

The Hood River War Glacier.

It's a Cold Day When We Get Left.

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THE MESSAGE ON CUBA

A Practical Declaration of War With Spain.

ARMED INTERVENTION ASKED

Spain's Armistice Decree Reported Without Recommendation—Recognition of Cuban Independence Declared to Be Unwarranted and Inexpedient.

President McKinley Monday sent the following message to the congress of the United States:

Obedient to that precept of the constitution which commands the president to give from time to time the congress information of the state of the Union and to recommend to its consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient, it becomes my duty now to address your body with regard to the grave condition that has arisen in the relations of the United States and Spain, by reason of the warfare that for more than three years has raged in the neighboring island of Cuba. I do so because of the intimate connection of the Cuban question with the state of our Union, and because of the grave relations which the course which is incumbent upon the nation to adopt must needs bear to the traditional policy of our government, if it is to accord with the precepts laid down by the founders of the republic and religiously observed by succeeding administrations to the present day.

The Cuban Revolution.

The present revolution is but the successor of other similar insurrections which have occurred in Cuba against the dominion of Spain, extending over a period of nearly half a century, each of which, during its progress, has subjected the United States to great effort and expense in enforcing its neutrality laws, caused enormous loss to American trade and commerce, caused irritation, annoyance and disturbance among our citizens, and by the exercise of cruel, barbarous and uncivilized practices of warfare, shocked the sensibilities and offended the humane sympathies of our people.

Since the present revolution began, in February, 1895, this country has seen the fertile domain at our threshold ravaged by fire and sword in the course of a struggle unequalled in the history of the island and rarely paralleled as to the number of the combatants and the bitterness of the contest by any revolution of modern times, where a dependent people striving to be free have been opposed by the power of the sovereign state. Our people have beheld a once prosperous community reduced to comparative want, its commerce virtually paralyzed, its exceptional productivity diminished, its fields laid waste, its mills in ruins and its people perishing by tens of thousands from hunger and destitution.

Damage to American Interests.

We have felt ourselves constrained, in the observance of that strict neutrality which our laws enjoin and which the laws of nations command, to police our own waters and watch our own seaports in prevention of any unlawful act in aid of Cuba. Our trade has suffered; the capital invested by our citizens in Cuba has been largely lost, and the temper and forbearance of our people have been sorely tried as to beget a perilous unrest among our own citizens, which has inevitably followed its expression from time to time in the national legislature so that issues wholly external to our body politic engross attention and stand in the way of more close devotion to domestic advancement that becomes a self-contented commonwealth, whose primal maxim has been the avoidance of all foreign entanglements. All this must needs awaken and has indeed aroused the utmost concern on the part of this government as well during my predecessor's as during my own administration.

A Previous Effort to Restore Peace.

In April, 1896, the evils from which our country suffered through the Cuban war became so enormous that my predecessor made an effort to bring about peace through the mediation of the government in any way that might tend to an honorable adjustment of the contest between Spain and her revolting colony on the basis of some effective scheme of self-government for Cuba, under the flag and sovereignty of Spain. It failed, through the refusal of the Spanish government then in power to consider any form of mediation or indeed any plan of settlement which did not begin with the actual submission of the insurgents to the mother country and then only on such terms as Spain herself might see fit to grant.

Weyler's Inhuman Policy.

The war continued unabated. The resistance of insurgents was in no wise diminished. The efforts of Spain were increased, both by the dispatch of fresh levies to Cuba and by additions to the horrors of the strife. The new and inhuman phase, happily unprecedented in the modern history of civilized Christian people, the policy of devastation and concentration, inaugurated by the captain-general's ban of October 21, 1896, was thence extended to embrace all of the island to which the power of the Spaniards was able to reach by occupation or by military operations. The peasantry, including all dwelling in the open agricultural interior, were driven into the garrisoned towns or isolated places held by the Span-

ish troops. The raising of provisions of all kinds was interdicted. Fields were laid waste, dwellings unroofed and fired, mills destroyed, and, in short, everything that could desolate the land and render it unfit for human habitation or support was commanded by one or the other contending parties and executed by all the powers at their disposal.

By the time the present administration took office a year ago, reconcentration—so called—had been effective over the better part of four central and western provinces, Santa Clara, Matanzas, Havana and Pinar del Rio. The agricultural population, to the estimated number of 300,000 or more, was herded within the towns and their immediate vicinity, deprived of all means of support, rendered destitute of shelter, left poorly clad and exposed to the most unsatisfactory conditions.

Sufferings of Reconcentrados.

As the scarcity of food increased with the devastation of the despoiled areas of production, destitution and want became misery and starvation. Month by month the death rate increased in alarming ratio, and by March, 1898, according to conservative estimates from official Spanish sources, the mortality among the reconcentrados from starvation and the diseases thereto incident exceeded 50 per centum of the total number. No practical relief was accorded to the destitute, the overburdened towns, already suffering from the general dearth, could give no aid. So-called zones of cultivation, established within the immediate area of effective military control, about the cities and fortified camps, proved illusory as a remedy for the suffering. The unfortunates, being for the most part women and children, with aged and helpless men, enfeebled by disease and hunger, could not have tilled the soil without tools, seeds or shelter, for their own support or for the supply of the cities.

Reconcentration adopted avowedly as a war measure, to cut off the resources of the insurgents, worked its predestined result. As I said in my message of last December, it was not civilized warfare; it was extermination, and the only peace it could beget was that of the wilderness and the grave.

Progress of the War.

Meanwhile the military situation in the island has undergone a noticeable change. The extraordinary activity that characterized the second year of the war, when the insurgents invaded even the hitherto unharmed fields of Pinar del Rio and carried havoc and destitution up to the walls of the city of Havana itself, had relapsed into a dogged struggle in the central and eastern provinces. The Spanish army regained a measure of control in Pinar del Rio and parts of Havana, but under the existing conditions of the rural country, without immediate improvement of their productive situation. Even thus partially restricted, the revolutionists held their own and their submission, put forth by Spain as the essential and sole basis of peace, seemed as far distant as at the outset. In this state of affairs my administration found itself confronted with the grave problem of its duty. My message of last December reviewed the situation and detailed the steps taken with a view of relieving the acuteness and opening the way to some form of honorable settlement.

Spain's Vain Promises.

The assassination of the prime minister, Canovas, led to a change of government in Spain. The former administration, which pledged subjugation without concession, gave place to that of a more liberal party, committed long in advance to a policy of reform involving the wider principle of home rule for Cuba and Porto Rico.

The overtures of this government made through the envoy, General Woodford, and looking to an immediate effective amelioration of the condition of the island, although not accepted to the extent of admitted mediation in any shape, were met by assurances that home rule, or other connected with the insurrection, offered to Cuba, without waiting for the war to end, and that more humane methods should thenceforth prevail in the conduct of hostilities.

Incidentally with these declarations the new government of Spain continued and completed the policy already begun by its predecessor of testifying friendly regard for this nation by releasing American citizens held under one charge or another connected with the insurrection, so that, by the end of November, not a single person entitled in any way to our national protection remained in a Spanish prison.

The Relief Movement.

While these negotiations were in progress the increasing destitution of the unfortunate reconcentrados and the alarming mortality among them claimed earnest attention. The success which had attended the limited measure of relief extended to the suffering American citizens among them by the judicious expenditure, through the consular agencies, of the money appropriated expressly for their succor by the joint resolution approved May 24, 1897, prompted the humane extension of a similar scheme to that great body of sufferers. A suggestion to this end was acquiesced in by the Spanish authorities. On the 24th of December a circular was issued an appeal to the American people, inviting contributions in money or in kind for the succor of the starving sufferers in Cuba.

Following this, on the 8th of January, was a similar public announcement of the formation of a central Cuban relief committee, which had headquarters in New York city, composed of members representing the national Red Cross and the religious and business elements of the country. The efforts of that committee have been untiring and have accomplished much. Arrangements for free transportation to Cuba have greatly aided the charitable work.

The president of the American Red Cross and representatives of other contributory organizations have generally visited Cuba and co-operated with the consular-general and the local authorities to make effective distribution of the relief collected through the efforts of the central committee. Nearly \$200,000 in money and supplies has reached the sufferers, and more is forthcoming. The supplies are admitted duty free, and transportation to the interior has been arranged so that the relief at first necessarily confined to Havana and the larger cities is now extended through most, if not all, of the towns where suffering exists. Thousands of lives have already been saved.

The necessity for a change in the condition of the reconcentrados is recognized by the Spanish government. Within a few days past the orders of General Weyler have been revoked, the reconcentrados are, it is said, to be permitted to return to their homes, and aided to resume

the self-supporting pursuits of peace; public works have been started to give them employment, and a sum of \$600,000 has been appropriated for their relief.

Spain's Cause Hopeless.

The war in Cuba is of such a nature that, short of subjugation or extermination, a final military victory for the other side seems impracticable. The alternative lies in the physical exhaustion of the one or the other party, or perhaps both, a condition which in effect ended the 10 years' war by the truce of Zan Jon. The prospect of such a protraction and conclusion of the present strife is a contingency which, in the physical exhaustion of the one or the other party, or perhaps both, a condition which in effect ended the 10 years' war by the truce of Zan Jon. The prospect of such a protraction and conclusion of the present strife is a contingency which, in the physical exhaustion of the one or the other party, or perhaps both, a condition which in effect ended the 10 years' war by the truce of Zan Jon.

An Offer of Mediation.

Realizing this, it appeared to be my duty, in a spirit of true friendship, no less to Spain than to the Cubans, who have so much to lose by the prolongation of the struggle, to seek to bring about an immediate termination of the war. To this end I submitted, on the 27th ultimo, as a result of much representation and correspondence through the United States minister at Madrid, proposals to the Spanish government looking to an armistice until October 1, for the negotiation of peace with the good offices of the president.

In addition, I asked the immediate revocation of the order of reconcentration, so as to permit the people to return to their farms and the needy to be relieved with provisions and supplies by the United States, co-operating with the Spanish government, as to terms of which the reply of the Spanish cabinet was received on the night of the 31st ultimo. It offers as the means to bring about peace in Cuba to confide the preparation thereof to the insular department, inasmuch as the insurgents are not to be recognized as belligerents until a final result, it being however understood that the powers reserved by the constitution to the central government are not lessened or diminished. As the Cuban parliament does not meet until the 1st of March, the Spanish government would not object, for its part, to accept at once a suspension of hostilities if asked for by the insurgents through the general-in-chief, to whom would pertain in such cases to determine the duration and conditions of the armistice.

The propositions submitted by General Woodford and the reply of the Spanish government were both in the form of brief memoranda, the text of which are before mentioned and substantially in the language above given. The function of the Cuban parliament in the matter of "preparing" peace and the manner of doing so are not explained in the Spanish memorandum, but from General Woodford's explanatory reports of preliminary discussion preceding the final conference it is understood that the Spanish government stands ready to give the insular congress full power to settle the terms of peace with the insurgents, whether by direct negotiation or indirectly by means of legislation does not appear. With this last overture in the direction of immediate peace and its disappointing reception by Spain, the executive was brought to the end of his official message.

Recognition Not Warranted.

In my annual message of December last I said: "Of the untried measures there remain Recognition of the insurgents as belligerents, recognition of the independence of Cuba and intervention to end the war by imposing a rational compromise between the contestants, or intervention in favor of one or the other party. I speak not of forcible annexation, for that cannot be thought of. That, by our code of morality, would be criminal aggression."

Thereupon I reviewed these alternatives in the light of President Grant's message in the words uttered in 1875, when after several years of sanguinary, destructive and cruel barbarities in Cuba, he reached the conclusion that the recognition of the independence of Cuba was impracticable and indefensible, and that the recognition of belligerence was not warranted by the facts according to the texts of public law. I commented, especially upon that phase of the question, pointing out the inconveniences and positive dangers of recognition of belligerence, which, while adding to the already onerous burdens of neutrality without our own jurisdiction, could not in any way extend our influence or effective offices in the territory of hostilities. He said:

"Nothing has since occurred to change my view in this regard, and I recognize as fully now as then that the issuance of a proclamation of neutrality, by which process the so-called recognition of belligerence is published, could, of itself and unattended by other action, accomplish nothing toward the end for which we labor, the instant pacification of Cuba, and the cessation of the misery that afflicts the island."

A Precedent Cited.

Turning to the question of recognizing at this time the independence of the present insurgent government in Cuba, we find said precedent in our history from an early day. They are well summed up in President Jackson's message to congress December 21, 1836, on the subject of the recognition of the independence of Texas. He said:

"In all the contests that have arisen out of the revolutions of France, out of the disputes relating to Portugal and Spain, out of the separation of the American possessions of both from the European governments, and out of the numerous and constantly recurring struggles for dominion in Spanish-American countries, so wisely consistent with just principles has been the action of our government that we have under the most critical circumstances avoided all censure and encountered no other evil than that produced by a transient estrangement of good will in those against whom we have been, by force of evidence, compelled to decide."

It has thus been made known to the world that the uniform policy and practice of the United States is to avoid all interference in disputes which merely relate to the internal government of other nations, and eventually to recognize the authority of the prevailing party without reference to our particular interests and views or to the merits of the original controversy. But in this, as in every other occasion, safety is to be found in a rigid adherence to these principles. In the contest between Spain and the revolting colonies we stood aloof and waited not only until the ability of the new states to protect themselves was fully established, but until the chance of their being again subjugated had entirely passed away. Then, and not until then, were they recognized. Such was our course in regard to Mexico herself. It is true that with regard to Texas the civil authorities of Mexico had been expelled, its invad-

ed army defeated, the chief of the republic himself captured, and all present power to control the newly organized government of Texas annihilated within its confines. But, on the other hand, there is, in appearance at least, an immense disparity of physical force on the side of Texas. The Mexican republic again is rallying its forces under a new leader and menacing a fresh invasion to recover its lost domain.

"Upon the issue of this threatened invasion, the independence of Texas may be considered as suspended, and were there nothing peculiar in the relations between the United States and Texas, our knowledge of the history of the world, at such a crisis could scarcely be regarded as consistent with the prudent reserve with which we have hitherto held ourselves bound to treat all similar questions.

Thereupon Andrew Jackson proceeded to consider the risk—that there might be imputed to the United States motives of selfish interests in view of the former claim on our part to the territory of Texas—and an avowed purpose of the Texans in seeking recognition of independence as an incident to the incorporation of Texas in the Union, concluding thus:

"Prudence, therefore, seems to dictate that we should stand aloof and maintain our present attitude, if not until Mexico itself or one of the great powers shall recognize the independence of the new government, at least until the lapse of time or the course of events shall have proved in fact a body politic, having a government in substance as well as in name, possessed of the elements of stability, and forming de facto 'if left to itself a state among the nations, reasonably capable of discharging the duties of a sovereign government in its own governance in dealing with cases like these, the further condition that recognition of an independent state is not due to a revolted dependency until the danger of its being again subjugated by the parent state has passed away.' This extreme test was, in fact, applied in the case of Texas."

The congress to whom President Jackson referred the question as one probably leading to an appropriate recognition of a friendly ally, having a government in substance as well as in name, possessed of the elements of stability, and forming de facto 'if left to itself a state among the nations, reasonably capable of discharging the duties of a sovereign government in its own governance in dealing with cases like these, the further condition that recognition of an independent state is not due to a revolted dependency until the danger of its being again subjugated by the parent state has passed away.' This extreme test was, in fact, applied in the case of Texas."

It was so recognized by President Van Buren, who commissioned a charge d'affaires March 7, 1837, after Mexico had abandoned an attempt to conquer the Texas territory, and then there was at the time no bona fide contest going on between the insurgent province and its former sovereign.

Cuba Not Rightly a State.

"I said in my message of December last: 'It is to be seriously considered whether the Cuban government possesses beyond dispute the attributes of statehood, which would entitle it to the recognition of belligerence, in its favor.'"

The same requirement must certainly be no less seriously considered when the graver issue of recognizing independence is in question, for no less positive test can be applied to the greater act than to the lesser, while on the other hand the influences and consequences of the struggle depending upon the internal policy of the recognizing state, which form important factors in the recognition of belligerence, are concerned, are secondary if not rightly eliminable factors when the real question is whether the community claiming recognition is or is not independent beyond peradventure."

Recognition Inexpedient.

Nor from the standpoint of expedience do I think it would be wise or prudent for this government to recognize at the present time the independence of the so-called Cuban republic. Such recognition is necessary in order to enable the United States to intervene and pacify the island. To commit this country now to the recognition of any particular government in Cuba might subject us to embarrassing conditions of interest obligation toward the organization so recognized. In case of intervention, our conduct will be subject to the approval or disapproval of such government. We would be required to submit to its direction and to assume to it the mere relations of a friendly ally. When it shall appear hereafter that there is within the island a government capable of performing the duties and discharging the functions of a nation, and having, as a member of the proper forms and attributes of nationality, such government can be promptly and readily recognized and the relations and interests of the United States with such nation adjusted."

Possible Alternative.

There are three forms of intervention to end the war, each as an impartial neutrality, by imposing a rational compromise between the contestants or as the active ally of the one party or the other. As to the first, it is not to be forgotten that during the last few months the attitude of the United States has virtually been one of friendly intervention in many ways, each not of itself conclusive, but all tending toward an ultimate pacific result just and honorable to all interests concerned. The spirit of all our acts hitherto has been an earnest, unselfish desire for peace and prosperity in Cuba, untarnished by differences between the United States and Spain and unstained by the blood of American citizens. The forcible intervention of the United States as a neutral to stop the war according to the large dictates of humanity and following the historical precedents wherein the United States has interfered to check the hopeless sacrifice of life by intestine conflicts beyond their borders, is justifiable on national grounds. It involves, however, hostile constraint upon both parties by differences between the United States and Spain and unstained by the blood of American citizens. The forcible intervention of the United States as a neutral to stop the war according to the large dictates of humanity and following the historical precedents wherein the United States has interfered to check the hopeless sacrifice of life by intestine conflicts beyond their borders, is justifiable on national grounds. It involves, however, hostile constraint upon both parties by differences between the United States and Spain and unstained by the blood of American citizens. 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