THE UNITED STATES AND SPAIN, 1931-1936

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I. INTRODUCTION

For one to understand the diplomatic relations of Spain in the early twentieth century, it is important first to understand the nature of Spanish society and government. Spain in the early twentieth century experienced so much instability in government that within thirty years it was ruled by a monarchy, a dictatorship, and a republic. Each of the governments failed to establish the security and confidence that the Spanish people desired. Worse, Spain in the early twentieth century faced violent conflict at times, in trying to secure a system of government that would satisfy the demands of the people. Those people were always at odds and never content with the very results for which they had fought. The volatility of Spanish government in these years was in considerable contrast with the relative stability that existed in American society at the time.

The constant fractiousness of Spanish society, the polariza-

tion of political issues by varying interest groups, and the changing desires of the Spanish people all contributed to the instability of the republic. Unlike in the United States, where interest groups seek to promote a certain cause or candidate, political divisions in Spain often occurred because interest groups promoted entirely different systems of rule that deviated from the government established by majority consensus. In Spain's case, the search for government was always pitted against a long and arduous history of various styles of government, with many long-established legacies to overcome.

Yet, despite the differences between American and Spanish society and the propensity of American governments to intervene in countries suffering from instability, the relationship between Spain and the United States in the years 1931-1936 was calm when compared with other moments in the history of the two nations. While it was not one of the most significant times in their long history of relations, in time it proved to be a transition between two important periods that were of great concern to their mutual interests. The early 1930's showed the strain created by the American victory over Spain in the war of 1898. They were to become important also for their value in explaining some of the events of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

The conflict between the two nations in 1898 started as a revolution by the Cubans against their mother country. As the stories of retaliatory Spanish atrocities in Cuba arrived in the United States, Americans became sympathetic with the Cuban

insurrectionists. Owing to increasing public hostility toward Spain, the Americans became embroiled in an all-out war against the Spanish people.

Although the war of 1898 is one of the most studied periods in the history of Spanish-American relations, there has never been agreement on why President McKinley decided to intervene in Cuba. Many have asserted that the United States was meddling in places it should not have been, but few agree about why.[1] Some cite merely the pressure exerted by the American public and the sensationalistic yellow press, while others argue that the president acted with humanitarian concern for the citizens of Cuba.

In Spanish society at the time, and even in academic circles today, thought has differed between those who felt the American government showed concern for the plight of Cuban citizens and their political condition, and those who saw official policy as a small part of a greater plan to economically colonize the rest of the world.[2] Adding validity to the latter view was the Americans' desire to annex the Phillipines as a part of the peace treaty signed in Paris in 1898. The Phillipine annexation and the reasons it occurred are alone additional subjects of historical debate. In sum, the most convincing of all explanations for

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[1]James W. Cortada, *Two Nations Over Time: Spain and the United States, 1766-1977* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978) 117.

[2]Antonio Blanco Freijeiro, et al., *Historia de España* (Madrid: Historia 16, 1986) 917.

the events of the war of 1898 is that it focused on complex political and economic decisions that involved all the above concerns.

Regardless of its cause, the war brought to the forefront many of the difficulties that had plagued the two nations throughout the long history of their relations. Unquestionably the economic motives of the United States in the war of 1898 highlighted its concern over a free market and the valuable commercial ties with Cuba that had developed throughout the nineteenth century, most notably in the sugar trade. The economic dominance of American commercial interests in Cuba became clearly visible in the 1890's. It would take little for the United States to live up to its reputation as an economic imperialist giant.

Another deep-rooted source of tension during the war was the appearance of widespread racial and cultural prejudice by both nations. The Spaniards perceived the demonstration of American strength as an affront to their nation's pride and dignity, to the extent that today the language of Spanish historians conjures the image of the United States as a warmongering nation that usurped by force what it could not get by persuasive argument.[3] A long-standing belief in Latin superiority and in the refinements of Hispanic culture exacerbated the tension. Spaniards saw American actions as an affront to their nation's

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[3]Blanco Freijeiro 908.

prestige and cultural hegemony in the world.[4] To even challenge Spain's historical status as a world power was seen as an abomination by most Spaniards.

American racial prejudices were even more significant, and found their roots in the distant past with the so-called international "black legend," evident in some of the more enduring slogans of the past. They ranged from "Remember the Armada" to "Remember the Alamo," and became in the Spanish-American war the popular theme "Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain!." The latter made reference to the American warship whose mysterious explosion provided the spark for the war. Animosity toward the Spaniards was a natural result of public opinion, for Spain had long been one of America's most formidable obstacles to its determined expansion in the southwest, the Floridas, and along the Mississippi.

The "black legend" theory had many implications, explained with great lucidity in Philip Powell's book, *Tree of Hate*.[5] The historical essentials in the potrayal of Spaniards throughout history have been that of a "treacherous, lecherous, cruel, greedy, and thoroughly bigoted" people.[6] The Calvinist word 'depravity' was often used to describe the plight of Spanish

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[4]Cortada, *Two Nations* 124.

[5]Philip W. Powell, *Tree of Hate: Propaganda and Prejudices Affecting United States Relations with the Hispanic World*, (London: Basic, 1971)

[6]Powell 6.

peoples. The basic supposition of the "black legend" is that Spaniards uniquely possess all of the above characteristics, and that they "differ so much from other peoples in these traits that Spaniards and Spanish history must be viewed and understood in terms not ordinarily used in describing and interpreting other peoples."[7]

The forces fomenting the "black legend" during the Spanish-American war, especially the yellow press, were so influential so as to prompt many historians to cite them as a chief cause of the war.[8] William Randolph Hearst's *Journal* called the Spanish general Weyler "the brute, the devastator of haciendas, the destroyer of families, and the outrager of women...There is nothing to prevent his carnal, animal brain from running riot with itself in inventing tortures and infamies of bloody debauchery."[9] Americans captured the mood, turning sensationalism into imperialism, and this mentality engrossed the American psyche to the point of fanaticism, even absurdity. An example that Powell says typified the American mentality was the Youngstown, Ohio Chamber of Commerce's boycotting of the Spanish onion.

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[7]Powell 11.

[8]Carlton J.H. Hayes, *The United States and Spain: An Interpretation* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1951) 25.

[9]Powell 123.

One must understand the mentality of the American public in order to appreciate and comprehend the relationship between Americans and Spaniards in the twentieth century. As we shall see, these racial presuppositions, as well as domestic conflicts, economic factors, and differences of opinion about American motives in the war, all would have a significant contribution to diplomatic relations in the 1930's.

Despite the effect that the war of 1898 had on Spanish-American relations, its most important result was on the domestic life of the respective nations. Many Spaniards criticized their own government for the defeat in the war, and found fault with the nation's entire social structure, questioning the role of the military and the monarchy in governing the nation. "Equally demoralizing," says Cortada, "was the destruction of their image of Spain as a world power, a delusion that events in the nineteenth century failed to dispel until 1898."[10] The events of the war of 1898 discouraged Spaniards, who turned "defeat into moral disaster."[11] The mood provoked a reevaluation of all that Spain represented, and the desire of the Spanish people for a significant change in their social system intensified throughout the early 20th century, reaching a climax during the 1930's.

American domestic life, despite victory, would also see some long-term effects from the war. Most significant was the new

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[10]Cortada, *Two Nations* 124.

[11]Carr, Raymond, *Spain, 1808-1939*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1969) 387.

status of the United States as a world power by virtue of the great naval victory. International recognition showed the relative strength of the country, and Americans would find it difficult to proclaim peace as they had, under the guise of an isolationist diplomatic ideology. The effect spread to the economic sphere of public opinion as well, for businessmen now saw even greater possibilities for trade in world markets. The expansion of American trade after the war was so evident that it harmed the trade of Britain and Germany in the first several decades of the twentieth century, which would significantly affect European trade relations in the 1930's.[12]

In Spain, the war had a profound effect on intellectuals, providing the basis for one of the greatest cultural revolutions in modern Spanish history. The literati began seriously to reassess the character of Spanish society. These writers are now collectively known as the "generation of '98." All were popular critics of the social turmoil that surrounded them. They represented every aspect of political and social Spanish life, and every economic class. Their works would gain great appeal in the United States, and the mood that they established would be highly visible in the cultural relations of the 1930's.

If the Spaniards thought they had survived the most difficult of all crises in modern history in the war of 1898, they would face even greater problems as the nation searched for a new

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[12]Cortada, *Two Nations* 124.

form of government. Americans heard in 1936 of the beginning of an uprising in Spain and soon learned that a rightist military general named Francisco Franco, who had rallied the support of a significant portion of Spanish society, was challenging the existing government. Because of the volatile nature of European relations in the 1930's, and because both sides in the war sought help from other nations, Spain's domestic problems soon acquired an international dimension. One writer has noted that the Spanish civil war "epitomized for the Western world the confrontation of democracy, fascism, and communism."[13]

In 1939, after three years of civil war, with over 800,000 casualties, Francisco Franco and his Nationalist army assumed power. Franco was to rule as the dictator of Spain until his death in 1975.

Many of the characteristics of Spanish-American relations during Spain's civil war have their roots in the second Spanish Republic (1931-1936), which is the period that this paper addresses. The Second Republic may be seen as an interim period, as it appeased the Spanish people with the reform desired after the fall of the monarchical dictatorship, yet it was not the radical change that would occur with the reordering of Spanish society under Franco. The republic brought to light some of the discord that surfaced following the war of 1898, and at the same time it

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[13]Gabriel Jackson, *The Spanish Republic and the Civil War, 1931-1939* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965) v.

showed menacing signs of the conflict to come.

It is difficult to say what exactly the republican years accomplished, for Spanish society entered the Franco dictatorship exactly as it had entered the Second Republic, without a strong central government, without a monarch, and without a national consensus. In retrospect, the republic served for little more than to spark outspoken discontent with the government, which provided the reactionary environment needed by Franco. Yet despite the absence of a far-reaching historical legacy, the republic at the time had several qualities that were perceived as optimistic signs by democratic societies throughout the world.

In 1931, with the birth of the republic, almost overnight an anti-monarchical, constitutional republic took the place of a once-popular dictator, Primo de Rivera, who governed under the authority of the king. With a republican-socialist majority in the legislature, the new government challenged long-established institutions of its society, namely the church and the old monarchical elite. It also questioned many of the traditions that had long governed all areas of private life.

The goals of the first administration of the Second Republic in sum were as follows: To create reform in the armed forces and a reduction in the size of the military establishment; to separate the church and state and to eliminate of many of the church's prerogatives; to decentralize the government and grant

autonomy for Catalonia; and basic social and economic reform.[14]

The first administration of the republic used its newly acquired legislative powers to achieve for the first time a true separation between church and state. So complete was the expulsion of the church from government that the republican leaders risked the permanent alienation of Spain's devout Catholic population, strong in number and in power. The new government achieved its first goal in the removal of the church from politics by simply establishing republican rule. The Church had lost its greatest voice with the departure of the king. Second, the republic attempted to free local politics from the priests, creating a laic state for the first time. The loss of power by the church would have significant consequences for Spanish Catholics and on their American counterparts during the republic.

The two years under the first administration were characterized by a progressive legislative movement that sought to reverse the course of Spanish history. The period came to be known as the "reformist two years" (*bienio reformador*). Many Spaniards suggested that a people with such a long history of monarchical, Catholic, and apostolic rule could not possibly withstand the shock of the new government.[15] Indeed, a more

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[14]*Manuel Tuñón de Lara, Historia de España, Tomo IX: La crisis del estado: Dictadura, república, guerra, (1923-1939)* (Madrid: Editorial Labor, 1985) 168.

[15]Tuñón de Lara 121.

traditional conservative majority soon returned to power in the elections of 1933. Some called this period the "black two years" (*bienio negro*). It was a term favored by those who supported the reforms of the first two years of the republic. But the Spanish electorate had committed itself to adhering to the democratic system created by the new constitution, and thus the initial transition to the new, more conservative administration was a quiet one. The period eventually was given the less partial name of the "conservative two years" (*bienio conservador*).

Still, the nation failed to establish a consensus, even a fractious one, that would provide the necessary stability for a new democracy. Conservative groups soon called for the renewal of the monarchy, and once in power they abolished the legislation of the first two years of the republic. Within the monarchist groups there existed disagreement over who the monarch should be, revealing the tenuous nature even of the right-center political majority.

In just two more years, the conservative majority gave way to the Popular Front, a coalition of moderate and leftist groups of democratic reformists that found considerable favor among the intellectuals of other Western European nations. The government of the Popular Front posed the last great threat to rightist power in Spain during the Second Republic, but because of its inability to establish a solid coalition, it soon was destroyed by the dictatorship of Francisco Franco.

Since the Second Republic was such a drastic change for Spain's people, the interested public in the United States viewed the new Spanish government with caution and saw the events in Spain differently than Spaniards did. This difference in perception was in great part the result of misleading official communications by the American ambassador to Spain. American relations with Spain in 1931 focused almost entirely on the issue of recognizing the new government, for it was unclear how reliably the newly elected leaders would represent the desires of the Spanish people. The man reporting the action first-hand was ambassador Irwin B. Laughlin, a conservative businessman partial to the monarchy, who had cooperated smoothly with the previous regime throughout the years of the dictatorship. When the provisional government was proclaimed after the elections in April of 1931, Laughlin revealed his strong bias in a dispatch to Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson:

> The majority which the republicans unexpectedly received in the usually unimportant municipal elections was apparently the cause for the events of the week. Since the gain was only in the larger cities the effect is unwarranted. For the entire country, the total number returned is, however, monarchical.[16]

On the same day, the Spanish embassy in the United States told Stimson: "The republic has been proclaimed throughout the country with delirious enthusiasm... Perfect order prevails

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[16]*Foreign Relations of the United States,* (U.S. Department of State, 1931) 2:985. [Hereafter listed as (FRUS)].

throughout the nation."[17] Subsequent results showed that the embassy was more reliable than Laughlin in relating the results of the election. One report shows that, in addition to the major cities, in 41 of 50 provincial capitals the republic had won in unbelievable proportions, so unexpectedly that "the victors could hardly believe in the imminence of political change."[18] Great changes were occurring in Spain's national political structure, and the quixotic dream of democracy began to show its strength.

Relations between Spain and the United States focused mainly on economic and cultural issues, as we shall see in the following chapters. The effect of the depression caused a reassessment of trade policy in the hope of avoiding crisis, and Spain and the United States proved no exception. Also, owing to the nature of the Second Republic as a government of highly literate men, an interesting topic during the period is a discussion of the cultural relations that existed between the two societies. American interest in Spain for its romantic appeal surged in the 1920's, influenced heavily by the writing of Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and other American authors who made their home in Europe. Undoubtedly, many of the American notions of Spanish society were highly inaccurate, based on conceptions that began with bullfighters and flamenco dancers and found their greatest expression in sunny beaches and oranges. Trite though American

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[17]FRUS 2:985

[18]Blanco Freijeiro 987.

conceptions may have been, they were influenced significantly by the embellishment given to Spanish life by American authors who found the romanticization of their personal lives to be a source of great financial gain in Britain and the United States.

As the year 1936 and its civil war approached, Americans became concerned about Spain's political future, and the delicate experiment of democracy in a previously autocratic land. Even if the events seen in Spain are significant for no other reason than what Bowers called "A rehearsal for World War II,"[19] they are significant indeed. With the attention that the world focused on Spain in its civil war, it would be a grave mistake to overlook the development of the events that preceded it.

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[19]Claude Bowers, *My Mission to Spain* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945) vi.

II. ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Once the United States had recognized the new regime, official relations in the early 1930's centered primarily on economic issues. The effects of the crash of 1929 were becoming evident in Spain in 1931. The government used extreme measures in trying to rectify national problems such as the bankruptcy of banks and businesses, falling prices, severe unemployment, and the scarcity of basic commodities. Additionally, a study of population revealed that never before had there been a greater decline in the birthrate in such a short period of time.[20]

The global effect of the depression confronted Spain with many questions regarding foreign trade, placing new burdens on Spanish economic relations with the United States. Trade between the two nations decreased from a total trading volume in 1929 of 118 million dollars to 50 million in 1931.[21] The trade deficit

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[20]Jorge Nadal, *La población española, s. XVI a XX* (Ariel: Barcelona, 1966) 185-86.

[21]James W. Cortada, ed., *Spain in the 20th Century World: Essays on Spanish Diplomacy*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978) 175.

between the two nations grew larger throughout the republic, and Spain had to reconsider its relations with all trading nations.

One of the first steps taken to relieve the situation was in early November of 1931. Spain signed an agreement with the French that included a significant reduction in tariff rates for special products entering the Spanish market, such as automobiles, tires, and films. The Ministry of Commerce emphasized that not all nations would benefit from similar tariff reductions. Industrial nations that had traded heavily with Spain and had strong shares in her market, specifically Great Britain, Italy, and the United States, became concerned with the potential for greater increase in the trade imbalance, and the obvious advantage that Spain had afforded to France. The United States began pressing Spain on the issue.

Spain's immediate response was that the United States would gain "most favored nation status" if only it allowed Spanish companies some concessions in the American market. The special status was a common arrangement that established reciprocal leniency between trading nations on an item by item basis, and could be offered to more than one nation. The conditions that Spain desired at the outset were vague, demanding simply that administrative regulations in the American market be made easier. The more specific complaints of the Spanish government would not be known until some weeks later.

Ambassador Laughlin referred the Spanish ministers to a trade agreement the nations had signed in 1927, before the

beginning of the Second Republic. It provided for the continuation of a "commercial treaty of mutual reciprocity which will bring about complete stability in the commercial relations between the two countries."[22] Laughlin's contention was that Spain had enjoyed extended privileges in the American market since long before the 1927 agreement. Based on the republic's assurance that it would honor all the financial obligations of the dictatorship, its predecessor, the government should adhere to the letter of the treaty. It should also reciprocate by offering the United States favored nation status without conditions. Finally, Laughlin demanded that the Spaniards make known their specific complaints regarding potential violations of the 1927 treaty.

The Spanish foreign ministry published the anticipated document at the end of 1931. It was an exhaustive list divided into three areas, American health and customs provisions, the protection of Spanish names in the American marketplace, and American tariff rates. Based on this list of treaty violations, Spain expressed its desire to negotiate with the United States on a 'quid pro quo' basis. Each item that created a problem for the Spanish would be subject to arbitration.

After complicated discussions on the specifics of the treaty, Spain resolved the long conflict by granting most favored nation status to the United States in April of 1932. But the

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[22]FRUS, 1927, 3:729.

issue had hardly come to rest. Spanish grape growers asserted within weeks that American entry tariffs were still too high, and negotiations began anew. The conflict went beyond the level of the State Department, for the real problem lay in American agricultural restrictions. Rigorous customs regulations had been placed on the entry of fruit from the Mediterranean for fear of contamination by the fruit fly. Although the restrictions were not related to trade agreements, but rather to health concerns, Spain persisted in its refusal to adhere to the 1927 treaty. Meanwhile, United States exports to Spain dropped by 25 million dollars in comparison to the previous year.

It was clear that Spanish resentment went much deeper than the initial complaint over tariff regulations. To show its dissatisfaction with American economic policies, the Spanish government sought retaliation through anticapitalist legislation. It raised protective tariffs and hampered American banking activities in Spain. Many businessmen in the United States feared the confiscation of American properties in Spain by governmental action. Yet most significantly, it was one of very few times in Spanish history that such a policy could have been legislated with such facility, for all policy was now determined by a democratic vote. With such stringent economic restrictions emanating from a democracy, Spain risked alienating one of its potentially most important allies during the republican period.

Tension between the two nations reached a climax in late 1932 with a conflict over the Spanish telephone company, which

was owned by the American subsidiary of the International Telephone and Telegraph Company (ITT). In late 1931 a proposal was introduced in the Spanish Cortes that would have nationalized the company and confiscated its equipment. The State Department immediately protested the action as "one of the most high handed performances" that a government had ever undertaken,[23] concerned that it would jeopardize all American investments in Spain. Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson expressed great fear that such "discrimination against American property"[24] would also adversely affect public opinion in the United States.

Stimson was premature in his concern, however, for the bill lay dormant for eleven months and was not introduced in the American press until November of 1932. It was a time bomb waiting to explode. On November 26, a Spanish deputy demanded the seizure of all of the company's property in the cities of Madrid and Barcelona. In his opinion, the company had failed to provide Spain with adequate service, and it was time for the syndicalists to take control. The company and its operation would be immediately surrendered to the Spanish authorities. The United States could not stand idly by. Issues generated by the presence of a powerful American-owned corporation in Spain were not to be taken lightly by either nation.

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[23]FRUS, 1932, 2:560.

[24]FRUS, 1932, 2:561.

While the United States embassy in Madrid acted to control the company's immediate takeover, Salvador de Madariaga, the Spanish minister in Washington, assured the State Department that official relations with the United States would be unaffected by the proposal. But de Madariaga proved to be no great prophet. The conflict over ITT became representative of a more symbolic cause, and played a significant part in relations between Spain and the United States during the Second Republic.

The official record of communication between the two governments shows that the action against ITT may have been part of a larger plan of economic and political revenge among the various factions of the Spanish Cortes.[25] It was a credible story from the American standpoint, for the republic had yet to prove its stability as a consensus government, and the problem could only be seen as an internal political struggle. Yet despite the republic's perceived instability, Stimson made clear to Laughlin that the vigor of American resistance to the bill before the Cortes should not depend on Spain's local political situation.[26]

Laughlin made public his vehement opposition to the proposal in a letter to Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs Manuel Azaña, stating that he found it odd that an economic agreement based on a widely accepted treaty "should receive the countenance...in the

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[25]FRUS, 1932, 2:564.

[26]FRUS, 1932, 2:564.

consideration which the Cortes is now giving the matter."[27] He was referring to an agreement signed during the previous government of Primo de Rivera. From its early negotiations with the republic the American government was assured that all economic negotiations and international loans that occurred during the years of the de Rivera dictatorship (1923-1931) would be honored by the new government. These statements of goodwill were made during the early years of the republic, but once international recognition of the government had been secured, the commitments were given less importance.

Spanish Prime Minister Indalecio Prieto called the financial dealings of the Rivera dictatorship into question in November of 1932 with the accusation that the ITT contract was secured by a bribe between the American ambassador and the Spanish government.[28] This claim not only challenged the validity of the contract but also the integrity of Spanish governmental authority since 1923. The governments of both the dictatorship and the Republic had previously been unwavering in their support of the ITT document.

Since the Spanish government provided no evidence to substantiate its claim, the challenge presented to ITT was clearly a new attempt to stir up disharmony with the American government as part of the anticapitalist legislation of the

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[27]FRUS, 1932, 2:567.

[28]*New York Times*, 4 December 1932. 27:1.

Second Republic. The company was successful, and it was unclear how nationalization of the company would benefit Spain. It was equally uncertain how the Spanish government might profit by being so inflexible in its attack of American economic involvement. Since 82 percent of the common stock of the company was owned by American ITT interests, one possibility is that the republican government was merely looking for greater control in the economic affairs of the nation. Searching around for the organization representing the largest investment of capital in Spain, it hit upon the telephone company as its victim.[29] But the company had a reputation as the finest telephone company in Europe, such that one official ventured to say that "Spain literally awakened to modernity to the tune of the telephone's bell."[30] The reasons must go deeper than the desire for economic control by the government.

One of the most persuasive explanations offered by historians for Spanish actions was the political infighting and regionalism in the young republic. Since different regions produced different export products, they had different relationships with outside nations. As historian Gabriel Jackson points out, "It was fine politics in conservative Catholic Castile to be able to blame the wheat problem on a

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[29]*New York Times*, 4 December 1932. 27:1.

[30]*New York Times*, 4 December 1932. 27:1.

Catalan Republican."[31] One report indicated that the ITT bill was intended as an effort on the part of the opposition to embarrass the governing party of the republic.[32] By pitting one party of the government against the larger economic power of the United States, another party could gain national and international respect. Jackson also states, "It was good politics to claim that a revolutionary government of intellectuals, Krausists, Masons, and Socialists was ruining the Spanish economy through its ineptitude."[33] Jackson thus shares the conclusion of many other American historians that Spain's foreign policy in this period was motivated more by internal political struggles than by genuine economic concerns.

There are, however, further interpretations of the motivation behind Spain's economic agressiveness. The American public had another view, with a tendency to accentuate the aspect of ineptitude that Jackson mentions. Comments that pervaded the press at the time viewed the Republic as composed of a group of capricious and confused patriots experimenting in democracy by trial and error. One may compare typical comments of the period with great similarity to the basic tenets of the black legend. Former ambassador Carlton Hayes, for example, said that the Spanish nobility, which formed a significant part of the Cortes,

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[31]Jackson 94.

[32]FRUS, 1932, 2:564.

[33]FRUS, 1932, 2:564.

is "proud of its titles, honors, and lineage...and [is] somewhat less politically minded."[34] John Dos Passos stated that they "were merely the left wing of the old Madrid bureaucracy. It wasn't their ideas; it was their habits of life that counted."[35] But views such as these are based primarily on mundane generalizations and misconceptions, and must be largely discounted.

Another possible explanation for Spain's economic policy during the second Republic is that the ITT conflict became symbolic of a larger ideological battle between the two nations. As the bill proceeded through the Cortes, the Spanish government became progressively more resentful of American involvement in what they perceived as a "question of domestic character which has arisen between the Spanish State and a Spanish company."[36] The American position, however, was that the Spaniards were meddling with an American corporation that established a pattern for all other American investments in Spain. Their intransigence was not to be tolerated.

The two nations regarded the issue with a different degree of importance. The *New York Times* reported on December 6, 1932, that "The strong stand of the American government has brought the

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[34]Hayes 40.

[35]"Testing Time for the Spanish Republic," by John Dos Passos, *American Mercury*, March 1934, 31:343-56.

[36]FRUS, 1932, 2:573.

young Spanish Republic face to face with the most serious question of its history."[37] On the same day a Spanish publication close to Azaña reported his statement that "We refuse to regard the trouble over the telephone company as the greatest in the world just because the United States is involved."[38] In Azaña's statement we begin to see the tone that prevailed throughout the conflict with ITT, which lasted until the civil war. It was an attitude of economic nationalism and personal honor, which solidified representatives in the Cortes in their opposition to American economic interests.

As Spanish economic nationalism grew, the American government retaliated by threatening an end to diplomatic relations and the removal of the ambassador from Madrid. This was to be reported to the press as a "semi-diplomatic rupture" that "in the event that Spain maintained an intransigent attitude"[39] the peseta might so react to such a statement that it would exert an important and significant influence on the Spanish position. So the conflict over ITT became a ideological battle, influenced heavily by nationalistic, partisan, and regional factors.

Despite the reasons for Spanish involvement, none of the aforementioned motives fully explained why the United States

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[37]*The New York Times*, 6 December 1932, 2:25.

[38]*La Voz*, 6 December 1932, 1.

[39]FRUS, 1932. 2:572.

government had involved itself from the beginning in the battle facing ITT, a private corporation with interests abroad. There are several possible explanations. First, ITT earned considerable profit in Spain, despite Spanish complaints that the company was inefficient.[40] Only four percent of the gross revenue (about ten percent net revenue) was paid to the Spanish government in taxes each year. The rest was paid out proportionate to the common stock, of which, as mentioned earlier, 82 percent was owned by ITT. There was a considerable financial stake in Spain through the company.

Additionally, the American government saw the ITT conflict as a test case of the safety of foreign investments, not only in Europe but also in Latin America. The United States in 1932 had $5,250,000,000 in Latin American investments, many in nations that looked to Spain for cultural leadership. Given the conservative economic environment created by the depression, any action affecting a large entity such as ITT would establish a strong precedent for other investments.

A third possibility for American involvement was the explanation offered by many Spanish historians. Many Spaniards viewed the United States as the economic giant of the world that had caused the depression, now a ruthless imperialistic force seeking to correct the economic evils of the globe. In all the places it had caused problems it was now trying to salvage what

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[40]Cortada, *20th Century World* 177.

it could of an international economy, even at the expense of multinational corporations such as ITT. This is a weak argument, however, for it was clear from the official records of diplomatic relations that Spain had initiated the seizure of ITT. What Ambassador Laughlin did on behalf of the United States government was to salvage what he could of the ITT's vested interest in the Spanish economy. And this occurred only after an indiscriminate attack by Spain on American economic interests, which had been of unquestionable benefit to both nations.

Of all factors it was the erratic policy of Spain's foreign ministry that placed the greatest strains on its relationship with the United States. Spain had proven itself indecisive with its changing requests for tariff regulations, and relentless in its pursuit of ITT, though its motives were not clear. It was this behavior that caused John Dos Passos to label the Spanish economic system with the term "libertarian communism."[41]

Hope for improved relations with Spain was expressed when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President of the United States in 1932. With Roosevelt came the appointment of Claude G. Bowers as ambassador in Madrid. Bowers was a distinguished author, diplomat, and historian in his day, and his appointment underscored the importance with which the Roosevelt administration regarded its relations with Spain.

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[41]"Spain Gets its New Deal," by John Dos Passos, *American Mercury*, March 1934, 31:343-56.

The potential for improved relations as Bowers' term continued was significant, for he developed an intimate relationship with both governments. His memoirs relate many close contacts with different members of the Spanish government and the several presidents of the republic. He also had a strong relationship with high officials in the United States Department of State, and a personal relationship with President Roosevelt that allowed him to bypass communication with the Secretary of State.[42]

Yet despite his contacts, it is questionable whether Bowers contributed to any meaningful changes in the official relationship between Spain and the United States between the time he took office and the start of the civil war in 1936. During this time Americans experienced a Spanish government more obstinate than ever, with negotiations especially difficult in economic matters. The Second Republic would experience two significant leadership changes in its final years, and Bowers' more liberal tendencies would help to cultivate Spanish interest in the United States.

However, the transition of ambassadors from Irwin B. Laughlin to Claude Bowers turned out to be much less revolutionary than was originally expected. Bowers was to face some the most difficult of all negotiations with the Second Republic, including some issues that he would inherit from Laughlin. The first challenge occurred in the beginning of 1934

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[42]Bowers, *My Mission to Spain*.

when Spain reintroduced tariff negotiations with the United States that sought to overcome its trade imbalance in Europe. The action came just after Spain had signed a treaty with France, which indicated that treaties with other European nations were sure to follow. The Spanish Ministry of Commerce took the official position that all nations interested in the matter of trade relations with Spain should initiate negotiations, and as the chief Spanish official for treaty relations stated, the last to come would be the last served.[43]

Bowers announced that relations with Spain were good, and that if mutual concessions could be made, the Spaniards would be eager to resolve the treaty matter. It was an issue which had plagued relations since the initiation of the republic, and one that the Americans were equally eager to resolve. The unfortunate side of the issue was that this mutual eagerness did not lead to mutual generosity, as both nations felt they had a great deal to lose if embargoes were placed on goods or tariffs were raised.

Tariff negotiations after 1933 mirrored those of the early republic. While the Spanish government initially had asked for general 'tariff reductions' and the matter had been resolved, Spain again requested reductions in 1934, and the United States again asked for a specific list of trade grievances.[44] Unlike

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[43]FRUS, 1934, 2:692.

[44]FRUS, 1934, 2:694.

the early years of the republic when the justifications for Spanish complaints were nebulous, Spain was now addressing a specific issue, that of a significant trade deficit with the United States.

Juan Cárdenas, Spanish ambassador in the United States, attempted to create a strong sense of urgency for the United States by explaining the economic picture for all of Europe, as indicated above, and by providing statistics showing that almost half of Spain's total deficit in foreign trade resulted from the importation of American goods to Spain.[45] Since these were all goods sorely needed by the Spanish market, the republic claimed that significant increases in Spanish exports to the United States would have to be negotiated to offset the deficit. Spain had again selected the United States as its target by virtue of its power and dominance in the marketplace. And since relations with Bowers were congenial, it seemed an opportune time for the Second Republic.

Although the American government appreciated the urgency of resolving the Spanish trade deficit, Secretary of State Cordell Hull disagreed that the deficit should be leveled off. He asserted that the amount of goods being exchanged by the nations was equal to the availability of those products in the respective nations of origin. Thus, to lower tariffs on Spanish exports to the United States would be futile, for Spain would be unable to

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[45]FRUS, 1935, 2:689.

provide more of those goods to the American market anyway. Hull believed that the solution to the issue would be found in the removal of "present hindrances to trade,"[46] which meant that Spain would have to offer to the United States the same concessions that they had offered to France and other European nations. This would then allow the United States to open new markets for Spanish goods where trading had not previously existed.

While the American government was prepared to cooperate in the negotiations in late 1934, the Spaniards were still upset by strict American restrictions on the entry of produce and other perishable goods to the United States. While these measures were merely used to ensure that fruit and produce entering the American market was safe for consumption, the Spaniards interpreted these restrictions as a reluctance by the American government to promote Spanish trade. But since the agricultural restrictions were unrelated to the negotiations of the State Department, Bowers had little authority to bargain with the Spaniards. The Spanish request that these standards be lowered was by no means a simple one. It was based on an unclear Spanish perception of the relationship between the Departments of Agriculture and State, and it became another matter of misunderstanding between the two nations.

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[46]FRUS, 1934, 2:698.

The background for the tension that existed in the second wave of trade negotiations during the republic was elucidated in January of 1935, when the Assistant Secretary of State Francis B. Sayre reported a conversation that he had with Luís Calderón, the Spanish ambassador in the United States. In that conversation Sayre spoke of United States efforts to help promote a movement "directed toward the liberalization of the trade of the world."[47] This was one of the first tangible signs in official communications with Spain of the effect of the New Deal.

While the republic was just becoming accustomed to the change brought by Roosevelt toward more liberal international relations, the United States was beginning to understand a change that had occurred in the Spanish government as well, but in the opposite direction. In the elections of 1933 a reactionary movement had placed in power a group of conservative intellectuals who called themselves the "Spanish Coalition for Autonomous Rights" (CEDA). This period under this administration was known later as "the conservative two years", and it became known for its return to strong nationalism and to many traditional values that had been usurped by the administration of the first two years of the republic.

This administration became very nationalistic in its international trade policy, evidenced not only by its unwillingness to offer the United States any form of generosity

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[47]FRUS, 1935, 2:688.

in trade relations, but also by some of its relations with the other nations of Western Europe. An example is found in the relations between Spain and France over the entry of automobiles to Spain. Because the French were unwilling to concede to tariff reductions for several types of fruit entering France, Spain threatened to close all frontiers to French automobiles and deluxe articles. With the threat was issued a statement in the Spanish press that indicated that the French "make us equal to a colonial country",[48] and that if such treatment endured that Spain would be forced to negotiate "with all rapidity with Germany, England, and the United States."

Yet with each of the three other countries Spain was bargaining on the same terms, stating to all that if negotiations were not hastened and made more lenient, Spain would be forced to deal with those 'other nations', at the detriment of the country in question. So by pitting each trading nation against the rest, Spain hoped to increase its stake in the international marketplace and in turn balance its trade deficit. Part of the economic program of the Second Republic was to increase the visibility of Spanish products abroad. In its early years the republican government sought to protect the names of Valencia oranges, some of which were being labeled as such but were grown in the United States. Spain sought the assurance of the United States that all oranges bearing the name Valencia would in fact

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[48] *El Debate*, 30 January 1935, 1:4.

be imported from that region in Spain.

The same issue became more important when Spain sought to protect against the fraudulent labeling of sherry and amontillado wines. These wines were traditionally derived only from the 'xéres' grape vines in the province of Jerez in southern Spain. Although other regions of Spain and of the world had attempted to replicate the sherry of Jerez, none was allowed to bear the name of the region. The Spanish government insisted that even when non-genuine sherry carried the labels 'kind', 'type', 'manner', 'rival', or any other specific regional location besides Jerez, that use of the name 'sherry' should be prohibited. What was surprising was the importance that Spain placed on this issue, for most internationally successful sherry producers and exporters were British in origin. These companies grew the grapes and bottled only the minimum amount of sherry required by law at the location of the cellars in Jerez, and the rest was taken by ship to the United Kingdom, where it was bottled and marketed internationally. Also, the share of Spanish companies in the international sherry market was quite small, indicating that the Spaniards were interested in guarding more than economic rights with their concern over labeling. It was a case of Spanish pride and confidence in a product that was distinctly Spanish, from a region with a climate and environment that could not be replicated throughout the world. The government, in its zeal for international recognition and support, was also seeking to protect its reputation and honor.

Throughout the years of its existence the Second Republic had shown a tendency toward obstinacy in its relations with the United States. The protection of Spanish honor and the legitimacy of the Second Republic were key factors in this behavior, as was the desire to prevent a large power like the United States from dominating the unstable government of the Second Republic. The American public did not always understand the reasons behind the apparently strange Spanish behavior in economic negotiations. But what was truly valued by the Americans, i.e., the protection of capital and a more liberal world economic system, were relatively trite in Spanish eyes, considering the importance placed on the values of honor and trust. We shall see that this fundamental difference of values extended to other areas of relations between the two nations during the republic.

III. TOURISM

As we have seen in the economic relations during the republican period, Spain and the United States experienced their greatest conflicts in areas of ideological differences of public opinion. More significant than official relations were the conflicts as portrayed in the sensationalized press reports of the day. Since these press reports largely contained idealized and inaccurate portraits of the Spanish character, Americans were uninformed of the entire context surrounding Spanish actions and behavior.

One area of exchange where these differences of perception became a great source of conflict was in the presence of American tourists in Spanish territories. Public opinion had so soured with the perceived instability of the Spanish government that a severe drop in tourism would have been readily expected. Additionally, the depression should have greatly reduced the number of tourists travelling abroad for simple economic reasons. Yet surprisingly, the economic strain inflicted by the depression and strong negative public opinion had no significant impact on

the flow of tourists into Spain. Since 1924, the number of Americans abroad had steadily increased, reaching an average in Spain of about forty thousand per year.[49] Although many of these were wealthy Americans largely unaffected by the depression, their continued presence in Spain was surprising.

Tourism was one of a small number of things that contributed to the economic sustenance of the republic throughout its existence. Its contributions were short-lived, however. One of the significant diplomatic conflicts of the period occurred when Americans abused their privileges as tourists, upsetting a long history of peaceful relations between the Spanish government and American residents overseas. The privilege of living and touring in Spain lost a good deal of prestige, with the problems becoming a much larger issue. But the negotiations that followed would lead eventually to what was considered as Ambassador Bowers' first diplomatic success.

The event occurred in Palma de Mallorca, capital city of the island of Mallorca (in English--Majorca). It was one of three islands off the coast of eastern Spain in a small archipelago of the Mediterranean. It had enjoyed prominence in Europe for many years as a pristine site of natural beauty in a localized environment virtually unscathed by mass tourism. It was considered by many as "the paradise of the Mediterranean."[50]

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[49]Cortada, *Twentieth-Century World* 238.

[50]*New York Times*, 11 July 1933, 1:5.

On 4 June 1933 five Americans staying in Palma de Mallorca were imprisoned for attacking a Spanish Civil Guard (*Guardia Civil*). The American embassy in Barcelona became involved with the case because of the reported severity with which the Americans were being treated. Additionally, the Spanish account of the arrest was such a different interpretation from that expressed by the imprisoned Americans that it merited at least an official investigation. Within three weeks of the reporting of the event in the United States, public pressure was already advocating the involvement of the United States government in releasing the prisoners.

The American government at first was reluctant to do little more than make a polite request that the matter be expediently solved, and justifiably so, for it understood many of the implications that the public did not. This case, trivial as it seemed initially, eventually provided great insight into the workings of the Spanish republic and the traditions left by its predecessors. In an extensive statement to the Secretary of State Cordell Hull in August 1933, Bowers highlighted the fundamental problems that had caused what he termed "a wholly erroneous impression"[51] of the events in the American interpretation.

First, the Guardia Civil was an entity of military policemen with a long history as the protectors of stable government in

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[51]FRUS, 1933, 2:710.

Spain. These servants protected the peace over the years by whatever means necessary, including the use of unrestrained force. The attack on a Civil Guard in Spain not only conveyed a total lack of respect for authority but disgraced the government as well. In the Spanish perception the charges against the Americans were by no means trivial. They were, as reported in the American press, "among the most serious in the laws of the Spanish Republic."[52]

A second problem that Americans at home could not fully understand was the role of the Guardia Civil in the Spanish government. This was an issue in itself during the republic, for the group was seen by the government as an overly militant, albeit necessary, remnant of the autocratic governments of years past. The Guardia Civil had proven itself especially loyal to the government during a dictatorship, and would prove instrumental in the overthrow of the republic by Francisco Franco. Senior members of the Guardia Civil were also known for their great distaste of the republic, for it threatened a reorganization that would have curbed their power.

Spanish military historian Gabriel Cardona describes the officials of the Guardia Civil as "old military bosses integrated into the civil hierarchy, where they mixed with trained soldiers

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[52]*The New York Times*, 11 July 1933, 1:5.

to form a basis for public order."[53] Thus the Civil Guard was not under civil authority, despite its name, but was rather "the very cream of the military organization," as Bowers commented.[54] No personal attack against any of its members was an issue for the civil courts to contend with, but was instead to be taken up by a military court. A case in the military court was an act that Spaniards had especially learned to fear, which is probably why the Guardia Civil had acquired so much authority over the years.

A third factor that affected the treatment of the Americans imprisoned in Mallorca was the way of life of the Guardia Civil. Over the years the group had become a self-perpetuating 'guardian' kingdom, living together with their families in the communal style, and often marrying only within their own circle of associates. The attack of a civil guard became an attack on his personal honor as well as that of his 'family'. It was a matter of obligation that such an attack be punished, and intervention by the American government in the matter was not respected in the least.

Since the Guardia Civil maintained such close loyalties between its members, it was difficult also for the Spanish government to intervene in what had become an independent arm of

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[53]Gabriel Cardona, *El poder militar hasta la guerra civil*, (Madrid: siglo veintiuno editores, 1983) p. 161.

[54]FRUS, 1933, 2:710.

the public trust. To complicate matters, the Guardia Civil was effective at what it did, and to challenge its authority would be to undermine one of the most essential sources of security in the republic.

An official report by Bowers shows the disparity between the intentions of the military authorities in Palma and the desires of the Azaña government.[55] The plan of the court was to proceed with the trial, eventually giving the Americans the minimum sentence. This would mean even more time in jail beyond the seven weeks they had already spent there. But Azaña desired that they be released immediately, given that they had already served sufficient time in jail, and that negative public opinion in the United States was mounting. The tension between the two groups provided a difficulty for the American position.

It was for all of the above reasons that the American government encountered resistance from the republic in attempting to expedite the case before the courts. The Spaniards were upset that the Americans took so little notice of many of the factors that the republic perceived as an inherent part of life in Spain. Americans, however, did not understand either the nature of the Guardia Civil or its baffling relationship with the republic.

Despite the apparent odds against an official plea on behalf of the Americans, it was Ambassador Bowers' close relationship with Azaña that allowed the United States to intervene. Bowers

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[55]FRUS, 1933, 2:710.

states in his autobiography that Azaña seemed a "benevolent and easy boss who knew that 'the constitution is nothing between friends.'"[56] Bowers then describes his meeting with Azaña about the court case: "'I will do everything I can within the law,' [Azaña] said, and then, with a twinkle in his eye, 'and outside it if necessary.'"[57] Considering all of the implications of meddling with the Guardia Civil, it was the result of a significant decision when the consul in Barcelona was informed that he should do "everything possible on behalf [of the] Americans under arrest."[58]

Once the United States entered into negotiations on behalf of the jailed Americans, the American public was confronted with several issues that were implicitly connected with the case. The first was the long history of carousing by Americans in Mallorca. Bowers explained to the State Department that though there were many Americans in Mallorca who brought credit to the nation, there were many others in increasing numbers who were 'a disgrace' to the United States. In Bowers' words: "These are an irresponsible group who live in a chronic state of drunkenness and indecency, parading the streets half clothed, offending local feeling, treating the natives with arrogance, and their laws and regulations with a jeering levity." The offense by the five

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[56]Bowers 128.

[57]Bowers 128.

[58]Bowers 709.

Americans arrested on June 4th was seen, thus, as "the straw that broke the camel's back."[59]

Bowers was quick to point out to Spanish and American authorities alike that the five arrested were not of the disreputable group that had caused the greatest trouble in Mallorca. In fact, only one of the Americans was drunk at the time of the incident leading to arrest, and the trouble was caused by that one man. The diplomatic position of the American government was that they had no basis for a legal argument with the Spaniards, and that the case would have to be solved on the basis of good will. While Bowers expressed his desire to assist those arrested, he was adamant that the case should serve as an example to those whose indecent behavior had repeatedly violated the laws of Spain.

At the same time reports were surfacing in the American press that showed great frustration over the actions of the Spaniards. One of the five imprisoned was a woman by the name of Dorothy Lockwood, and it was reported that she was being held in "virtual solitary confinement in the women's quarters with a half-crazed Majorcan."[60] This was not viewed with particular favor by the American public. Matters worsened when it was reported that Mrs. Lockwood was at the point of collapse herself, having been placed with the woman "whose raving Mrs. Lockwood has

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[59]FRUS, 1933, 2:711.

[60]*New York Times*, 11 July 1933, 1:18.

endured day and night until she herself has been made very nervous."[61]

The life of the five prisoners was viewed from around the world as an act of valor, of personal tenacity against the obstinate Spaniards. One of the men, Robert Fullerton, published an account of his experiences in the *New York Times*, stating his role in the incident with the Guardia Civil as that of an "ardent pacifist". He continued: "And yet here am I, a harmless man on the 41st day of imprisonment, getting publicity abroad."[62] Americans rallied behind the prisoners, even in Palma de Mallorca where the press reported that "Palma is seething with excitement today and unruly Americans have started booing policemen when they pass."[63]

Under the guise of personal liberties the Americans attacked the very foundations of the Spanish legal system. The article published by Fullerton stated that the affair in Mallorca "was such as occurs daily in the United States and is settled there by a trip to night court followed by an admonition or fine."[64] The undue severity of Spanish punishments was an act of savagery, brutality, and injustice in the eyes of Americans. For many the problem was not to be found in the Spanish legal system itself,

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[61]*The New York Times*, 18 July 1933, 1:2.

[62]*The New York Times*, 17 July 1989, 15:8.

[63]*The New York Times*, 18 July 1933, 1:6.

[64]*The New York Times*, 17 July 1933, 15:8.

but rather in the fact that the system was different from that of the United States.

As a part of the excitement in Mallorca another American named Theodore Pratt, who lived on the island, published an article in *American Mercury* in an attempted support of the prisoners. When the article reached the hands of the Spanish press, police had to be summoned to the village to save Mr. Pratt from "bodily harm at the hands of a mob of Majorcans."[65] The Mallorcans were justified in their anger, for Pratt's article was extremely short-sighted, and indicative of writings that had considerably influenced public opinion during the republic.

Pratt attacked every possible aspect of Mallorcan society and way of life, from its houses to its food, to the character of its people. He writes: "They kick harmless dogs to death and put out the eyes of cats from pure malicious sadism....They make inept servants, and when not shirking their work from pure laziness or contrariness, they are stealing food to take to their own homes in the accustomed Harlem manner."[66] This description was from an American who lived among the Mallorcan people. It was with even greater passion that a case of simple civil disobedience would be misinterpreted in the United States. Pratt's conclusion that the Mallorcans were "no better than any

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[65]*The New York Times*, 19 July 1933, 3:6.

[66]"Paradise Enjoys a Boom," by Theodore Pratt, *American Mercury*, XXIX:115, 331.

other peasant race"[67] did little to encourage amity between Spain and the United States.

Additionally, the drastic change in the power structure of the Second Republic in November of 1933 caused Americans to be concerned again with the stability of the government and the continuity of negotiations over the prisoners. The elections in 1933 meant that Manuel Azaña was no longer the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Bowers' relations with Azaña were negated by the new appointment and would have to begin anew with Alejandro Lerroux, minister during the conservative two years of the republic. Nonetheless, although Lerroux knew nothing of the court case the first time the two men met, he promised Bowers that he would do everything possible under the law to prevent bad feelings, and that "he would go beyond that, if necessary."[68] Bowers had established a similar relationship with Lerroux to that which he enjoyed with Azaña.

Lerroux persisted in aiding the American authorities with the release of the prisoners. The new reassurance underscored the desires of the Spanish government all along, which was to provide the quietest and most conciliatory release possible. Owing in great part to the relationship between Lerroux and Bowers, the prisoners were pardoned and simply asked to leave the island on 3 February 1934, though it did not preclude their

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[67]Ibid 334.

[68]FRUS, 1933, 2:713.

residence in Spain.

Bowers was praised early in the conflict for his "very rare ability to understand the Spanish mind," which was "built on his solid liking for Spaniards, which leads them to reciprocate."[69] From Bowers' explanation of the many difficulties in dealing with the Guardia Civil, it was clear that he did understand Spanish society, and based on his own political persuasions he had a personal affection for the government of the republic. There were other Americans who supported the action of the Spanish government. There were those who were unabashed in their conviction that opinions such as those expressed by Theodore Pratt were an isolated interpretation of the events in Mallorca. One article labeled Pratt as a quintessential example of those Americans "who permit their whisky to get the upper hand of their wisdom."[70]

Although support for Spanish actions was strong, very few Americans appreciated either the conciliation of Bowers or the importance of the Mallorcan case. Many like Pratt were quick to condemn Spanish actions and attitudes before understanding the context and circumstances surrounding the attack of a Spanish civil authority. A *New York Times* editorial had shown that the case had specifically emphasized the danger to international relations when there is a heedless disregard of the laws of a

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[69]*New York Times*, 23 July 1933, IV, 3:3.

[70]*The New York Times*, 14 Aug 1933, 12:5.

country by the nationals of another."[71] More indirectly, the case had shown how much Spanish society still depended on long-standing traditions and loyalties, and raised questions about the chain of command in Spanish government. Despite the seemingly insignificant status of the imprisoned Americans in Mallorca, the case highlighted many of the ideological problems behind Spanish-American relations during the Second Republic.

IV. CULTURAL RELATIONS

A former ambassador to Spain tells the story of one of his fellow workers in the Foreign Service. When on return in the United States this officer was commonly asked to confirm the truth of many inveterate notions about Spanish life and culture. His standard reply, used to superficially affirm the curiosity of the inquirer, was the comment "Oh! Spain!!--bull fights, fiestas, castanets, gay colors, lovely señoritas, fruits and flowers."[72] The response was effective in that its bearer could elude the weariness "of trying to explain that Spain and Spaniards are not describable in simple, categorical terms."[73] It was lamentable, then, that many of these simplistic notions existed in the 1930's, and worse yet that they were propagated by Americans who

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[71] *The New York Times*, 1 Sept 1933, 16:5.

[72] Hayes, *An Interpretation* 28.

[73] Hayes 27.

saw themselves as authorities in representing the Spanish culture and psyche.

Yet despite the potential misconceptions of the American public, it was to be expected that cultural relations between Spain and the United States would flourish during the Second Republic. The republic was, after all, a government of highly literate men, of doctors and lawyers, professors and diplomats. They were the great enemies of Spanish tradition, creating a new government based on the wisdom of men.

These men of letters comprised the entire government, and became the ambassadors of the republican cause in diplomatic posts throughout the world.[74] Salvador de Madariaga, a prolific and well-known writer in his day, became the Spanish ambassador to the United States, and Claude Bowers was quick to praise him for "his well-earned international reputation as an intellectual."[75] The hope shared by intellectuals such as Bowers and de Madariaga in the coming of the republic was to be reflected in the cultural relations of the two nations during the 1930's.

One singular manner of determining the interest of one nation in another is by viewing its travel literature. Although Spain's publications about the United States were scarce, American interest in Spain was seen throughout the early

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[74]Cortada, *Twentieth Century World* 33.

[75]Bowers 71.

twentieth century, with a particular surge during the prosperity of the late 1920's.[76] People travelled in Spain with many motivations, some of which will be seen in this chapter. While some went in search of mythical Spain, others went to dispel the myths. But clearly a predominating factor in any reason behind American tourism in Spain was the profound curiosity in the political and social environment created by the cautious hope of the republic. The author of one travel journal described his work as "the document of a disillusioned journalist...the candid document of a Liberal of humane instincts and keen perceptions observing humanity unleashed."[77]

The few Spaniards who were writing about the United States and its people were intrigued with the nation's vitality, showing a level of respect that was not always seen at the official levels of government.[78] Spanish diplomatic officials sent home reports about the efficiency of the United States economic system, the stability of American government, and the prosperity of the American way of life.[79] The exchange of Americans and Spaniards continued, albeit unbalanced, with each nation's

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[76]Cortada, *Two Nations* 182.

[77]Francis Rogers, *Spain: a Tragic Journey*, (New York: Macaulay, 1937) vii.

[78]Charlotte Lutkens, *El estado y la sociedad en Norteamérica*, (Madrid: Prensa Española, 1931).

[79]Alvaro Seminario, *El cónsul de España en América*, (Madrid: Prensa Española, 1935).

perceptions of the other becoming less fantastic as visitors saw reality through travel, and reported what they saw to their countrymen.

One factor contributing to cultural relations that aroused fascination among Americans were the interpretations of Spanish life being offered by the great writers and novelists of the day. There were many writing in Europe at the time, continuing the great nineteenth century tradition of American writers telling the tales of romantic European life. This they found with great facility and abundance, most especially in France and Italy. One reason behind this is offered by one of the greatest of all of these authors, Gertrude Stein, who said that "Writers have to have two countries, the one where they belong and the one in which they live really. The second one is romantic, it is separate from themselves, it is not real but it is really there."[80] Stein claimed that her generation at the end of the nineteenth century found its '*raison d'être*' in the passion and delight of France. But in short time the writers of Stein's day found Spain, where political liberalism began to glow and the pursuit of leisure shined brightly in an exemplary land for romantic dreams.

Although a long history of the influence of Spanish themes in literature was waning, there were three great writers that immortalized Spain in Stein's day, John Dos Passos, Ernest

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[80]Gertrude Stein, *Paris France*, (New York: Scribner's, 1940).

Hemingway, and Stein herself. In different ways these writers portrayed Spain as a people in transition and turmoil, in the profound political struggle for an identity in the battle between tradition and modernity. Dos Passos has been described as indicative of "the thoughtful mind in America."[81] His novels reflect the dualism of Spanish society and all who come in contact with it. It is at once the glory of the arts and letters of ages past, and the new Spain of the agitated peasant farmer, "Spain straining at the bonds of the oppressor."[82]

The work of Dos Passos was especially insightful, for he spent a great deal of time among Spain's oppressed and less fortunate, and saw the political reality of the Second Republic. Dos Passos' novel *Rosinante to the Road Again*[83] became a classic work on the perils of peasant life in Spain, and as one commentator states: "Once more we are invited to reflect on the slowness of change in virtually changeless Spain."[84] Yet for Dos Passos it was the sense of timelessness that made the country come alive. He said in a letter to a friend that while "Roman Italy is a sepulchre--Roman Spain is living--actuality--in the way a peasant wears his manta, the queer wooden plows they use, in the way they

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[81]Stanley T. Williams, *The Spanish Background of American Literature*, vol. 1 (New Haven: Yale UP, 1955) 237.

[82]Williams 237.

[83]John Dos Passos, *Rosinante to the Road Again* (New York: G.H. Doran Co., 1922).

[84]Williams, *Spanish Background*, 238.

sacrifice to the dead..."[85] The picture was both fascinating and alluring for American readers, an account that invited them to explore for themselves the reality of Spain. One critic concludes that *Rosinante* is "at once a travel book, a poetic fantasy, a work of social criticism, and a proof of Dos Passos' delight in contemporary Spanish literature."[86] It was also an influence on American perceptions.

While we may see Dos Passos as one persuaded by the entirety of Spanish society, Gertrude Stein was an author more likely influenced by perceptions than by experience. Her works rarely described Spanish events or people, but instead reflected their attitudes and mannerisms through her characters. In a biographical sketch of Pablo Picasso, one of her good friends, she frequently made allusions to the culture and people that might have influenced him before he established his permanent home in Paris. "The sadness of Spain and the monotony of the Spanish coloring"[87] that she claimed affected Picasso surely affected her perceptions of Spain as well. Since her two greatest friends, Juan Gris and Picasso, were Spaniards living in Paris,[88] they clearly left an unalterable picture of Spain on her

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[85]Townsend Ludington, ed., *The Fourteenth Chronicle: Letters and Diaries of John Dos Passos*, (Boston: Gambit, 1973) 57.

[86]Ludington 57.

[87]Gertrude Stein, *Picasso*, (London: B.T. Batsford, 1938) 5.

[88]Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, (New York: Harcourt, 1933) 111.

thoughts that would be seen in her writing.

One contribution that Stein made was in her unabated passion for the United States, despite having lived most of her life overseas. Americans saw in Stein the fantasy of living in two worlds at once, of capturing all that the world has to offer whilst avoiding its worst elements. A biographical sketch of Stein published in 1934 elucidated this enthusiasm: "Miss Stein is decidely bullish on America....She loves the tall buildings, the people on the street, she had a great time at the football game, America is certainly a wonderful country."[89] At the same time Stein loved France and Spain and her writings on these countries continued to attract American attention.

What Stein learned from Picasso and Gris must surely have become a part of what she went on to share with Ernest Hemingway in her close relationship with him in the 1920's and 1930's. Her influence on Hemingway was clearly seen in his writings and work, which were the most significant of any factors influencing American perceptions of Spain during the Republic. But despite his influence, Hemingway was much less thoughtful than Stein or Dos Passos, inclined more towards passion and the pursuit of a good time, "and not devoid of naiveté,"[90] as one commentator has noted. Hemingway was so associated with Spain and things

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[89]"Gertrude Stein Comes Home," by T. S. Matthews, *New Republic*, 5 Dec 1934, 81:100-1.

[90]Williams, *Spanish Background*, 239.

Spanish that his work was perceived by many as authoritative and complete, and still today is the first impression that many Americans have of the country. This is regrettable, for the view of Spain that Hemingway provides is the limited view of the 'génération perdue'[91], a lost generation in search of itself and its own happiness. The search manifested itself in specific ways, as Stanley Williams states: "Nowhere in Europe was there a better laboratory for his study of the passions of lust, hatred, and cruelty that in certain depths of human experience in Spain."[92] Hemingway spent the rest of his life searching for what he would never find, and in the process Spain had become that country "that is not real but is really there," as Stein so eloquently described.

For the American adventurer Spain became a mystic fantasy through Hemingway's writings, a pipe dream. But nontheless, nobody did more than Hemingway to arouse American curiosity and interest in Spain. His writings capitalized on 'the black legend' and American notions of the cruelty of Spaniards and the spectacle made of savagery in Spanish society. This reached its climax when he finally saw the conflict he so desired in Spain come to fruition in the civil war (1936-39). In 1940 Hemingway published *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, a brillantly written war novel

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[91]Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*, (New York: Scribner's, 1964) 29.

[92]Williams, *Spanish Background* 239.

that demonstrated all of the values that he had come to extoll in his work. Brute strength, vicarious lust, relentless fate, and animal instinct all came to rest in one scene as a group of Loyalists were executed by the Guardia Civil.

Hemingway's fascination with Spain was inextricably linked to this passion for horror and violence. He states in his prized work on bullfighting, *Death in the Afternoon*, that "The only place where you could see life and death, i.e., violent death now that the wars were over, was in the bull ring and I wanted very much to go to Spain where I could study it....One of the simplest things of all and the most fundamental is violent death."[93]

With his book on bullfighting Hemingway raised the Spanish tradition to the level of international conflict, provoking strong protest among Americans. An article was published several months after the book, accusing Hemingway of "juvenile romantic gushing," with the assertion that the book was "just the kind of sentimental poppycock most regularly dished out by those Art nannies and pale-eyed processors of poetry whom Hemingway above all men despises."[94] What most upset Americans was Hemingway's betrayal of his own romantic image of Spain with the treachery of the bullfight. One did not mention blood, death, and cruelty in the same breath as fiestas, castanets, and fruits and flowers.

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[93]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, (New York: Scribner's, 1932) 2.

[94]"Bull in the Afternoon", by Max Eastman, *New Republic*, 7 June 1933, 75:74-77.

And so Hemingway also served to provoke hostile sentiments toward Spanish culture, as animal rights activists succeeded in de-popularizing the fascination that Americans had acquired for the bullfights through his writing.[95]

With *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway sought to dispel much of the confusion that he had helped to create. Americans had previously shown more fascination and intrigue with the bullfight than an understanding of its background. While some tourists enjoyed is status as spectacle, Hemingway was trenchant in his belief that the bull fight was something distinctly Spanish: "It has not existed because of the foreigners and tourists, but always in spite of them and any step to modify it to secure their approval, which it will never have, is a step towards its complete suppression.[96] The destruction of bullfighting by the tourist industry would not be seen until after Hemingway's death when the Spaniards themselves would begin to lose interest.

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[95]*New York Times*, 4 Jan 1933, 5:2.

[96]Hemingway, *Death* 8.

V. CONCLUSION

Of all of the events and personalities that shaped Spanish-American relations in the 1930's, none shaped the attitudes of the American people as did the cultural events of the day. The writers and artists who romanticized Spain's essence helped to fuel the perceptions of Americans at home. The economic crises and diplomatic concerns, however, were in many ways unknown to the majority of Americans. Although press releases told of trade imbalances and diplomatic conflicts between the two nations, these events were of very small consequence in comparison with the larger issues of the 1930's.

But the international attention that would be given to Spanish events during the Civil War in the latter part of the decade had significant roots, as we have seen, in the events of the Second Republic. It is for this reason that every event that

transpired in the diplomatic relations of the two nations became important, in explaining some aspect of conflict or misunderstanding that would take place in the future.

The primary source of conflict seen in all discussions between the two nations was the often misguided public opinion that influenced diplomatic decisions. How influential that public opinion was is difficult to determine, but from the events discussed in this paper it is evident that press releases in the United States were greatly used to influence Spanish policy. Many times the Spanish embassy in Washington became alarmed by letters and stories submitted to the press, and thus the American government used these press reports to their advantage.

Spanish-American relations are an important, albeit small, part of the significant events of the twentieth century. Occurring between the most noteworthy of those relations, the Spanish-American War and the Spanish Civil War, were the hopeful years of the Second Republic. If ever Americans focused their attentions on Spain with the hope of liberal democratic reform, it was during the years 1931-1936.

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