men and upon the fate of the treaty.

The treaty was passed to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and there it remained for about two months. Meanwhile Grant continued to supply aid to Santo Domingo. Another revolt against the Dominican Government would destroy any chance of the treaty's being ratified, so in answer to various pleas from Baez for aid against encroachments from Haiti, Grant ordered at least two ships into Dominican waters with instructions to protect the Dominican Government against any aggression of the Haitians. Not only were these orders to be communicated to the Baez regime but they were to be made quite clear to Haiti also. The constitutional legality of this action was later queried by Congress, and it was certainly politically foolish at a time when the treaty was pending before the Committee.

(92) Pierce, Sumner, Vol. IV, p. 453; Nevins, Fish, p. 311. Grant, foolishly, had paid the first instalment of the lease out of Secret Service funds, thus avoiding Congressional consent. This payment committed the United States to the lease of Samana Bay, and later payments had to be made.

(93) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., pp. 242-3

(94) For interpretations see Nevins, Fish, pp. 311-2; Hesseltine, Grant, pp. 199-200; Pierce, Sumner, Vol. IV, pp 453-5

(95) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 383

(96) Cong. Globe, 42 Cong., 1 sess., App. p. 54

Grant felt that the justification for his move lay in the Dominican plebiscite of February 19, 1870. Reinforced by American strength, Baez announced on February 16 that a vote on annexation would be held three days later.\(^{(98)}\) Reams of government propaganda emerged, the most interesting aspect of a large proportion of it being its attempt to display the United States as:

"a collection of free and independent republics united by a common bond, each state possessing its own religion, language, customs, and habits,"\(^{(99)}\)

which suggested that Baez was none too sure of his people's desire to surrender their independence. This opinion is endorsed by the fact that his agents let it be known that any opposition would meet with imprisonment, banishment or death.\(^{(100)}\) Not unexpectedly the result was overwhelmingly in favour of annexation - 15,169 to 11 was the official total. Fabens explained that the eleven votes were registered only to preserve appearances.\(^{(101)}\)

Grant was pleased by this vindication of his interest. Fish continued unenthusiastically but loyally to follow the President but it was obvious that he had no faith in the measure and was convinced it would fail.\(^{(102)}\) Then

\(^{(98)}\) Welles, *Naboth's Vineyard*, p.384  
\(^{(99)}\) Ibid, pp.384-6  
\(^{(100)}\) Ibid  
\(^{(101)}\) Nevins, *Fish*, p.315  
\(^{(102)}\) Nevins, *Fish*, p.314
the newspapers learned of the terms of the treaty from an undisclosed source, and began a campaign of opposition. (103) They explored the dubious legality of Fabens' and Cazneau's actions, the wholesale speculation of certain American merchants, the attempts to bribe Babcock, the government support of Baez, the connections between interested parties, and the Davis Hatch case. Hatch was an American citizen, living in Santo Domingo, who had acquired a number of concessions from the government. He became aware of the speculatory activities of Fabens and Cazneau and, when his opposition became inconveniently vocal, Baez imprisoned him, ostensibly for subversive action. The American Commercial Agent made a number of attempts to have him freed, without success, and he finally appealed to Babcock who, convinced of Hatch's danger to negotiations, ignored him. Even the State Department showed little interest. (104) This case was to provide the focal point for an irrelevant but emotional debate in Congress against annexation.

Although some newspapers, such as the New York Times and the New York Herald, generally supported the Government, it was apparent that public opinion was predominantly opposed to annexation, or at least indifferent to its so-called advantages. Most people were more concerned with events at home, and some felt that the

(103) Ibid, pp. 312-3
(104) Ibid, pp. 330-34
annexation of Santo Domingo would cause unnecessary ill-feeling in Danish-American relations, as the treaty for the sale of the nearby Danish West Indies had failed to pass the United States Senate. (105)

Grant, however, could not be deterred. Badeau attributed his persistence to

"the heat of the contest that made him so eager for success at last; for he had the soldier's instinct, even in civil affairs. When he was once engaged in battle, he was always anxious to win." (106)

Concerned that the Senate would not make a judgment before the expiry date of March 29, Grant sent a message to the Senate on March 14, urging rapid consideration:

"The people of San Domingo have already, as far as their action can go, ratified the treaty, and I express the earnest wish that you will not permit it to expire by limitation. I also entertain the sincere hope that your action may be favorable to the ratification of the treaty." (107)

Fish's frustration, for he was not told of this note and interpreted it as a want of confidence in himself, was not eased by Grant's incessant lobbying. For days the President called senators to his room at the Capitol, or to the White House, and preached the advantages of annexation. (108) It was not illegal, but it was undignified.

(105) See an article discussed in the New York Times, March 27, 1869.
(106) Pierce, Sumner, Vol. IV, p. 439
(107) Richardson, Messages and Papers, pp. 52-3
(108) Nevins, Fish, p. 317; Hesseltine, Grant, pp. 201-202
The message had no visible effect on the progress of the treaty through the Senate, for it passed from committee to executive session where it remained for well over two months.\(^{(109)}\) The delay caused it to lapse, but as it had not been definitely voted out, Grant was encouraged to negotiate for an extension, hoping that the treaty would meet with more success.

During April and May, 1870, the Senate was busy with other matters and the subject of Santo Domingo did not come up for serious discussion until June, although the question of annexation was not ignored. A mass meeting was organized in New York on May 12 in an attempt to rally support for the treaty. One of the more interesting justifications of annexation was voiced at this meeting when one speaker claimed that there was:

"a scientific theory that the West Indian Islands were formed out of the wash of the Mississippi Valley, carried by the Gulf Stream and deposited into the reefs of the Bahamas. If this is correct, that soil must have been torn out of the American continent and why should we not follow our property?"\(^{(110)}\)

In the House Benjamin Butler made eight attempts to introduce a joint resolution to annex the republic.\(^{(111)}\) As he continued with these attempts the House appeared to be more bored and amused than antagonistic. Everyone seemed indifferent.

\(^{(109)}\) During the discussion of the treaty, Sumner and Carl Schurz led the attack upon it. See New York Tribune, March 25, 26, 1870

\(^{(110)}\) Hesseltine, Grant, p. 204; New York Tribune, May 13, 1870

\(^{(111)}\) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., pp. 2442, 2495, 2547, 2602, 2660, 2861, 3386, 3976.
Indifference was apparently increasing. There was no desire to annex the Republic—it was small, politically uncertain, diseased and not part of the American mainland. Some, like Senator Merrill, queried the claim that such annexation was a manifestation of the Monroe Doctrine, because the Doctrine was essentially defensive, not imperialistic. (112) Many of the strategic justifications had lost their effect with the failure of the proposals to build a canal across the Central American isthmus. Surveys in recent years told only of disease, engineering difficulties and endless expense. (113)

Grant, however, was not discouraged and went ahead with the negotiations for an extension of the expiry date of the treaty, which was acquired on May 14. Although he still could not see that the measure was doomed, he had recognized that some compromise was needed. (114) Fish put forward some suggested changes, which called for the establishment of a protectorate rather than annexation, (115) with control vested in Congress. This, he hoped, would appease Congress and bridge the gap between it and the President. His ideas did not appeal to Grant who turned them down, chiefly because he believed they had originated with the opposition. (116) The changes finally made had little

(112) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 1 sess., p. 527
(113) Nevins, Fish, p. 327; Williams, Anglo-American Isthmian Diplomacy, pp. 270–75
(114) Nevins, op. cit., p. 324; Hesseltine, Grant, p. 204
(115) Nevins, op. cit., p. 326
(116) Ibid, p. 328
effect on the tone of the treaty, but only limited the amount of money to be spent in annexation. (117) The President's decision was probably influenced by letters from Gautier who claimed that

"The desire is great with which this country almost unanimously is burning to see the conclusion of its annexation to the United States." (118)

Both Gautier and Fabens were urgent in their recommendations for action, with some justification, for the political situation in Santo Domingo was approaching near chaos. The rebels under Cabral were gaining strength, and it was rumoured that the British Vice-Consul had lent them financial aid, which prompted Grant to send American vessels to support Baez. (119)

Even more disquieting to the advocates of annexation was the growing opposition of the American Commercial Agent, Perry. He had become aware of the roles of Fabens and Cazneau in the annexation measure, and had begun asking difficult questions. His remonstrances to the Head of the Dominican Senate against the continuing extension of concessions to these two men resulted in his recall. He left in the middle of May as an enemy of annexation, and warned Cazneau:

(117) Hesseltine, Grant, p. 204
(118) Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 387
(119) Ibid
"You may rest assured that inasmuch as it lies within my power I shall do all I can to prevent injury or intrigue against the interests of my government and to defend the name of President Grant, which name I have every reason to fear has already been used by a financial ring for their own selfish ends."(120)

Grant continued to press for action. On May 31 he issued an unexpected message to the Senate which dwelt upon the merits of annexation, and which was, in effect, a call for party unity as he made his personal concern quite plain. It was also interesting for its expanded appeal to the theories of the Monroe Doctrine:

"The doctrine promulgated by President Monroe has been adhered to by all political parties, and I now feel it proper to assert the equally important principle that hereafter no territory on this continent shall be regarded as subject of transfer to a European power . . .

The acquisition of San Domingo is an adherence to the "Monroe Doctrine"; it is a measure of national protection."(121)

When Congress took up the subject again in June, the President's hopes were dealt a blow, for the Senate, led by Thomas Ferry of Michigan, launched into a discussion of the Davis Hatch case, one bound to reflect badly upon the Dominican negotiations. As expected, the debate did not long confine itself to Hatch, but developed into an attack upon the Administration in

(121) Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, pp. 61-2
general, and upon Grant in particular. An entire day was spent in general recriminations during which Charles Sumner figured prominently in the assault upon Babcock and Grant. John Thayer's frequent attempts to introduce reason into the debate were ignored. It became apparent that the investigating committee voted to look into the Hatch case would be investigating not so much the case as Grant and his failings. (122) The unpleasant situation was not improved by the President's continual lobbying, nor by Fish's inopportune offer to Sumner of a post in England, presumably if he would drop his opposition. (123)

That this debate would have an effect upon popular reaction to the treaty was a foregone conclusion. Not only had it uncovered more of the dubious legality of the negotiations, but it also revealed Sumner's opposition both to the scheme and to the Administration. On June 30, after two days of debate, the treaty failed to gain the necessary two-thirds majority. The fifty-six Senators voting divided evenly. All the Democrats voted against it, and nineteen Republicans joined them. The remaining Republicans had followed Grant, some because they supported the scheme, others, undoubtedly, because he had made it an issue of party loyalty.

(122) Cong.Globe, 41 Cong., 2 sess., pp. 4194-4201
(123) Nevins, Fish, p. 364; Pierce, Sumner, Vol. IV, pp. 433-4. This was an action which Fish later regretted deeply.
The measure now seemed to be definitely finished. Grant expressed his disappointment in a defensible but ill-timed gesture which was to be interpreted as personal spite. The day after the Senate's decision John Lothrop Motley, Minister to England and one of Sumner's admirers, was recalled. This had been pending for some time, for his opposition to Grant and his frequent refusals to take orders from Fish were indefensible in an Administration officer. Only Fish's attempts to avoid too many changes had prevented Motley's recall earlier. (124) Motley, however, refused to resign and remained in England until a successor, Robert Schenck of Ohio, was found in September. In the intervening months, Sumner, far from being subdued, was more vociferous than ever in his denunciations of Grant, realizing that Motley's dismissal was a blow aimed at him. (125) Though justifiable in terms of the administration of foreign affairs, the removal of Motley was certain to damage any further developments in the Santo Domingo case - "a blunder"

(124) Badeau, Grant in Peace, pp. 205-8, 469-70
(125) That this was aimed at Sumner was apparent from a letter from George Jones, of the New York Times to Benjamin Moran, Secretary of the American Legation in London:

"Grant said he had appointed Motley to please Sumner, since he himself had known nothing of him ... Now he would remove the man to please himself because of the San Domingo business".

and "a fatal blow to the San Domingo scheme" was the view of the Nation.\(^{(126)}\)

On December 5, 1870, Grant sent to Congress his Annual Message, which bemoaned the failure of annexation, and put forward his belief that European powers would fill the position vacated by the United States. His interest was obviously undiminished, but, knowing there was no chance of getting annexation by treaty, he suggested that:

"by a joint resolution of the two Houses of Congress the Executive be authorized to appoint a Commission to negotiate a treaty with the authorities of San Domingo for the acquisition of that island."\(^{(127)}\)

With this the debates began again when, on December 9, Sumner demanded of the President all the information in his possession relating to annexation. On December 12, Oliver Morton of Michigan in the Senate and Nathaniel Banks in the House introduced identical bills calling for the creation of the Commission suggested by the President.\(^{(128)}\) With these bills the Senate went into Executive Session and for the week until December 20 nothing was heard but rumours which told mainly of Sumner's opposition.\(^{(129)}\) On December 20, however, on

\(^{(126)}\) Oberholtzer, op.cit., p.243
\(^{(127)}\) Richardson, Messages and Papers, p.100. This apparently assumed that Haiti too would be annexed, a point which Sumner fixed upon, but it was probably a slip of the tongue on Grant's part.
\(^{(128)}\) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., pp.51, 66
\(^{(129)}\) Hesseltine, Grant, p.225
the floor of the Senate Sumner reopened the campaign.

The Chairman marshalled all his skills to discredit the President and his policy, and he was supported by a number of influential Senators, particularly Republicans Carl Schurz of Missouri, Orris Ferry of Connecticut, Justin Morrill of Vermont and James Patterson of New Hampshire, and Democrats Garrett Davis of Kentucky, Eugene Casserley of California, Thomas Bayard of Delaware and Allen Thurman of Ohio. (130) In the afternoon of December 20, armed with the information he had demanded, he began the attack, which Schurz picked up and extended. The debates ranged from objective to viciously personal, from relevant to highly illogical, with the most effective taking place during the two days of December 20 and 21, and the long night session of the 21st. The climax of these two days came with Sumner's famous "Naboth's Vineyard" speech, which was to be widely discussed by the press then and later. (131) He labelled the Dominican Government "a collection of political jockeys" and attacked Baez as a black Iscariot planning only to reap the financial benefits of the sale of the Republic, an underhand plot which was being sustained by the continuing

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(130) Three of these men, Schurz, Patterson and Casserley, were also members of the Foreign Relations Committee.
(131) For example, an article by E.L. Godkin, Editor of the Nation, "A Senator's Fidelity Vindicated", N.A.R., Vol. XXVII, 1878.
presence of the United States Navy of Dominican waters. He claimed that annexation would be costly and unproductive and would lead to the conquest of the entire West Indies. The speech then turned into an attack on Grant. Sumner denounced the President as a constitutional menace, claiming that he was attempting to interfere with the work of the Foreign Relations Committee, and compared Grant's Administration to the expansionistic presidencies of Pierce and Buchanan:

"I protest against this resolution as another stage in a drama of blood. I protest against it in the name of Justice, outraged by violence; in the name of Humanity insulted; in the name of the weak trodden down; in the name of Peace imperilled, and in the name of the African race, whose first effort at independence is rudely assailed." (132)

Oliver Morton leapt to Grant's defence, attacking Sumner's speech point by point, continuing with a call for support for the President's suggestion of a Commission and ended:

"The annexation of San Domingo will come. I prophesy here tonight that it will come. It may not come in the time of General Grant, or in my time, but I believe it is destined to come, and with it, too, the annexation of Cuba and Porto Rico." (133)

It was, he claimed, the Manifest Destiny of the United States to control the West Indies. James Nye of Nevada continued the defence of Grant, and an assault upon Sumner developed. It became apparent that the heated

(132) For the entire speech, see Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., pp.227-236
(133) Ibid, p.271
attacks on Grant had helped rather than hindered his supporters.

Opposition amendments to the resolution in an attempt to render it ineffective were regularly defeated. (134) Finally Aaron Cragin of New Hampshire settled the doubts of many senators by proposing an amendment which suggested that a vote in favour of the Commission should not commit a senator to a vote for annexation. This passed, and the vote on the amended resolution came at about 6 o'clock on the morning of December 22. It passed by 32 to 9.

The House debate was equally acrid, with Fernando Wood of New York leading the opposition. The measure was passed on January 9, after a day of discussion, but the debates continued for another two days. (135)

The Commission sailed on January 17, only twelve days after the House vote; the President had evidently been confident of victory. (136) Fish was pleased with the men chosen by Grant: Ben Wade of Ohio, Andrew D. White, President of Cornell University, and Samuel G. Howe of Massachusetts, a long-standing friend of Sumner. Frederick Douglass was one of the Secretaries, and geologists, geographers, stenographers, newspaper reporters and political observers brought the numbers to twenty-four. (137) The Commission returned in March with

(135) Ibid, pp.381-416
(136) Hesseltine, Grant, p.227
(137) Ibid, p.228
a report of no great depth which, to Grant's delight, supported his annexation plans. (138) The return gave Sumner another opportunity to attack the Administration, but his influence had been diminished by his removal from the Chairmanship.

The debates of December 20 and 21 had revealed only too well that Sumner's latent antagonism towards Grant as President had come to a head. His increasingly vituperative denunciations of Grant and his policies had become a rallying point for any disfavour towards the Administration and his influence threatened the stability of both the Republican Party and the Senate. It can be said on his behalf that he was concerned, and probably honestly, about the effects of the annexation of Santo Domingo upon the political future of Haiti. The Negro republic had fired Sumner's imagination, and he believed that the United States had a duty, as a strong power, to foster and protect weaker powers instead of plotting to absorb them. As one of the most incorruptible of Senators he was also incensed by the taint of corruption and influence that had surrounded the negotiations.

However, his personal assaults upon Grant forced him into a position which was impossible for the Administration to accept. There were many examples of his

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(138) For events see A.D. White, Autobiography, (New York, 1905), Chap. XXVII
(139) Cong. Globe, 42 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 271-305
speaking indiscriminately against the President. In November 1870 he claimed that he had been told:

"that the whole coast of the bay of Samana is staked off into lots and marked "Cazneau" and "Babcock" and "Baez", and that one or two particularly large ones are marked "Grant"." (140)

Such remarks forced even the cautious Fish to write:

"Upon a certain class of questions, and whenever his own importance and influence are concerned, or upon anything relating to himself or his views past or present or his ambition, he loses the power of logical reasoning, and becomes contradictory and violent. This is mental derangement." (141)

It was his vanity which led to this "mental derangement". Seeing himself as a great Congressional leader, as others did, and as a symbol of senatorial authority, he regarded Grant's irregular handling of the episode as a personal affront. His maintenance of senatorial and personal authority had become an obsession.

By the time the Santo Domingo Commission returned Sumner was no longer Chairman. The Republican Party caucus replaced him in March, 1871, with Simon Cameron. In any case, the Commission returned to find that interest in Santo Domingo was dead. Fortunately for Fish's peace of mind, Grant at last recognized the hopelessness of the measure. Of the Cabinet meeting of March 31, 1871, Fish wrote:

(140) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., p. 245
(141) Nevins, Fish, p. 451
"President reads draft of proposed message communicating report, to which some amendments and alterations are suggested. In the main it is right; he submits the whole question to Congress and the people. Asks no action, recounts his action with regard to it, and claims that the report justifies his views and expressions."(142)

The Commission had been only a gesture, and any positive effects it might have had had been limited by Cragin's amendment. Congress had turned to other matters and the moment for annexation had passed; it was obvious even to Grant. His message to Congress on April 5, 1871, was a recognition of failure - quiet, resigned and dignified:

"No man could hope to perform duties so delicate and responsible as pertain to the Presidential office without sometimes incurring the hostility of those who deem their opinions and wishes treated with insufficient consideration; and he who undertakes to conduct the affairs of a great government as a faithful public servant, if sustained by the approval of his own conscience may rely with confidence upon the candor and intelligence of a free people whose best interests he has striven to subserve, and can bear with patience the censure of disappointed men."(143)

Fabens continued to badger the Government, but Fish was now in control and he told the Dominican agent quite unequivocally that the matter was finished. (144) Grant agreed, and Fish wrote in relief that "the troublesome, vexatious and unnecessary question is ... finally got rid of."(145)

(142) Nevins, Fish, p. 498
(143) Richardson, Messages and Papers, p. 131
(144) Nevins, Fish, p. 500
(145) Ibid, p. 501
Grant alone was responsible for the Administration policy in Santo Domingo, and only he in the Government responded with enthusiasm to the idea of annexation; even his supporters had found justification difficult. They had marshalled arguments of economic and strategic necessity. Orth, for example, claimed Caribbean control was vital since much of American trade went through the Gulf of Mexico and the isthmian canal would increase this trade. (146) Morton quoted figures of British trade in the area and asserted that Santo Domingo would yield vastly more. (147) Others talked of controlling great shipping lanes and reaping the benefits. The arguments of the opposition were far more effective, however.

It had become apparent that the idea of a canal was, at least for the moment, little more than a dream. Without it control of the Caribbean was not commercially worthwhile. Other arguments pointed out that the Dominican national debt was $10,000,000, and as most of the franchises were by this time in English hands, much of the potential wealth would be beyond the reach of Americans. (148) The republic was economically crippled, it was diseased, it was black and it was Spanish-speaking; there were frequent attacks on the "mongrel blood" and the ineptitude of Spanish governments. (149) A further

(146) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 1 sess., p.524
(147) Ibid, 41 Cong., 3 sess., p.197
(148) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., p.388
(149) Ibid, pp.194,225,249,386,404,409,412
devastating argument was the readily evidenced accusation of corruption. Grant had not improved the situation by his clumsiness, his secrecy and his reprehensible defence of Babcock. (150)

It was Grant's handling of the issue which was at the heart of the opposition for he had threatened the newly won Senatorial dominance and the jealous regard for this dominance was the keynote of the arguments against the annexation scheme. Davis, during the debates of December 20 and 21, put the Senate's case succinctly when he claimed Grant was insulting Congress, and the Senate, by forcing upon it:

"a furtive, unconstitutional project ... to be effected without the authority of the Constitution, and perverting and usurping its powers by assuming the prerogative of the treaty-making power."

This argument appeared again and again, and was undeniably the Senate's basic stand. It was no longer possible to call for complete party unity, for the division between the Senate and the Executive transcended even this. Fish, in a letter to George Bancroft, Minister to Berlin, on February 9, 1870, summed up the situation:

(150) There was, too, some discussion of the resignation of Judge Hoar, Attorney-General. Grant demanded this in order to replace him with Amos T. Akerman, of Georgia, in an attempt to muster Southern votes. See Cox, "How Judge Hoar Ceased to be Attorney-General", Atlantic Monthly.

(151) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 3 sess., p. 195
"The San Domingo treaty, I apprehend, will not be approved. In addition to the doubts honestly entertained by many of the policy of acquiring insular possessions ..., there is something of jealousy ... operating in certain quarters. The necessities of war developed large powers exercised by both Executive and Legislative branches; the subsequent disagreement between Congress and A. Johnson increased the legislative powers and accustomed those in Congress, and particularly those in the Senate to antagonize every proposition emanating from the Executive ... The habit of criticism, if not of opposition, became somewhat fixed ... it is difficult to voluntarily relinquish power."(152)

Confidence in Grant and his Cabinet had been severely shaken. Fish had threatened more than once to resign and his disillusion with the running of affairs was apparent to many. The unity of the Republican Party had suffered from the confrontation of Grant and Sumner. The reaction of the country was shown by the decided swing to the Democrats in the 1870 elections.

(152) Nevins, fish, p. 313
The policy of the United States towards Hawaii was for most of the nineteenth century undefined, and any action taken was less a matter of government interest than of an unofficial commitment by Americans living on the islands. To understand the force exerted by these individuals during Grant's period, it is necessary to look at the development of the "American frontier" in Hawaii.

The Hawaiian Islands were on the path of vessels bound from the American coast to Canton. The location of the archipelago and the ease with which water, firewood, vegetables, hogs and salt could be purchased there gave the islands a very real importance to all who were engaged in the trade of the North Pacific. To these attractions were added the assurances of security of life and property.(1)

These remarks sum up the position Hawaii held. The only sizeable island group in the North Pacific, it is approximately 2000 miles from the west coast of the United States, 5000 miles from South America and about 4000 miles from most of the Asian mainland and Australasia, but its apparent isolation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries only increased its importance as a coaling station and resting place in the long trans-Pacific hauls of the old trading routes.

From the time that Cook's voyages, and death, brought

the islands into prominence, the traffic through them increased steadily, especially as the fur trade with China flourished. The old route had been to leave China in April, and hug the North Asian and Alaskan coasts to the Canadian west coast. With the advent of the Hawaiian stops a faster trip could be made with fewer provisions. Food was cheap in Hawaii, and the natives, as accomplished seamen, could be hired as pilots or replacements for scurvy-ridden sailors.

Until the early nineteenth century, the leaders in this developing enterprise were the English, for they had the obvious advantage of the command of the largest commercial fleet. A small number of Englishmen joined Hawaiian society, the outstanding examples being Isaac Davis and John Young, who were left on the islands by mistake. So trusted did they become that they ultimately joined the king's haole, or "council", and created a liaison between the "administration" and the growing numbers of Europeans of dubious character.

By the turn of the century Americans were appearing in the North Pacific in appreciable numbers. Many Englishmen, forced out of Pacific trade by the monopoly of the East India Company, began using American vessels to ship their goods, but it was not long before American merchants themselves were attracted by the commercial possibilities of the area. As the end of the War of Independence released more American vessels and as the Napoleonic wars forced England to close some of her
commitments in the Pacific, the number of Americans in the region increased. The sandalwood trade, which boomed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was largely responsible for this growth, for it was almost entirely an American affair. By 1818 between one and two hundred foreigners were living in Hawaii, of which the majority appeared to be Americans, and the advent of whaling only carried this development further.

The next significant move of foreigners into Hawaii began in the 1820s with the influx of the missionaries, who were to have an enormous impact upon Hawaiian life, far greater than mere numbers suggest. Again, they were predominantly American and, more particularly, New Englanders. Their influence was both good and bad. The most important advance was in education, but the religion and ethics they taught were of a rigid, Calvinistic variety and the effect they had in destroying many social customs and beliefs can be held at least partially responsible for the disruption of native life, and the decline of the native population.

Politically, their influence was to be vital for the future American commitment in Hawaii. Their hold over certain important Hawaiian chiefs increased steadily, and they exerted considerable pressure in government circles through these men. Their interests were not

(3) Morgan, Hawaii: Economic Change, p. 115
solely spiritual but material, and they constituted a strong and vocal pro-American, anti-British force in the islands. Foreigners of other nationalities, particularly the British and French, were constantly concerned by the growing political power of the American missionaries. (4)

As European authority in the islands stabilised, merchants were encouraged to establish trading houses, and once more Americans dominated this group. So strong was the American commercial commitment that in 1820 the United States Government felt it warranted an agent, and in September John Coffin Jones was appointed American Commercial Agent at Honolulu. Six years later a commercial treaty was signed between Hawaii and the United States, the first treaty undertaken by Hawaii. Though never ratified by the American Senate, it lent a more formal tone to the commercial relations of the two countries.

Yet, despite the increasing domination of Hawaiian commercial and religious life by Americans, the paramount political power was Britain. Since the late eighteenth century Britain had offered aid and protection, though she had consistently refused to consider the annexation of the islands, and she had become Hawaii's traditional friend. Against this Americans had as yet made little headway. During the 1820s, however, the balance changed.

(4) Ralph S. Kuykendall, The Hawaiian Kingdom 1778-1854. (Honolulu, 1938), p. 196
In 1821 Kamehameha II and his favourite wife had died during a trip to England, leaving the king's nine-year-old brother as heir. A regency was established under Kaahumanu, Kamehameha I's favourite wife, and although she continued to favour the British, she permitted the child to be educated by the American missionaries. The American influence was further enhanced by the Hawaiian acceptance in 1825 of a new moral and social code drawn up by the missionaries, who saw it strictly enforced when, at Kaahumanu's death in 1832, the heir Kamehameha III took his throne.

By the late 1830s Americans had become firmly entrenched in Hawaiian society, and had considerable influence over the king and his advisors. As the native population continued to decline, they bought up land and established plantations which, in turn, encouraged the development of small industries, such as sugar and cotton mills. This American predominance was not, however, a cohesive phenomenon; merchants and missionaries were frequently in violent disagreement over each other's actions. The missionaries constantly disapproved of the lives of merchants and sailors, and the latter complained that both their social lives and the efficient running of commercial activity were being hindered by the bigotry of their compatriots.

The merchants' distrust of the missionaries and their power was echoed by Britain and France, both of
whom had similar misgivings about the constant increase of American mercantile power. Neither was prepared to force its control on the islands, but neither would accept the usurpation of authority by the Americans. The 1840s saw a sudden surge of British and French activity in the area, including a rise in the volume of their respective trade with the islands. So concerned were the American merchants by this renewal of European interest that they proposed that the Hawaiian government should apply for a recognition of independence from all powers which most threatened the status quo. Britain and France agreed to this suggestion, but the negotiations with the United States were more difficult.

The activities of American citizens in Hawaii had not been sanctioned or encouraged by the United States government; in fact, the United States seemed to have little interest in the islands beyond commercial enterprise, and any action by the government up to 1842 had been fostered by Hawaii's American population. Now, in 1842, the United States was being forced to take more notice, and President Tyler, on December 31, issued the first statement of American policy towards Hawaii, after hints that if he did not recognize the islands a British protectorate might be sought. It was an important document, for it resembled in some respects the Monroe

Doctrine. It declared a national interest in the islands and their fate, and warned that it would frown upon attempts by any foreign power "to take possession of the islands by conquest, or for the purpose of colonization". (6)

Despite the fact that this Presidential statement asserted an American concern for Hawaii, relations with the Islands might well have gone on as before had it not been for the seizure of Hawaii by Lord George Paulet in February 1854, which caused such a reaction in the United States that the State Department felt constrained to issue a more definite statement. Legare, the Secretary of State, warned the British government that the United States was vitally interested in the fate of Hawaii and that any attempts at annexation would be regarded as a threat to American security. (7) The British government, after restoring the Hawaiian flag, organized with France a joint recognition of Hawaiian independence. Efforts to include the United States failed, and the American government was left unfettered in its relations with the islands.

The next decade was one of increasing Americanization, culminating in the annexation fever of the middle 1850s. The missionaries steadily increased their hold over

(6) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p. 3
(7) Ibid, p. 18; Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, p. 200
Hawaiian society as more of their numbers came out from the American mission societies; their importance in instilling a faith in the American way of life should never be underestimated. Many of them acquired land and a material interest in the future of Hawaii, and gradually the barriers between the commercial and evangelical worlds broke down. Economic life prospered. The results of the decline of the whaling trade were negated by the "economic revolution" wrought by the opening of California and Oregon, which was to be instrumental in tying Hawaii even more tightly within the American sphere of influence. The Californian gold rush boosted prices of all goods produced in Hawaii, increased exports, and encouraged the spread of the sugar industry. It was also responsible for an influx of migrants, eager to buy land and pressuring the Hawaiian government for new fiscal codes and increased democratization. This growing awareness of the social and economic dependence of Hawaii upon the United States, and the fear, engendered by the 1849 attempt of the French to seize control of the islands, that this position could be lost, were major causes of the sudden agitation in the United States for closer ties with Hawaii.

The 1849 debacle had prompted a voluntary cession of the islands to the American Commissioner, (8) which had been immediately rejected by the Whig administration. (9)

(8) P.R.F.R. (1894), Hawaii Appendix, pp. 13-14
(9) Ibid, pp. 99-100
and which had not been greeted with approval by many in Hawaii. Merchants did not want to exchange the low Hawaiian tariff for an increased American one, and the missionaries believed annexation would destroy native life completely. In the United States, however, interest in Hawaii was deepened and a noticeable swing towards annexation took place. The Senate, encouraged by the interest of the Californian representatives, asked the President for all relevant information on Hawaii, but Taylor was opposed to any thought of annexation and the requests were denied. (10)

Annexation fever came closest to success during the Presidency of Franklin Pierce, who was an enthusiastic advocate of Manifest Destiny. In 1854 interest in taking over the Hawaiian Islands was bolstered by the assertion of David Gregg, the new Minister to Hawaii, that the islands were anxious for union with the United States. (11) Rumours that Britain and France were considering some action added to the need for speed, and in April 1854 the Pierce Administration informed Gregg that the sovereignty of Hawaii would be purchased for $100,000. (12) The negotiations were slow, hindered by the king's demands for $300,000 and a guarantee of his current standard of living, but in December 1854 he died. His successor, Alexander Liholiho, was actively opposed to annexation,

(10) Cong. Globe, 32 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 572, 603
(11) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, pp. 417-22
(12) P.R.F.R. (1894), Haw. App., pp. 121-2
both because he led a growing nationalistic movement among native chiefs, and because he feared the reactions of the alarmed British and French. His attitude spelt the end of annexation.

In the next few years the United States was too concerned with the problems of imminent civil war to turn to Hawaii, where Americans were now pressing for a reciprocity treaty. But the United States was not interested in this proposal; it was annexation or nothing, (13) and the opposition of the Louisiana sugar planters to a purely economic arrangement which could threaten their sugar monopoly further decreased any appeal the measure might have. Expansionist feelings faded as men realized that this was not the time to encourage costly ventures in imperialism. This did not, however, prevent a continuing awareness in the United States of the American position in Hawaii, nor did it diminish the jealous regard for that position.

In August 1863, James McBride, United States Commissioner in Honolulu, wrote to Secretary of State Seward, pointing out that British influence there had grown while the Civil War had diverted American attention, and he suggested that the United States should take immediate action. His recommendation was a reciprocity

treaty. The fear that Britain would usurp the American position was not without basis. The king was an Anglophile and had given increasing numbers of official posts to Britons, as the decline in the native population meant that there were insufficient native replacements. McBride believed that in the event of the king's death, which appeared imminent, the British would assume control of the government, and he claimed that there was an unpaid British loan which could be used as a justification for annexation. But the danger was exaggerated, and Seward met his suggestions with a firm refusal; however, he was credited as having stated that "when the Civil War was over, the government would take good care of its interests in the Sandwich Islands." 

After the war, Seward investigated the Hawaiian situation more closely, occasioned by the visit to England in 1865 of Queen Emma of Hawaii and Bishop Staley. He betrayed some concern about the political reasons for

(15) McBride's dispatches reveal that he was an advocate of annexation.
(17) Kamehameha V advised Emma to visit the United States in order to show:
that your visits (sic) to Europe was not of any political purpose but for private purposes. They (the Americans) are a very sensitive people, your visiting them will disarm all the lies and insinuations directed against our family from what they say of our dislikes of that country. She did so, but cut short her visit on the death of her adoptive mother; Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom 1854-1874 (Honolulu, 1953), p. 202. Hereafter Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. II
this trip, and wrote to Charles Adams, Minister in London, asking for information on the official British attitude. Adams assured him that all was well, but this did not, it seemed, settle Seward's apprehensions, for he eagerly entered into new negotiations for a reciprocity treaty. He wrote to the new Minister in Honolulu, Edward McCook, encouraging him to sound out the proper authorities on the subjects of both reciprocity and annexation, and later confessed to McCook that the real intention was annexation. (18)

Annexation feeling ran high in Hawaii in these months. Sugar planters were suffering from the results of an economic slump caused by the fall in prices at the end of the Civil War. McCook, who was being pressured by the sugar interests, and Z.S. Spaulding, Seward's secret agent in the islands, wrote to encourage annexation, claiming that a revival of the reciprocity treaty was useless and that annexation would be more readily accepted. (19) But Seward, regretfully, had been forced to recognize that reciprocity was likely to be more successful in the United States, for public interest seemed, he said, "to be fastened upon the domestic questions which have grown out of the late Civil War." (20)

(18) P.R.F.R. (1894), Haw. App., p. 143. Seward to McCook, September 12, 1867
(19) Ibid., pp. 139, 140, 144. McCook to Seward, June 7 and August 5, 1867; reply of Seward to Spaulding's unprinted dispatch, July 5, 1868.
(20) P.R.F.R. (1894), Haw. App., p. 144. Seward to Spaulding July 5, 1868
As it was, the reciprocity treaty was not successful. It was not reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee for a year and then it was tabled by one of its opponents. Though resubmitted in January 1869, it was ignored until May 1870 when it met with considerable indifference, for though it was defeated by only 20 to 19, only half the Senate bothered to vote.

The reasons for its failure were many, but one of the most widely accepted was that, despite the opposition to annexation at the time, reciprocity would hinder any later attempts at annexation. Another interesting theory was that opposition to the treaty was increased by the belief that it had been engineered by anti-American elements in Hawaii, particularly the British, under the assumption that reciprocity would kill any desire for annexation on the part of Hawaii. (21)

The anti-British element in these early diplomatic dealings was very strong and appears to have been a far greater impetus to an active American policy towards Hawaii than economic or even strategic considerations. Again and again the predominant argument in favour of action had been a desire to stop British authority spreading in the Pacific. This line was cloaked in the language of economic necessity, of political strategy.

(21) Patterson, "United States and Hawaiian Reciprocity", pp.18-26. See also Jean I. Brookes, International Rivalry in the Pacific Islands, 1800-1875. (Los Angeles, 1941), pp.269-79.
and of Manifest Destiny, but it seemed unlikely in the 1840s and 1850s that an outpost such as Hawaii would be a strategic necessity or an economically sound proposition for the United States, or that American commitments and investments there were sufficient to warrant such action. Opinion within the United States had been rather indifferent until 1853 and even then the enthusiasm had been limited mainly to those from California. The activists were those Americans in the islands who, by continual pressure upon both the Hawaiian and American governments, attempted to force a political situation which would support their authority. Citizens of the United States were in the majority among foreign residents, and had gained positions of considerable influence; any movement on the part of Britain or France towards increased political interest in the islands upset the delicate balance of power which the Americans had established. With each one of these movements there can be distinguished an American reaction aimed at some concrete proposal, such as reciprocity or annexation.

The first reactions of the Grant Administration to the treaty of reciprocity still pending before the Senate were those of indifference. There is no evidence that Grant was even vaguely interested in the islands, and it seems to have been a year before Fish paid more than passing attention to the scheme, and this was not occasioned by a growth of interest in it, but by the
constant lobbying of the Hawaiian agent, Elisha Allen. In January 1870 Allen visited Fish in an attempt to urge Administration support of the treaty; the Secretary was cold, and was unwilling to be drawn into further reciprocity negotiations. For the next two months Allen continued to communicate with the State Department, much to the annoyance of Fish, who finally dismissed the agent with the argument that the immigration of orientals practised by Hawaii was viewed with strong disfavour in the United States. By the end of May, the treaty had failed to pass and Allen had returned to Hawaii.

The response there to the failure of the treaty was a violent anti-American swing. It was apparent that the failure was due in part to the feeling that reciprocity would hinder annexation schemes, and the reaction in Hawaii was alarm and indignation. Public meetings were held in opposition to annexation, and the popular Queen Emma exhorted the population never to give up its independence. Even the possibility of reciprocity had lost its appeal, for there was a revulsion against the national dishonour of begging for aid. The Pacific Commercial Advertiser of November 18, 1870, declared:

(22) Stevens; American Expansion in Hawaii, p. 103
"Let us depend upon our own resources, and upon the markets of the world, and make the most of opportunities which we have, and of which no-one can deprive us." (24)

So widespread was the disillusion with the United States that even the commercial interests, who were desperate for aid of some variety, began to search for new markets beyond the United States. Such a development alarmed the new American Minister to Hawaii, Henry A. Peirce.

The appointment of Peirce as Minister was the only action taken by the new administration which seemed favourable to the islands. He had long been associated with Hawaii; in his youth he had taken an active part in the mercantile life of Honolulu and had been one of the founders of the firm of C. Brewer and Company, one of the largest and longest-lived of the early companies. (25) His understanding of the islands was well-respected, and his sympathies with the needs of their economy made him a strong supporter of closer ties with the United States, his conviction being that annexation was the only way to save the struggling economy from complete ruin. The growing opposition to this, and, indeed, to American influence generally, impressed him so strongly that shortly after his arrival, and less than three months after the failure of reciprocity, he wrote to Fish to report that trade with the British colonies was

(24) Stevens; American Expansion in Hawaii, p. 103
developing so rapidly that it posed a significant threat to American interests, and he suggested that some American action was essential.\(^{(26)}\)

There was some reason for his alarm. Between 1866 and 1870 plans for transoceanic steamship lines connecting Hawaii with the rest of the Pacific basin came to fruition. Numerous attempts failed but by 1870 various lines were running, the most effective being an Australian Company which gained subsidies from the Australian, New Zealand and Hawaiian governments, and an American line, run by W.H. Webb, the New York shipbuilder, which acquired similar subsidies but which could not encourage American support.\(^{(27)}\) Though all these ventures collapsed within two years, their growth had seemed an encouragement to Hawaii to seek financial and commercial aid outside the United States.

At the same time there had been an increase in trade with Australia and New Zealand, but this had been very slight and had not diminished the trade with the United States. The figures were quoted by annexationists in the United States as evidence of an anti-American movement, but these trade links at no time constituted a threat to American commercial dominance in Hawaii.\(^{(28)}\)

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\(^{(27)}\) Ibid
It is possible that this rumour was gauged to appeal to the anti-British instincts of American expansionists in an attempt to revive American interest in Hawaii.

Peirce, like many others, was impressed by these apparent signs of British competition, and he continued to press for a commitment on the part of the United States. In September 1870 his arguments were endorsed by a scheme for a reciprocity treaty submitted to Fish and Grant by Zephaniah Spaulding, one-time secret agent to Hawaii during Seward's Secretaryship. At that time he had inclined towards annexation, but since then he had become an associate in a sugar venture on the island of Maui, and he stood to profit more from reciprocity than annexation. (29)

The administration made no reply to these letters; indeed it was a long time before any interest was displayed. Only Fish appeared to have changed his attitude, for he began to bring the Hawaiian question before Cabinet. It is not obvious what caused this reversal of opinion but the persistence and urgency of Peirce's suggestions may have been partly responsible. In October

(29) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. II, p. 228. Spaulding's case was interesting, for it illustrated the reasons for the differences between annexation and reciprocity. Those in the United States who favoured closer ties with Hawaii were likely to favour annexation since this would mean free trade between Hawaii and the United States. Hawaiians, or those with a commercial investment in Hawaii's economy, usually favoured reciprocity, which would ensure an expanding but independent economy and better returns for their endeavours.
1870 he broached the subject of annexation in Cabinet. Most of its members appeared little impressed, and Grant remarked only that "Sumner had better be consulted whether Annexation is desirable. Let him think that he originates it, and all will be well." (30) In December Fish made another attempt to have the subject discussed, encouraged by the enthusiasm of Californian merchants and businessmen for action. (31) The reaction was indifference.

"No-one responds and the subject is dropped. The indisposition to consider important questions of the future in the Cabinet is wonderful," (32) Fish observed. The Administration's ignorance of the potential importance of Hawaii was further illustrated by Grant's suggestion that Peirce be removed in favour of someone looking for political reward. The idea was thwarted by Fish. (33)

In 1871, however, there was a glimmer of interest in the reaction to Peirce's dispatch of February 25. In yet another attempt to encourage the Administration to revive the subject of annexation he had written:

"That such is to be the political destiny of this archipelago seems to be a foregone conclusion in the opinion of all who have given attention to the subject ... The event of the decease of the present sovereign.

(30) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p. 111
(31) Ibid
(32) Ibid
(33) Ibid
of Hawaii, leaving no heirs or successor to the throne ... will produce a crisis in political affairs which ... will be availed of as a propitious time to inaugurate measures for annexation of the islands to the United States ... as the Manifest will and choice of the Hawaiian people."(34)

On April 7 Grant forwarded this to the Senate with the comment:

"Although I do not deem it advisable to express any opinion or to make any recommendation in regard to the subject at this juncture, the views of the Senate, if it should be deemed proper to express them, would be very acceptable with reference to any future course which there might be a disposition to adopt."(35)

Over a month had passed since Grant had received this dispatch, and there is nothing to show what influenced him in his decision to transmit it to the Senate, but it seems hardly coincidental that he should have developed a sudden interest in Hawaii at the same time that his schemes for Santo Domingo were dealt a final blow.(36)

Although the Senate did not reply to the message, Grant was not discouraged. A confidential mission was authorized to investigate the commercial and naval facilities of the islands. In 1872 two military agents left to make a careful survey, which was reported on May 8, 1873.(37) This favoured the acquisition of Pearl

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(35) Richardson, Messages and Papers, Vol.VII,p.131
(36) Grant's message recognising the defeat of Dominican annexation was delivered on April 5, 1871.
Harbour, if a naval depot was required, and commented upon the public attitude to closer links with the United States. Only very few wanted annexation, the report pointed out, but it suggested that the United States accept the cession of the harbour "as an equivalent for free trade." (38)

In Hawaii a new development prompted another call for annexation from Peirce. On the morning of December 11, 1872, Kamehameha V died. He had not appointed a successor and, though in the last hours of his life his ministers had attempted to encourage him to name his choice, he died without having resolved the crisis. There would be an election to name a successor, and a political crisis developed as the contest narrowed to two of the four candidates, William Charles Lunalilo, the late king's cousin, and David Kalakaua, a high chief, who had been educated in Europe. (39) On December 11, Peirce informed Fish of the situation, and anxiously hinted once more at action by the United States.

"I have heard influential men speak of annexation to the U. States as being the most preferable measure for the future prosperity and security of these Islands.

(38) Ibid, p. 158
(39) The other candidates were Princess Bernice Pauahi, relation and close friend of the late king and married to an American in the Hawaiian Cabinet, Charles Reed Bishop; and Ruth Keelikolani, said to be the choice of many chieftains "because she would place many of them in presumptive relation to the throne". Queen Emma refused to stand. P.R.F.R. (1873), p. 485. Peirce to Fish, December 11, 1872
But success in that direction they deem impossible of attainment; in view of the results in regard to former proposed purchases by the U. States, of the Island of St. Thomas and that of St. Domingo; as well as the indifference shown by the U. States Government for the acquisition of these Islands. The "Party of Annexationists" so called, seems now to have little life - but it would revive with the most overwhelming strength, if any encouragement were given them by authority of the U.S. Government. (40)

This feeling had been growing in Hawaii for some time, partly out of increasing desperation. The sugar industry had not recovered after recession which set in after the temporary boom offered by the American Civil War, but in 1872 the situation was more immediate. The year had been a bad one for sugar planters and the prospects for 1873 did not seem to be good. Labour was difficult to obtain, especially as a reaction developed against Chinese coolies when it was realized that this could have a detrimental effect upon the case for reciprocity. Transport costs increased as a number of the shipping lines with Hawaii went out of business. High tariff walls in the United States upset many planters and even the lower duties of New Zealand and Australia were not encouraging, for it was obvious that these countries could never hope to absorb the amount of sugar exported to the United States should such a trading

(40) Ibid. See also: Merze Tate, The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom - A Political History. (New Haven, 1965), pp.29-31
change be necessary. (41) Sugar interests were in
desperate need of some aid, and such disillusion had been
expressed in the hope that reciprocity would be accept-
able to the United States that men were being driven to
support annexation in preference to economic ruin. (42)

The revival of talk of annexation at the time of the
election of a new king partly reflected hope for a change
of government policy after the anti-American feeling
which had been apparent at the end of the previous reign.
Planters and merchants tended to support Lunalilo, for
he was not actively opposed to closer ties with the
United States, and his royal blood appealed to the native
population; thus at the election on January 1, 1873 he
won by an overwhelming majority. (43) Hopes for annexa-
tion were further enhanced by Lunalilo's announcement a
few days later of a Cabinet composed almost entirely of
Americans. Encouraged by this, a group of planters, led
by one Henry Whitney, placed before the king a memorandum
calling for an investigation of American attitudes to
reciprocity. (44)

(41) Tate, The U.S. and the Hawaiian Kingdom, pp. 31-32;
Sullivan, C. Brewer & Co., pp. 129-31;
Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, pp. 112-13;
Gavan Daws, Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian
Islands. (New York, 1968), p. 191
(42) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p. 113; See
also article by Charles Nordhoff in New York Tribune,
March 19, 1873.
(43) Lunalilo had run a more strenuous campaign than
Kalakaua, and was determined to win, even to the
extent of overthrowing Kalakaua if the election went
that way. Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. II, p. 244
(44) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p. 114
Although the agitation for annexation had become very strong, this demand for a renewal of the reciprocity negotiations wisely recognized two important elements in the Hawaiian attitude towards reciprocity and annexation. Firstly, most planters would prefer reciprocity to annexation if this was possible, and secondly, the native population was intensely nationalistic and was opposed as strongly as ever to annexation and the loss of independence. The memorandum realized, however, that reciprocity alone was not sufficient to attract the United States, and it suggested that the lease of Pearl Harbour as a naval station be offered. (45) This suggestion was presented to Minister Peirce, who was forced to decline it because he had no instructions from Washington, but it was forwarded to Fish. (46)

Despite the fact that reciprocity was apparently preferred in Hawaii, Peirce continued to press Washington for a consideration of annexation. So enthusiastic was he personally for annexation that he failed to judge accurately the prevailing spirit in Honolulu, and held the king responsible for any opposition to the idea.

(45) Ibid; Harold W. Kent, Charles Reed Bishop: Man of Hawaii, (Palo Alto, California, 1965), pp.61-2  
(46) P.R.F.R. (1894), Haw. App., p.152. Peirce to Fish, February 10, 1873
"The glitter of the crown, love of the power and emoluments of office have too many attractions. But should the great interests of the country, however, demand that annexation should be attempted, the planters, merchants and foreigners generally will induce the people to overthrow the Government, establish a republic and then ask the U.S. for admittance into the Union." (47)

Such was the popular faith in the king, however, that according to Charles Nordhoff, the noted specialist in Hawaiian affairs, "not even a glimmer of annexation spirit prevailed among the natives." (48) By late February, there had been a general acceptance of reciprocity over annexation and Peirce's views were embarrassing its advocates. The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce ventured the opinion that Peirce would actively oppose any scheme for reciprocity, (49) and on March 15 Fish informed the minister that his ideas were premature and threatened the good relations between Hawaii and the United States which rested upon the recognition of the islands' independence. (50) Californian enthusiasts for annexation had met with a similar response, when Fish, while not denying the possibility of annexation in the future, declared that "at the moment the Government has no such arriere pensee". (51)

(47) P.R.F.R.(1894), Haw. App., pp. 152-4. Peirce to Fish, February 17, 1873
(48) New York Tribune, March 11, 1873
(49) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. II, p. 251
(50) Ibid; Tate, U.S. and the Hawaiian Kingdom, pp. 32-3
(51) New York Herald, January 8, 1873, quoted in Tate, op. cit., p. 33
On March 25, the Secretary of State sent to Peirce the first comprehensive statement of the administration's attitude to Hawaii. He held out little hope for the success of a reciprocity treaty, though he was unsure how much a cession clause would alter opinion.

"The position of the Sandwich Islands as an outpost fronting and commanding the whole of our possessions on the Pacific Ocean, gives to the future of those islands a peculiar interest to the Government and people of the United States ... The acquisition of territory beyond the sea outside the present confines of the United States meets the opposition of many discreet men who have more or less influence in our Councils."

He agreed that many believed in annexation, but maintained that there was insufficient information to create a concrete policy and suggested that Peirce

"without committing the Government to any line of policy, (should) not discourage the feeling which may exist in favour of annexation ...; and you will cautiously ... avail of any opportunity of ascertaining the views of the Hawaiian authorities on this question, and if there be any idea entertained in that direction ... you will endeavor ... to ascertain their views as to the manners, and the terms and conditions (on which such a project could be executed)."(52)

Encouraged, Peirce transmitted this message to Bishop, who brought it before the Cabinet where the negotiation of a treaty was discussed. It was finally agreed that the cession of Pearl Bay would be included in the reciprocity offer, though it was an uncertain

agreement. The King was rather reluctant, and Bishop himself was unconvinced that this was the best strategy; his wife, Princess Bernice, was strenuously opposed to the idea of alienating land. The treaty was forwarded to Fish by Peirce early in July, and on July 12 the terms were published in the Pacific Commercial Advertiser in Honolulu. (53)

There had been considerable feeling against such a scheme before July 1873, (54) but the publication of the terms caused a tide of opposition. Public meetings were held to voice disapproval and an American journalist, Walter Murray Gibson, started a newspaper, Nuhou, specifically to publish articles which opposed the cession. (55) Queen Emma wrote

"There is a feeling of bitterness against these rude people who dwell on our land and have high handed ideas of giving away someone else's property as if it was theirs." (56)

Theophilus Davies, acting British Commissioner, believed that this signalled the end of American dominance of Hawaii.

(53) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol.II, p.255
(54) For example, public speech by Hon. Stephen H. Phillips, March 11, 1873, published in pamphlet form later in the same month.
(55) Daws, Shoal of Time, p.192; Kuykendall, op.cit., p.255; Isabella Bird Bishop, Six Months among the Palm Groves, Coral Reefs and Volcanoes of the Sandwich Islands, (London, 1894), p.242. Her opinion of the Nuhou was that it was "scurrilous and diverting, and appears "run" with a special object which I have (not yet unravelled) from its pungent but not always intelligible pages."
(56) Tate, U.S. and Hawaiian Kingdom, p.32
"Within the last six months the United States has lost ground here which it can never regain - that is in the hearts of the people. It is commonly believed that if Great Britain were to ask for Pearl River, or even one of the islands, the natives would grant it at once." (57)

Even Peirce recognized that a swing to Britain was possible, though he claimed that the situation owed much to "emissaries and political demagogues of foreign and native birth" who were "exciting the passions and prejudices of the people, against cession of territory; stirring up strife and enmity between the foreigners and natives." (58)

The King was deeply concerned by the reaction. He had not been sure that a cession of Pearl Bay was advisable and since July had been receiving Joseph Carter, a prominent citizen who was strongly opposed to the cession, and that fact, wrote Charles Bishop,

"strengthens the impression that he is not heartily in favor of reciprocity with any cession of territory, and it accounts for the other fact, that many prominent natives who have usually made the King's wishes their own ... have spoken against cession." (59)

(57) Tate, U.S. and Hawaiian Kingdom, p. 32; Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. II, p. 256
(58) Kuykendall, op. cit., p. 256
(59) Kent, Bishop, p. 62
A Cabinet meeting was called for November 14, (60) and
the King withdrew his support for the treaty. Fish
received this news calmly:

"It is possible that the acquisition
suggested might in some respects be advan-
tageous to the United States. No
encouragement, however, can, under existing
circumstances, be given that the proposition
will be accepted upon the terms proposed."(61)

This did not put an end to the reciprocity movement
but it did disillusion many of its enthusiasts. Further
political disturbances threatened to break out, and the
climax came with the death of the King on February 3,
1874 after little more than a year's reign. His death
plunged the kingdom into yet another crisis, for he too
died without naming a successor. The three possible
candidates were Bernice Pauahi, who refused to stand;
Queen Emma, who had a body of followers sharing her
distaste for anything American; and David Kalakaua,
whose position had improved since the last elections,
partly because he had spent more effort in his campaign,
and partly because he was opposed to annexation and the
cession of territory. Davies wrote that a deep-seated
antagonism existed between Kalakaua and the Americans,
and he felt sure that British interests would be safe. (62)

(60) The delay since the last Cabinet meeting in July
was due to the King's illness and convalescence.
(61) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. II, p. 255
This analysis of the situation proved to be incorrect. No such antagonism existed and the Americans were quite ready to support him. On February 12 he was elected king after a day of bitter fighting between his and Queen Emma's supporters which necessitated the call for troops from both British and American vessels in the harbour.

Once order was re-established, the interest in reciprocity began again. The news of the proposed cession of Pearl Bay in order to acquire reciprocity had prompted the usual nationalistic, anti-American correspondence. The Hawaiian Gazette (whose editor was Henry Whitney) said on February 25, 1874:

"We have wasted much valuable time in fruitless endeavours to secure a treaty; let us then in future attend to the development of our productions and our commerce on a self-reliant and independent basis, leaving the overtures for a treaty to be made from the other side of the water." (63)

Just how transitory this opinion was became apparent when, a few weeks later, the same paper responded to a new memorandum for reciprocity:

"Now appears to be the golden opportunity for Hawaii to make another vigorous effort to secure the coveted boom ... If, in addition, His Majesty can be induced to head an embassy to Washington, it might add an eclat which, we are confident, would crown the undertaking with success. And to this proposal the people will say Amen." (64)

(64) Ibid, p. 19
San Francisco newspapers encouraged this idea, and the King also was enthusiastic; he had long wanted a trip to the United States. By August this feeling had developed to such a point that the King was being recommended strongly to go to Washington, and on September 11 he agreed, though he refused to go as a negotiator; for this position he appointed Chief Justice Elisha Allen. (65)

On August 20 Peirce wrote Fish advising him of the probability of the King's visit and encouraging a positive approach to the negotiations. (66) By the time the King was ready to leave in October, Peirce had become so enamoured of the possibility of success that he suggested that a demand for the cession of Pearl Bay would probably be acceded to by the King rather than risk the failure of the treaty. (67) In this he was wrong; cession of Hawaiian territory was something to which Kalakaua was inflexibly opposed.

On October 18, Allen and H.A.P. Carter, the other appointed negotiator, left for Washington with orders to use the uncompleted 1867 treaty as a model. They were instructed that sugar up to a specified grade must be admitted duty free, and it was suggested that they

(65) Ibid, pp. 19-20
(66) P.R.F.R. (1875-6), p. 669. Peirce to Fish, August 20, 1874
should attempt to get rice and wood included, but any cession of territory was out of the question. (68)

Conditions in the United States were more favourable towards a reopening of negotiations, for the general indifference which had dogged earlier attempts had begun to change. The issues in foreign policy which had taken precedence over Hawaiian affairs had been settled - Santo Domingo had long since been dealt with, and an amicable arrangement had recently been reached with Spain. Charles Sumner, who had attacked most of the administration's schemes in foreign affairs, had died in March 1874. Fish had realized the importance of controlling Hawaii for some time but more important concerns and the indifference of the Cabinet had prevented any action. (69) By late 1874 the constant reports of Peirce, and the insistent enthusiasm of Californian merchants for a consideration of Hawaiian needs had had some effect upon the Cabinet. (70)

The argument which seemed to be most forceful in bringing about this change was that of the competition of Britain and the British colonies. While the figures

(68) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. III, p. 22
(69) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, pp. 119-20
(70) Ibid; Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. III, pp. 23-4
quoted by Morgan\textsuperscript{(71)} reveal no substantial change in the
trade pattern of Hawaii, they did show a slight increase
in the trade with British colonies and this, combined
with the rumour that Hawaiian planters were preparing to
send the entire 1875-1876 crop to Australia and New
Zealand, produced a favourable reaction to the treaty.
Another rumour that gained considerable attention was the
belief that Julius Vogel, Prime Minister of New Zealand,
was about to admit Hawaiian sugar free, and was
negotiating for the union of Australasia and Hawaii in
a "Polynesian Company" under British suzerainty.\textsuperscript{(72)}
These arguments were seized upon by San Francisco news-
papers, which kept up a constant campaign for action,\textsuperscript{(73)}
and to their voices were added those of businesses, such
as ship-building, which saw considerable profit in closer
ties with Hawaii. They were optimistic about the
treaty's chances,\textsuperscript{(74)} but official circles did not offer
the negotiators such hope.

\textsuperscript{(71)} Morgan, \textit{Hawaii: Economic Change}, p. 211

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See also Chalfont Robinson, \textit{A History of Two Reciprocity
Treaties} (New Haven, 1904), p. 121

\textsuperscript{(72)} Tate, \textit{U.S. and Hawaiian Kingdom}, p. 32; Robinson,
op. cit., pp. 120-22

\textsuperscript{(73)} Kuykendall, \textit{Hawaiian Kingdom}, Vol. III, pp. 18-24

\textsuperscript{(74)} Kuykendall, \textit{Hawaiian Kingdom}, Vol. III, p. 24
Fish was not encouraging, although his continuing coolness did not give Allen or Carter the impression that he was actively opposed to the treaty. (75) His chief concern was that the "most favoured nation" clause of most international agreements would negate any advantage gained by the United States. On December 24, 1874 the Hawaiian agents pressed Fish for action, but he still seemed loath to act, and promised only consideration without commitment. He seemed to be waiting for some hint of the Senate's reaction. (76)

Judge Allen left Washington to join the King before the next meeting with Fish and Carter continued the negotiations alone. It is evident from both the headway he made with Fish, and the arguments he used against the Secretary's caution, that Carter was a skilful negotiator. Of the December 31 meeting he wrote:

"I had previously requested some of our friends to call upon Mr. Fish and he seemed more inclined than I had seen him before to discuss the Treaty." (77)

He had also approached a number of Senators

"who encouraged me to believe that the treaty (would) be favorably acted upon and urge(d) an early submission after the assembling of Congress." (78)

(75) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p.121. He believes Fish's coolness was towards Allen whom he had disliked since the 1870 negotiations. (76) Kuykendall, op.cit., p.24; Robinson, Two Reciprocity Treaties, p.122 (77) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. III, p.24 (78) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p.122
His pressures had effect, for he was asked by Fish to submit a treaty draft by January 4, 1875. On the following day it was submitted to Grant and the Cabinet, and the general opinion was favourable. Within the next two weeks, the treaty was discussed item by item. Certain changes were made: coffee was removed from the free list, as were hemp, flax and similar materials in order to avoid possible opposition from textile interests but, apart from these, agreement was reached quickly. The treaty was signed on January 30, and submitted by the President to the Senate on February 1. (79)

The treaty, as it stood, was merely an agreement for reciprocal trade; any political aspects were not explicit. The Senate, however, wanted more overt acceptance that the American position would not be challenged. Therefore, the addition of Article IV was made.

"It is agreed, on the part of His Hawaiian Majesty that so long as this treaty shall remain in force, he will not lease or otherwise dispose of or create any lien upon any port, harbor or other territory in his dominions, or grant any special privilege or rights of use therein, to any other power, state or government, nor make any treaty by which any other nation shall obtain the same privileges herein secured to the United States." (80)

Allen and Carter had expected some additions of a

(79) Richardson, Messages and Papers, p. 318
(80) P.R.F.R. (1875-76), pp. XXVII-XX
political nature, but undoubtedly they did not anticipate the kind of amendment which eventuated. Carter telegrammed resignedly to Allen, "You had better assume we considered the amendment alright (sic) and stand by it with me if you will do so". (81)

The treaty was reported back to the Senate from the Committee on March 11, 1875. Both Peirce and Allen had appeared before the Committee to plead the treaty's case, maintaining that the failure of this treaty would drive the islands in desperation to Britain. The amended treaty was debated in Executive Session on March 17 and 18. (82) Senator Morrill was the chief opponent, denying that there was any commercial value in the treaty, and maintaining that it could only bring the United States into conflict with jealous nations. Another powerful argument put forward by Morrill was that the treaty was merely a "put-up job, in the interests of the planters of the Sandwich Islands, and at the expense of the Government of the United States." (83) Senators Hamlin of Maine, Kelly of Oregon and Sargent of California led those in favour, and as the amendments were adopted, one after the other, it became apparent that the treaty would be successful. On March 18, it was put to the vote and passed easily, 51 to 12.

(81) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p.126
(82) Although Executive Session debates are generally secret, the Senate can authorise the publication of certain speeches. This was authorised in this case on March 23, 1875. See Cong. Record, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix pp. 151-62
(83) Ibid., p.156
As the measure involved a revocation of revenue legislation, however, the House of Representatives was required to originate an enabling bill to put the treaty into effect. This had to wait until the next session of Congress, beginning in December 1875. In the meantime, both sides had time to organize, and Judge Allen returned to the United States from Hawaii in the autumn of 1875 to lend support to the treaty's supporters. On January 6, 1876 Representative Luttrell of California introduced the necessary bill (H.R. No. 612), and it was reported to the Committee on Ways and Means where it remained until February 24. The Committee reported 6 to 4 in favour of the bill, the minority submitting a report in opposition to the bill at the same time.

The majority report dealt rapidly with the commercial advantages, then proceeded to discuss the points which were the crux of the reciprocity issue - the strategic and political necessities of accepting reciprocity.

"We should consider it as a question comprehending interests beyond the mere free exchange of articles enumerated in the schedules." (85)

It pointed to the commercial competition of Britain and claimed that it was vital to secure the islands against

(84) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. III, p. 28
(85) Congressional Record, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 1421
British encroachment. The minority report confined itself to commercial considerations and had no difficulty in erecting a sound case against reciprocity. Such an agreement was unnecessary, it claimed, because American influence in the islands was sufficiently extensive to ensure the United States of continuing dominance.

"The neutrality of the commercial nations as to these islands, the hospitable entrepot for the Pacific commerce of the world, their healthful civilization and development under the common protection and liberal policy of all, and an open but firm diplomacy, will do more to expand our commerce and secure our peace than the possession of the sovereignty of the islands, and for a much stronger reason than the illusory provisions of this treaty."(86)

The debates which ensued were concerned mainly with arguments over whether or not the islands were strategically necessary. The Californian representatives, however, introduced a new point of discussion. "It is a Pacific-coast measure," claimed Luttrell, "and we do not want to have you send us home defeated and mortified."(87) This line of argument gained several supporters, including Money of Mississippi, and Garfield of Ohio who maintained that the ratification would serve to unite the east and west coasts, which was owed to

(86) Cong. Record, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 1422
(87) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p. 136
California and to the United States. (88) Finally the House voted, and passed the measure 115 to 101; conspicuously most of the opposition was from the mid-West and South, areas which would not benefit immediately from the treaty.

From the House Bill No. 612 went to Senate on May 15 and was referred to the Foreign Relations Committee. In the weeks while it was discussed the Southern sugar interests began organizing deputations to the Committee, opposing both the pending bill and the treaty. On June 14 Allen wrote anxiously to Fish that the "delegations of the rice and sugar interests are active in their opposition," and asked for some help to encourage the passage of the bill. On June 20 Fish suggested to Grant that some pressure should be applied; he himself approached Senatorial Leaders Conkling of New York, Cameron of Pennsylvania and Hamlin of Maine and urged haste. (90) It had been the delays in debate and discussion which had helped to kill previous treaties. Finally, ten days later, the Committee reported favourably on the bill and it was returned to the Senate without amendment. Senator Morrill immediately reopened the opposition and suggested that, as the bill involved

(88) Cong. Record, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., pp.2273-4
(89) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p.137
(90) Stevens, American Expansion in Hawaii, p.137
a change in tariff regulations, it should go before the Committee on Finance. Cameron, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, argued that this was unnecessary, but he failed to prevent it.\(^{(91)}\) It was apparent that Morrill was hoping to keep the bill out of open debate long enough for favourable opinion to change.

That the Senate was already losing interest was indicated by the small number of Senators debating the bill, and by the struggle that Senator Sargent of California had in forcing the bill out of Committee and into discussion on the Senate floor.\(^{(92)}\) The debates, on August 12 and August 14, brought forward no new justifications or attacks, except references to the memoranda from South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana in opposition to the bill. A clearer sign of the apparent indifference was the final vote on August 14, for, although the bill passed 29 to 12, the numbers were a marked change from the vote for the treaty.\(^{(93)}\)

The slow progress of the bill through Congress and the developing lack of interest in Washington caused

\(^{(91)}\) Cong. Record, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 4261
\(^{(92)}\) Cong. Record, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., pp. 4261, 4265-6, 5099, 5118, 5356-7, 5432, 5462-3
\(^{(93)}\) A study of the vote reveals that every opposing vote, except those of Morrill and Booth, an independent from California, was from the South, and only five Democrats voted in favour. Of a Senate of 71, only 41 voted compared with 63 on March 18, 1875.
concern in Hawaii where the fate of the treaty was being followed anxiously. The fear that reciprocity might fail yet again led to votes of no confidence in the Government twice during the long summer session of the Hawaiian Legislature. At least one of them related directly to the question of the treaty. The Enabling bill was signed by President Grant on August 15, but the news did not reach Hawaii until September 21 with the arrival of the steamer "City of New York". It was greeted with considerable rejoicing.

"This country has now its way opened to flourish like a green bay tree", wrote Peirce. "Capital and immigration will be attracted to it; and the rich bounties which God and nature have bestowed upon these beautiful islands, will be developed under a good government and able ministry." (95)

The reciprocity had been a Hawaiian Measure from the beginning and it was envisaged wholly as a commercial arrangement. The addition of Article IV was not desired by the Hawaiians but it was recognized that something of the sort was necessary in order to widen the appeal of the Measure in the United States. The native population and a large percentage of the foreign residents were definitely opposed to any limits upon Hawaiian sovereignty and did not intend the treaty to lead to annexation. It was not politically motivated but was a measure to alleviate the desperate plight of the sugar industry,

(95) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol.III, p.40
and to give a boost to the economic life of the Islands. Annexation had been considered mainly as an alternative to reciprocity in the attempt to keep the Hawaiian economy alive, and even then was interpreted idealisti-
cally. Many appeared to envisage it as a system where the way of life would remain unchanged but where economic security would be assured.⁹⁶

As far as the United States was concerned, most experts in this field are agreed that the political arguments carried more weight than those of commercial gain. It was not difficult for economists to show that the treaty would result in financial loss for the country, and Southern rice and sugar concerns presented convincing cases to prove that reciprocity could only harm their production. The best economic arguments were those which maintained that the treaty would lead to an increase of trade between the two countries and that this trade increase would benefit shipping interests on the Pacific and the bankers, merchants and insurance companies of California. Undoubtedly California was to profit by the treaty.

In economic terms the opposition's case was far stronger, but the arguments of strategic and political gain were on the side of the advocates of reciprocity.

Kuykendall maintains that the most effective claim was that of strategic necessity; that, because of their position, control of the Islands was essential to protect the Pacific coast, to promote American domination of the commerce of the North Pacific, and to encourage American men and money to go out to the Islands to build up unbreakable economic links with the United States. (97) Robinson favours the complementary idea that it was antagonism to the encroachment of Great Britain which fostered the acceptance of the treaty. (98) The debates in the Congressional Record reveal a preponderance of this latter argument, (99) though in most cases it is couched in terms of economic need to disguise the expansionist intentions. The wariness of British activities in the Pacific had for a long time been part of American policy towards the area, and the advocates of the treaty talked at length on the cordon which Britain was throwing around the United States, from Canada to Fiji and Australasia. The passage of time only endorsed the view that it was, as Senator Morgan stated before the Fifty-third Congress,

(97) Kuykendall, Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. III, p. 35
(98) Robinson, Two Reciprocity Treaties, pp. 132-4, 138
"negotiated for the purpose of securing political control of those islands making them industrially and commercially a part of the United States, and preventing any other great power from acquiring a foothold there which might be adverse to the welfare and safety of our Pacific coast in time of war." (100)

The treaty was a great success for Hawaii; production increased remarkably and, from a period of poverty and bankruptcy, Hawaii moved into a period of affluence and prosperity. As a commercial enterprise, the treaty cannot be said to have had the same importance for the United States economy, but as a political move its effects were to be long-lasting.

(100) Robinson, Two Reciprocity Treaties, p. 134. See also, R.P. Spaulding, A Bird's-Eye View of the Hawaiian Islands with Some Reflections upon the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States, (Cleveland, 1882)
Like Hawaii in the North, the Samoan Islands occupied a strategic position in the South Pacific and were one of the few sizeable island groups not yet under foreign control. American interest in them had been slight. Individual traders had long recommended a government investigation into the islands' possible attractions, but these were ignored until the 1830s, by which time British missionaries had established some influence. The persistence of these recommendations finally prompted a naval commission in 1839 under Lieutenant Charles Wilkes. His report on possible harbour sites was especially favourable towards Pago Pago but no subsequent action was taken. (1)

By the 1870s European influence was well-entrenched due to the activity of the missionaries and an energetic German trading firm, Godeffroy and Company, which controlled Samoan trade. It was at this time that a number of American enterprises, encouraged by the apparent commercial benefits and by the continuing optimism about the possibility of an Isthmian canal, attempted to acquire a slice of this trade.

(1) Joseph W. Ellison, Opening and Penetration of Foreign Influence in Samoa to 1880. (Corvallis, 1938), pp.24-5
One of the first of these enterprises was the Polynesian Land and Commercial Company, formed in 1868 by San Franciscans James Stewart and James McKee. The Company was a speculative syndicate which established claims, often by only a minimal deposit, to over 300,000 acres, and it was anxious for American control of the islands in order to ensure a large financial return. Another American link was that of William H. Webb, owner and director of a Pacific Mail line between San Francisco and New Zealand. He applied to Congress for a subsidy to enable him to extend this line, maintaining that it would bring the United States in closer contact with the important trade centres and routes in the Pacific. Henry Peirce, Minister to Hawaii, supported him and wrote to Fish to point out the great commercial advantages to be gained from such an arrangement. The bill for the subsidy failed to pass in the Senate however and Webb turned elsewhere, finally gaining some financial support from Australia and New Zealand.

Once the steamship line was operating Webb was interested in Pacific ports, and sent Captain E. Wakeman to the Samoan Islands to report on their commercial value.


(3) Ryden, Foreign Policy of U.S. to Samoa, p.46. Peirce also voiced some interest in the annexation of Samoa by the United States.
He left Hawaii on July 30, 1871, and submitted his report on September 20. It was highly optimistic, painting the harbours and economic potential in glowing colours.

"I know of no other island with the same form of government, where all the chiefs are willing and desirous of ceding to the Americans, which would in that event be so valuable. From its commanding position in mid-Pacific, with the control of the commerce of all the islands which are contiguous to this point, with Australia and New Zealand at their door to supply with sugar, coffee, etc., no other group affords equal facility for a naval station (and coal depot) with a most brilliant future for a lucrative ......... commercial enterprise. Of the 150 Europeans, they are all strongly in favor of having American law established on the islands." (4)

Enthusiastic about the possibility of absolute American control in Samoa, Webb submitted this report to the Secretary of the Navy, Robeson, who sympathized with his interest and claimed that the Department was aware of Samoa's potential. A hint that New Zealand and Germany were scheming for control of the islands had more effect, however, especially after corroborative evidence was received from the Minister at Honolulu, Peirce, and from Jonas Coe, the United States Commercial Agent in Apia. On August 30, 1871 the United States Minister in Berlin, George Bancroft, was instructed to enquire whether Germany had any designs on Samoa, to which the German Foreign Office replied it had not. (5)

(4) House Executive Document No. 161, 44 Cong., 1 Sess, p. 10
(5) Ellison, Opening and Penetration ... of Samoa to 1880, p. 40
Nevertheless, the Navy Department displayed some anxiety and the Commander of the United States Pacific Fleet, Rear-Admiral John A. Winslow, instructed Captain Richard Meade, commander of the "Narrangansett" to survey the harbour of Pago Pago and locate a depot. (6) Peirce, in an urgent letter to Meade, wrote:

"It is of great importance to the future interests of the country, in the South Pacific, and I may say, in this Hemisphere, that you should proceed as soon as possible even before visiting Micronesia, to the Navigators Islands, for the purpose of promoting by all legal and proper means, American interests and enterprises, present and contemplated at that group." (7)

Meade apparently shared Peirce's views, for he undertook the mission with avowed intentions to procure some measure of American control in order "to frustrate foreign influence, which is at present very active." (8) The Navy Department made no sign of disapproving of these less than diplomatic hopes, which were, in fact, outside his jurisdiction.

Meade left Honolulu on January 28, 1872 and reached Pago Pago on February 14. In the course of the survey, which took about a month and which included several displays of strength to impress the chiefs with the power and authority of the United States, he took it

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(6) Ibid, p.41; Ryden, Foreign Policy of U.S. ... to Samoa, pp.53-4
(7) Ryden, Foreign Policy of the U.S. ... to Samoa, pp.60-61
(8) Ellison, Opening and Penetration ... of Samoa to 1880, p.40
upon himself to conclude a treaty with Mauga, the most powerful chief of Pago Pago. The treaty did not promise American protection but was worded in such a way that this was implied. In return he awarded the United States

"the exclusive privilege of establishing the said harbor of Pagopago (sic) island of Tutuila, a naval station ... And I hereby further agree that I will not grant a like privilege to any other foreign power or potentate."(9)

As Mauga was only one of a number of chiefs constantly in conflict for control of Pago Pago, Meade got them to agree to a loose confederation in the hope that peace would preserve the terms of the treaty.(10) Apparently he promised that the United States would protect them all from foreign interference. Certainly he left the impression that the United States was politically interested in the islands, for a few weeks after Meade's departure the chiefs petitioned the American government asking that the islands be annexed to the United States.(11)

In the United States the activity in Samoa did not go unnoticed. San Franciscan commercial companies were

(9) House Exec. Doc. No. 161, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., pp. 6-7
(10) Ibid, p. 65
(11) Ibid, p. 4. Ellison, Opening and Penetration of ... Samoa, p. 42 maintains that the phraseology of this document makes it almost certain that it was drafted by Americans on the island. Their main concern was the establishment of some law and order to permit the peaceful pursuit of business, a concern shared by most foreign residents.
anxious for American political dominance in any part of the Pacific in order to expand their markets, and enthusiastically endorsed the reports from Samoa. In Congress some members were encouraging a more positive policy in Samoa as a method of advancing American political and economic interests in the Pacific. On March 7, 1872 Representative Houghton of California submitted a resolution calling for information on any proposals to extend an American protectorate over the islands.\(^{(12)}\) On May 13, Senator Cole of California proposed annexation, to which the Senate did not seem opposed.\(^{(13)}\) Congressional opinion appeared favourable, and the treaty, accepted by Robeson despite the fact that Meade had had no authority to negotiate it, was recommended to Fish. The Secretary of State sent it to Grant for consideration.\(^{(14)}\) On May 22, the President forwarded it to the Senate with a qualified recommendation:

"The advantages of the concession which it proposes are so great, in view of the advantageous position of Tutuila, especially as a coaling station for steamers between San Francisco and Australia, that I should not hesitate to recommend its approval but for the protection on the part of the United

\(^{(12)}\) Cong.Globe, 42 Cong., 2 Sess.,Pt 2,pp.1509-10  
\(^{(13)}\) Ibid, 42 Cong., 2 Sess.,Pt 4,p.3352  
\(^{(14)}\) Ellison, Opening and Penetration of ... Samoa,p.42; Sylvia Masterman, The Origins of International Rivalry in Samoa, 1845-1884. (London, 1934),p.113
States, which it seems to imply. With some modification of the obligation of protection which the agreement imports, it is recommended to the favorable consideration of the Senate."

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee was apparently opposed to the unconstitutional negotiation of the treaty for, despite earlier signs of favour, the treaty never emerged from the Committee.

The matter did not end there. The treaty had given rise to increased purchases of land by the Polynesian Land Company and the pressure of the company for annexation persisted. "Highly respected commercial persons", continued to exert their influence upon the Administration, and later in 1872 there was sufficient public interest in Samoa for Grant to feel an investigation of the islands was necessary. He decided that an agent should be sent "in the hope that the information collected and reported to Congress would excite the interest of that body in the Samoan Archipelago". The agent chosen was Colonel A.B. Steinberger.

(15) Richardson, Messages and Papers, pp. 168-9. See also: W. Stull Holt, Treaties Defeated by the Senate: A Study of the Struggle Between President and Senate over the Conduct of Foreign Relations, (Gloucester, 1964), p. 130

(16) Ellison, Opening and Penetration of ... Samoa, p. 46

(17) See American Samoa: A General Report by the Governor, (Washington, 1931), p. 6. Here the developing public interest was referred to as "a public call for information".

(18) Ellison, Opening and Penetration of ... Samoa, p. 46. Many people believed the mission was to be political. See ibid, p. 47; Masterman, Origins of International Rivalry in Samoa, p. 119. Certainly it was interesting that a Special Agent should be sent on a fact-finding mission so soon after Meade's survey of Tutuila. A naval investigation was more usual.
Little is known of Steinberger's past, but he seems to have had links with the Polynesian Land Company and with Webb; it appears that Stewart suggested him to Webb, who agreed and sent the name to Grant as a recommended choice. The President then ordered his secretary, Horace Porter, to send this recommendation to Fish:

"Mr. Webb strongly recommends Mr. Steinberger as a competent person to visit the Navigator Islands and report upon their condition... Of course, it is not the intention to annex these islands, but if, in your judgment, it would be well to send a commissioner to report upon their condition with a view to sending such information to Congress, you might commission Mr. Steinberger for this duty."(20)

Fish hesitated before taking action - his attention was taken in any case by negotiations with Spain and Britain - and it was not until March 1873 that he undertook to write to Steinberger. On March 29, he gave the agent his instructions which were to investigate:

1. The number of islands, constituting the group, and the extent of each.
2. The number of inhabitants, both aboriginal and from abroad.
3. The nature and quantity of the agricultural and other productions.
4. The harbors suitable for vessels engaged in long voyages by sea.

He added:

(19) Masterman, op.cit.,pp.116-7 believes he was a clerk in Stewart's office. Davidson, Samoa Mo Samoa,p.48 considers that he "had contacts with the Polynesian Land Co." and was a "promoter of the trans-Pacific Steamship Company."

(20) House Exec. Doc. No. 161,44 Cong.,1 Sess.,p.3. Porter to Fish, August 20, 1872.
"It is not unlikely that perhaps in the not distant future the interests of the United States may require not only a naval station in the Samoan group, but a harbor where their steam and other vessels may freely and securely frequent. Full and accurate information in regard to the Islands will be necessary to enable the Government here to determine as to measures which may be advisable toward obtaining that object."

He further advised Steinberger that he was an informal, not a diplomatic agent, and reminded him of the need to be "reticent". After some trouble in finding transport, Steinberger left on June 29, 1873 and reached Pago Pago on August 7.

The visit was a great success. Steinberger's charm and undoubted tact endeared him to the native chiefs and they were encouraged to submit to him the laws they had drawn up for a proposed constitution. These he modified with the assistance of the American, German and British consuls and the Catholic and Protestant missionaries. He helped to settle land problems and sat in conference with the great chiefs, displaying a delicacy and understanding of local custom and etiquette that gratified them all. When he left on October 8 he carried with him many gifts and pleas from the chiefs for annexation and guidance. He left behind a considerable respect for the United States and its agents, and a firm

(22) Ibid, pp. 58-62. Enclosures F and G.
(23) Ibid, p. 50
belief that the mission had been a preliminary step towards a protectorate by the United States Government. (24)

He had done little to dispel this impression, despite his orders, and he undoubtedly favoured the idea himself. On his first visit to Mauga he settled a dispute with a British vessel in order to get:

"a practical recognition of Commodore Meade's action. Whatever may be the avarice and ignorance of Mauga or his farcical estimate of the importance to himself of Commodore Meade's treaty, yet that treaty and the harbor-regulations, with the intelligent and dignified action of this Officer, gave to the United States a powerful influence, ... attracted all the natives to us, and compelled upon the part of foreigners a tacit acknowledgement of the priority of America in its right to treat with the Samoans." (25)

In a later speech with Mauga and the chiefs of Pago Pago, he said that Meade had made the treaty with them

"believing that at no distant day your harbor would afford a refuge to our vessels, and create such general commerce and commercial relations as would bring ... the Samoan and the American people into close relation and bonds of friendship." (26)

Such statements encouraged the belief that a protectorate was imminent; they certainly prompted many letters to the American Government. (27) Not only the natives but the white population looked forward eagerly to a protectorate. The planters and traders were acutely sensitive to any change in the political system, and wanted a stable government and a recognition of their land

(24) Ellison, Opening and Penetration of ... Samoa, p. 55
(25) House Exec. Doc. No. 161, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 45
(26) Ibid, p. 54
(27) Ibid, pp. 53–62. Enclosures A1, B2, C1, D1, E, I1, I2, I3
The missionaries believed that such stability would protect the native population from the foreign assaults upon its culture. "Some intervention is necessary to bring (this) unsettled state to an end. Providence seems to show us that the Government of the United States is to take interest", wrote the Catholic bishop, Father Elloy.

Fish greeted these letters with disfavour, and his acknowledgement of Steinberger's report was short and cold.

"Your letter of this date (March 4, 1874) has been received. In reply, I have to state that your report ... in regard to your visit to the Samoan group of islands, reached here in due season, and has been read with lively interest. It is replete with novel and valuable information, and shows that you must have been a diligent and judicious observer."

Steinberger was not disheartened, and continued to advocate a protectorate with himself as governor. Though he claimed that any act to aid the Samoans would be for him a "labour of love", he also suggested that any moves should be given the force of diplomatic authority to give him "precedence over the American and other consuls". To his various letters in this vein,

(28) Davidson, Samoa Mo Samoa, p. 47
(30) Ibid, p. 64. Ellison believes that many of the letters praising Steinberger and asking for his return in an official capacity were inspired by Steinberger himself. See Opening and Penetration of ... Samoa, p. 55
(31) House Exec. Doc. No. 161, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 69. Fish to Steinberger, March 4, 1874
Fish apparently made no reply. On April 8 Steinberger wrote:

"The Samoan people) seek American protection ... After spending some months with these people, it is my judgment that the United States (should) extend a protectorate, appoint a governor and secretary, equipment for, say, one hundred men as a native guard ... and a scientific corps." (32)

On April 17, determined to gain some assurances from the State Department, he submitted to Fish a proposed message to the Samoan chiefs which he desired the Department to endorse. Like his other speeches to Samoans this contained disguised references to the possibility of the United States extending its "interest", and it was dismissed by Fish. (33)

Though Fish was opposed to further commitment, it was apparent that Grant was considerably interested in Samoa. The harbour especially appealed to him, but the strategic location of the whole group had not escaped him, especially as these arguments were constantly forwarded by San Franciscan merchants. The singular desire of the natives to surrender to American control, as evidenced particularly by the gifts to Grant of the staff, fly-flap and sacred mat, Samoan symbols of power, made the scheme more attractive. (34) Fish was more cautious and was concerned by the possible repercussions in Congress of further expansionist ventures.

(33) Ibid,pp.74-5
(34) Ellison,Opening and Penetration of ... Samoa,p.58
Steinberger, for his part, was determined to return to Samoa as he had promised, and was convinced that the United States Government would accredit him as a diplomatic agent. In September, before having received instructions or even notification of any decision by the State Department, he left for Hamburg to discuss the future of Samoa with John Godeffroy and Son, the German trading company. An agreement between them, which was later to be brought as evidence of Steinberger's duplicity, called for Steinberger to encourage business for the Company in return for the Company's co-operation with him in his "laudable and humane purpose ... to establish a fixed and substantial government upon the principles of good administration", and for a promise to use influence to gain the recognition of the Samoan government by the German Empire. (35) The Company was to have a monopoly of copra and cocoa-nuts in the islands and was to be permitted to introduce foreign labour. For this Steinberger was to receive ten per cent of purchases. Both wanted a stable government and economic advancement and it was presumed that one would enhance the other. $13,982 in gold was advanced to Steinberger, which included $8,500 to purchase the "Peerless". The rest was to be invested in the Company at six per cent interest.

Upon his return to the United States, Steinberger

informed the State Department of his negotiations with Godeffroy but did not tell Fish the precise nature of the agreement.

"In the interests of the Samoans, I have conferred with the Messrs. Godeffroy, at Hamburg. They are elevated and conscientious people ... Claims will be subject to legal adjudication. The agents of Messrs. G. (sic) are instructed to this effect, and their influence is to be used at once after my arrival to secure the recognition of the Samoan Government by Germany." (36)

Finally Steinberger's persistence achieved success; Grant, although not taking up the suggestion of a protectorate, appointed Steinberger to Samoa, again as a special agent which still hinted at political interest. His position this time was anomalous. His orders were "limited to observing and reporting upon Samoan affairs, and to impressing those in authority there with the lively interest we take in their welfare," (37) but that much he had done earlier. It appeared that Fish was uncertain about what orders to give Steinberger, and his letter of December 11, 1874 expressed admirably the confusion of the American position:

"Its (Samoas') position ... in the Pacific is commanding and particularly important to us. It is more than doubtful, however, whether these considerations would be sufficient to satisfy our people that the annexation of these islands to the United States is essential to our safety and prosperity. In any event, supposing that the

(37) Ibid,p.77
general sentiment should be favorable ..., I am not aware that it has received such an expression as would require an acknowledgement by the Government and warrant measures on our part accordingly." (38)

With these imprecise orders, Steinberger sailed on February 2, 1875.

His reception in Samoa was jubilant. Elaborate festivals were planned, and on April 22, 1875 the gifts from Grant were handed over and the President's message read. At this gathering or "fono" a satisfactory code of laws was organized and under Steinberger's hand a government was established with a constitution of six articles modelled on that of the United States. The Legislature was to be composed of two Houses: the Taimua or House of Nobles, consisting of fifteen high chiefs chosen by a system resembling election, and approved by the King; and the Faipule or House of Representatives elected on the basis of one member for every 2000 natives. The monarchy was placed on the peculiar basis of a four year alternation between the two great houses vying for it. The office of premier was also created, with Steinberger in mind, and in July 1875 he officially accepted the position.

Undoubtedly the system of government was too sophisticated for a people experiencing centralization for the first time; nevertheless, it was the best form

Fish to Steinberger, December 11, 1874
of government Samoa had had up to that time. Although Steinberger interpreted his role autocratically the natives responded appreciate,(39) and indeed his intentions for Samoa were probably good; his enthusiasm for the islands and their people was always genuine. It is possible that he hoped that his action would encourage the American Government to take a more lively interest in Samoa. In his letter on July 4, 1875, advising the State Department of his acceptance of the office of Premier, he pressed again for closer ties with Samoa.(40)

In the United States any interest in Samoa was limited to San Franciscan merchants and other commercial concerns in California who wanted stronger links with possible Pacific Ocean coaling stations. Bills had been introduced in Congress in May and June 1874 to authorize the establishment of naval and coaling stations in the Samoan Islands, but neither emerged from the Foreign Relations Committee.(41) Undoubtedly some influence was being brought to bear upon the Government in an attempt to gain an American commitment to Samoa but it had no effect, though this may have been caused as much by a preoccupation with other issues as by indifference.

What probably encouraged Steinberger was the fact that the State Department issued no criticism of his

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(39) House Exec. Doc. No.44, 44 Cong.,2 Sess.,pp.61,96
(40) House Exec. Doc. No.44, 44 Cong.,2 Sess.,p.81
Steinberger to Fish, July 4, 1875
(41) Cong. Record, 43 Cong.,1 Sess.,pp.4238,4450
action. Despite Fish's awareness from August 30, 1875 that the United States agent had accepted the premiership, he did not demand that Steinberger give up his office; nor did he advise the Samoan Government or the foreign consuls that Steinberger's action was not approved by the United States Government. There was no reply to Steinberger's resignation of his post as special agent and there was no response, either in opposition or approval, to his draft of a treaty of friendship between the United States and Samoa. The Government may well have been indifferent but it did not seem to be hostile.

The chances for the success of the new government appeared to be good. On July 16, 1875, it was recognized by King Kalakaua of Hawaii. The natives were undoubtedly pleased with it and its premier, and the foreign consuls and residents seemed to feel that this government could offer peace and stability.

Steinberger frequently turned to the missionaries for counsel on matters of government social policies, and consulted the consuls on matters such as harbour duties and pilots. However, this harmony did not last long.

(42) When Steinberger's despatch of July 4 was received. Steinberger resigned his position as special agent in October, 1875
(44) An appeal on October 19 for recognition by the United States drew no response.
(45) House Exec. Doc. No. 44, 44 Cong., 2 Sess., pp. 5-6, 20, 96. King Malietoa to Grant, October 19, 1875; Taimua to Grant, October 30, 1875; speech of King Malietoa, December 27, 1875
Within two months, there were complaints from consuls and commercial interests about taxes on liquor, the strict control of land sales and the slow adjudication of land claims. Griffin, the successor to S.S. Foster, the United States Consul at Apia, wrote to Fish later that the trouble was said by the people

"to have been inspired by British and German commercial interests that have ... long maintained a commercial monopoly there to the great detriment ... of Samoan interests and American trade ... During the administration of Colonel Steinberger, a prominent feature of his policy was to aid in subserving the expressed wishes of the natives in diverting the trade of the islands ... to the United States." (46)

Steinberger had always been anxious to bring Samoa closer to the United States, and foreign merchants became aware that their acceptance of his law and order meant a gradual monopoly of the trade by the United States. Even the missionaries turned against him. Just why this was so is difficult to understand, but as they claimed they would demand his deportation if he was not acting with the authority of the United States Government, it seems likely that they were concerned for the political stability of the islands if other nations moved in to usurp his unauthorized position. (47) More strangely, the most influential individual in Steinberger's downfall was probably Foster, the United States Consul, who was,

(47) Ibid, pp. 124-5. Foster to Hunter, October 3, 1875
from the beginning, jealous of Steinberger's power, but had not been able to get him removed.

The first attempt to remove him came in December 1875 when a British man-of-war, the "Barracouta", under Captain C.E. Stevens, arrived in Apia. Foster and T. Williams, the British Consul, appealed to him for aid, and together they seized the "Peerless", Steinberger's vessel. This caused considerable dissen­sion and, though the King stood behind Steinberger in the ensuing attack upon him, the Government began to lose its control of the situation. (48) The British and American consuls besieged the government with petty but aggressively worded complaints, and though the natives remained loyal to the Government, the foreign population was divided. On January 18, 1876 fifty-four foreigners signed a petition to Stevens, demanding the removal of Steinberger on the grounds of his "drunkenness, his lying, his debauchery, his disregard for the common decencies of life" and accused him of being "dangerous" and "a despot". (49) The Americans on the islands, with only a few exceptions, responded with a counter petition, maintaining that under the Government there had been peace and order, justice had improved, roads were built, morality uplifted and native wars prevented. (50) The

(48) The declining efficiency of the Government at this time endorses the impression that Steinberger's rule verged on dictatorship.
(49) House Exec. Doc. No.44, 44 Cong.,2 Sess.,pp.126-7
(50) Ibid,pp.66-7
King protested against the actions of the foreign consuls, and the government on January 20, 1876 sent a plea for support to the United States.

No help was forthcoming, and on February 7 King Malietoa was finally persuaded by Foster, Williams, and Stevens to agree to the removal of Steinberger. On February 8, the King appeared before the Legislature and issued a statement on Steinberger, claiming he was "a liar and an imposter" and that he had been "the cause of all the troubles which are called insults offered by our Government to the representatives in Samoa of the British and United States Governments". At a meeting later on the same day, Steinberger was arrested and taken on board the "Barracouta". The Taimua and Faipule responded by deposing the king, an act which later led to bloodshed when Stevens, Foster, and Williams tried to reinstate him. The chiefs then wrote to Grant asking for a warship and bemoaning the loss of Steinberger.

"We can never forget our love for Colonel Steinberger. He is as the lamp of Samoa which is now distinguished. He has never said a word in Samoa by which he tried to bring us under the power of the United States. This is true ... We and the Samoan Government, in our actions during the recent difficulties, have had no wish to join any other nation. Our only wish was to keep fast our friendly relations with your Government." (56)

(52) Ibid, p. 70. Samoan Government to Grant, January 20, 1876.
(53) Ibid, p. 156. Griffin maintained that the persuasion was drugged wine.
(54) Ibid, p. 138
(55) Ibid, pp. 138-9
(56) Ibid, Dv. 71-2. Taimua to Grant, May 1, 1876
On March 30, 1876, the "Barracouta" sailed, taking Steinberger and Jonas Coe, one-time American Consul to Samoa, who was arrested because Stevens and Foster believed he was blocking their attempts to reinstate Malietoa. Steinberger made numerous attempts to gain a hearing at the court martial of Stevens in Auckland, New Zealand, but the transfer of the case to London seemed to mean the end of his hopes.

Public opinion was divided on the issue. R.L. Ogden, Commercial Agent to Samoa and a prominent San Franciscan merchant, defended Steinberger in a letter to the President in which he included several articles from Californian newspapers. These, he claimed, reflected the majority feeling in the state. All called for action against Britain and the reinstatement of Steinberger. (57)

The New York Times used the issue as a political weapon to attack Grant and the Administration for ever having sent Steinberger, (58) but the New York Herald upheld Steinberger and Grant, and demanded compensation for the attack on the American flag. (59)

Grant himself was prepared to stand behind Steinberger, having always supported the agent's contention that a positive policy towards Samoa was needed, and he ordered that Steinberger be given all papers he

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(57) House Exec. Doc. No. 44, 44 Cong., 2 Sess., pp. 73-79
(58) New York Times, March 25, April 14, May 5, 1876
(59) New York Herald, March 26, 1876
required to carry on his case in London. (60) Foster was removed from office and a new consul sent, G.W. Griffin, whose orders from the State Department illustrated the new awareness of Samoa.

"You will endeavour as far as possible to repair the harm that has been done by your predecessor, and will do all in your power to cultivate friendly relations with the authorities, assuring them of the interest this Government takes in the welfare of their people, and of the earnest desire of the President to do all in his power to promote the prosperity of the islands." (61)

Griffin was further instructed to investigate the Steinberger debacle and its effects in Samoa. His report was completely favourable to Steinberger. He noted the strong pro-American feeling engendered by Steinberger's presence and the unanimity of affection for him. He endorsed the agent's economic policy, and claimed that the natives had observed that:

"under the influence of American commercial intercourse and the friendship and political intimacy of the Government of the United States, the Hawaiian Islands had emerged from a rude and semi-barbarous condition to a civilized, enterprising, prosperous state among the family of nations." (62)

Like Steinberger, he reinforced the need for closer ties with Samoa for the sake of a commercial and strategic control of the Pacific. He warned that unless something was done soon the monopoly of the Germans would ensure

(61) Ibid, p. 153-5
that no American commercial enterprise could become established, and finished by saying

"I do not hesitate to express my unqualified conviction that any engagement these people may be permitted to enter into with the United States ... will be faithfully and religiously observed." (63)

The next administration agreed and, bolstered by the Samoan approaches to Britain, concluded a treaty of friendship with Samoa on January 17, 1878.

The links with Samoa were new and the American awareness of the islands' strategic and commercial potential was limited. Grant was eager to extend an American protectorate, and Fish was not opposed to investigating the possibilities, but there was insufficient public interest to ensure the passage in the Senate of such a proposal. It is possible that the issue of a Samoan protectorate might have attracted more widespread attention in the United States had it not coincided with the passage of a controversial Hawaiian treaty. The strategic value of Hawaii was more apparent, and there was no American investment in Samoa that justified closer political connections. Undoubtedly the Steinberger affair had increased the Administration's interest in Samoa; the fact that Grant was forced to follow a policy of non-intervention did not denote indifference. The years 1874 and 1875 had given the United States a position in Samoan affairs that was to be formalized by the following Administration.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The foreign policy of the Grant Administration was not distinguished for broad statements of America's place in the world or for definitions of national purpose. Yet foreign policy issues fell into two distinct categories: matters awaiting settlement after the Civil War, of which the "Alabama" claims case was most important; and the expansion of American influence abroad, both in regions where the United States had long had a role, and into areas far beyond the traditional sphere of influence. The expansionist arm of this policy has been the concern of this thesis.

The Civil War spelled the end of the uncomplicated expansionism glorified as America's "Manifest Destiny". But as foreign policy under Johnson had been strictly peripheral it was only in the Grant Administration that the passing of the old order was apparent. In many respects foreign policy under Grant was an uncomfortable mixture of old and new. On the one hand the men who made policy and some of the problems facing Grant at his inauguration were survivors of the old order; on the other hand, the complexities of the new American economy and the nature of its infiltration into other regions marked out a distinctly new path. This dichotomy may explain why the Administration did not achieve many of its foreign policy goals, though they pointed the way to what came later.
Compared to the territorial concerns of Polk and Pierce or the strategic interests of Seward, the expansionism of Grant's period showed little or no singlemindedness of purpose. There were no specific ideals and no acknowledged doctrines of action. Instead the Administration responded randomly and unpredictably to the issues it confronted, and the only thing that united these apparently unrelated episodes was the expansionist mood.

In this expansionism the Administration only reflected the age. Few periods in American history have ever been characterized by such universal growth. The post-Civil War era was one of rapid industrial, commercial and financial development which was to place the United States among the greatest industrial producers in the world. "There is no other period", writes Hofstadter, "when politics seems so completely dwarfed by economic changes."(1) This preoccupation with the power of economics led to a gradual change in the justifications for expansion, a change which gives Grant's period, in retrospect, the appearance of a watershed between the old and the new.

The attitudes which had governed the foreign policies of the pre-Civil War period still lingered during Grant's Presidency, for the men who guided the

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Administration were by and large products of that era. Grant was a crude expansionist, interested in advancing Republicanism, with little awareness of either the diplomatic niceties of international relations or the wider international significance of any move made by the United States. Fish was cautious and responsible, but displayed in his Cuban policy an ambivalence of attitude. He was conscious of the need for peaceful relations with Spain, yet he was so impressed by the thought of a Spanish republic that his policy towards Spain fluctuated according to the fortunes of Spanish republicanism. Like other members of the Administration he was slow to perceive the potential of Pacific control, limited as he was by traditional policies.

Congress was still composed largely of political survivors of the pre-Civil War period, and only gradually reflected the changing nature of the society it represented. In the Senate, furthermore, positive action was too frequently hindered by the conflict between the Executive and the Legislature. The extinction in the Foreign Relations Committee of the 1872 Meade treaty for harbour privileges at Pago Pago after the Senate had approved earlier resolutions to this effect illustrated succinctly the jealousy regarding the control of foreign affairs which existed between the two arms of government.
Furthermore, many well-entrenched arguments for expansion were displayed, especially in the attitudes of the press and of public opinion. The most noticeable were those which opposed European and particularly British influence in any area where it could conflict with American interests. The presence of a monarchical and imperialistic power on the borders of the United States had never been acceptable to Americans, and the surge of republican feeling after the Civil War made the Spanish presence seem even less tolerable. The Cuban fight for independence presented another opportunity to vent anti-Spanish sentiment. The traditional anxiety about British competition was revealed in the Hawaiian situation where the declining economy demanded aid from some power.

There were evidences of a slight but nevertheless acknowledged consciousness of the Monroe Doctrine in the persistent awareness of the importance of the Caribbean, and in the antagonistic reaction to Fish's appeal for a multilateral assault on Spain's Cuban policy. The more recent beliefs of Manifest Destiny, that nebulous body of expansionist ideas which saw America's mission in the world as fostering the inevitable spread of republicans, persisted with more effect. But the Civil War had spelled the end of Manifest Destiny as an immediate issue, and it was a less vital and less realistic movement when it
reappeared in the time of General Grant. Consequently there had to be new justifications for expansion.

Of the four areas of American interest discussed in this thesis only Cuba fitted completely into the pattern of Manifest Destiny. This was due largely to the fact that attention to Cuba was a traditional policy inherited by the Grant Administration. The reaction to the stimulus of a fight for independence was to recall the policies and attitudes of the past and to reassert the right of the United States to determine the future of the island. That this previous interest was a justification in itself seemed acceptable, and the arguments in Congress centred on little else.

In the relations with Santo Domingo, Hawaii and Samoa, however, there was a gradual but distinguishable change in the emphases of the arguments favouring increased American commitment. The new and increasingly important element was the economic argument which on one hand acknowledged the insufficiency of the justifications of Manifest Destiny in the conditions of the 1870s, and on the other hand revealed the direction of policy in the future. "We are rapidly becoming a commercial people", said S.P. Orth as early as 1869, "and we should avail ourselves of all just means which tend to foster and protect our commercial interests."(2) The branching

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(2) Cong. Globe, 41 Cong., 1 Sess., p.524
out into the Pacific especially encouraged the development of this commercial line of argument, for there was no traditional policy towards the area. Indeed, the debates on Hawaiian reciprocity saw a refutation of claims that the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny could be extended to include the Pacific.\(^{(3)}\) To an increasingly pragmatic age economic arguments had more appeal and considerably more relevance.

The change was not as sudden as this would suggest. Undoubtedly the arguments of Manifest Destiny retained their appeal for some, but the justifications put forward by the advocates of foreign expansion began to mirror the economic advance of the whole country. As these justifications became more generally accepted, the application of the beliefs behind Manifest Destiny became less necessary.

This adaptation of the justifications for territorial expansion did not extend to the President or the Cabinet, though economic arguments increasingly found favour in Congress, or with the public at large, as a method of promoting expansionist schemes. The division within the Government and between Government and people was symptomatic of deeper divisions and tensions which hung over from the constitutional battles of the Johnson administration. Because of this disharmony and because of the

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\(^{(3)}\) *Cong. Globe*, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., pp. 1497, 2273, 2275. as examples.
President's inability to lead, a power vacuum developed in the field of foreign affairs into which stepped individuals and interest groups who acquired influence and authority out of all proportion to their numbers. For those with a purpose and a determination to act upon it there were many opportunities in this purposeless period to achieve results. It was this purpose on the part of Steinberger, and the abrogation by the State Department of responsibility for defining a Samoan policy, that enabled the agent to commit the Government to a policy it had not anticipated.

The most important development was not, however, the influence of separate individuals such as Steinberger, Fabens and Cazneau but the steady increase of the power of those with commercial purpose and determination. The economic growth of the post-war period encouraged widespread financial investment in trade and commerce, shipping, insurance, industry and other aspects of the economic expansion of the United States. These investments were not only internal but also extended to enterprises outside the borders of the United States. Some of these were purely speculative as in Santo Domingo, but others were perfectly sound; for example, in areas such as Hawaii where the American atmosphere and apparently strong economy promised good returns. American political control over such regions was considered desirable, for political stability and
economic advance were held to be complementary. Endorsing and utilising this argument were expatriate Americans, in whose future the investments had been made and who turned naturally to the United States in times of economic setback to demand aid and support. The power of this coalition of interests increased as its role in the American economic boom became more assured. Their wealth made them considerably influential; the financial scandals and accusations of large-scale corruption in the Grant period bear witness to that fact.

Their involvement in foreign affairs was not envisaged by these men. It was instead the natural result of their increased wealth and their part in the economic progress. Commerce was expansionist by nature and it advanced a philosophy of growth based on an awareness of commercial and mercantile potential. Their justification for expansion was not one of manifest right but one of commercial need.

Few of them or of their contemporaries were conscious that this change was occurring in the traditional policies of foreign affairs. But it became apparent that the arguments of commercial progress were appealing more and more. Indeed the Hawaiian reciprocity treaty was symbolic of this change when it implied that economic dominance could be equated with political control. It was natural that government policy should be affected by
this developing interpretation of expansionism, for its advocates expected the Administration to support them and to smooth the path to their goals, especially where foreign complications arose. The Grant Administration did not appreciate this challenge and businessmen were forced to take events into their own hands. Future Administrations, however, reflected more clearly the interests of the business community and acted accordingly. The culmination of this trend was to be the aggressive imperialism of the 1890s and the Dollar Diplomacy of the early decades of the twentieth century.
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