

The hope that the Third Hague Peace Conference may take place rests on well founded grounds, and Germany, well prepared to take up this work, will take part in that Conference. Germany feels convinced that through the solution of important international problems the Conference will exercise great influence in settling disputes and she will therefore deserve well of the cause of peace.

Dr. Kriege is a sincere, upright, and honest man. He expresses his opinions freely and without reserve, whether those opinions are agreeable or displeasing to his audience. He possesses the confidence of his government, and there is every reason to believe that the views expressed in the address from which the quotations have been made are the views which Germany has formed after great deliberation, and which Germany will be prepared to maintain at the next Hague Conference. That it may come soon; that the war which is plaguing mankind may soon cease; and that the nations may again meet at the little city of The Hague in the very near future and devise measures for the benefit of the nations of the world without exception is the hope of every lover of his kind.

#### A CARIBBEAN POLICY FOR THE UNITED STATES

An editorial comment in the July number of the JOURNAL<sup>1</sup> was devoted to the nature and the origin of the Platt Amendment, and it was suggested, without going into details, that the policy which dictated the amendment was capable of a larger application. It is the purpose of the present comment to take up this subject and to consider it from the larger point of view.

It may be stated in this connection that the amendment, although restricted to Cuba, contemplated the independence of the country to which it was to be applied, a republican form of government, assuring personal liberty and the protection of property in the sense in which these terms are used and understood in constitutional government, a solemn engagement on the part of the country covered by the amendment not to enter into any treaty or engagement with a foreign Power calculated to impair or to interfere with its independence, and that public debts should not be created in excess of the capacity of the ordinary revenues, after defraying the current expenses of the government, to pay the interest.

It is one thing, however, to undertake engagements of this kind; it is quite another thing to carry them out. A promise without performance would be a vain thing, and, as the United States intended to guarantee the independence of Cuba and as the provisions of the amend-

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ment previously quoted were devised for this purpose, it was essential in the opinion of Mr. Root, who, as Secretary of War, drafted the amendment and officially interpreted it, to reserve to the United States the right of supervision, in order to justify the United States in guaranteeing the independence of the particular country in question.

The obligation which the United States was willing to assume was not unlimited, but was conditioned upon the obligation set forth in the amendment which Cuba assumed. The failure to comply with these conditions would free the United States from its obligation. Therefore, Mr. Root reserved the right, and properly so, of the United States to intervene, not generally, but specifically "for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty." As, however, intervention has often been invoked to the detriment, as history shows, of the country subject to intervention, Mr. Root, as an upright and straightforward, prudent and far-seeing statesman officially interpreted the right of intervention in such a way as to exclude any and all thought of its abuse. Thus, in the gloss placed upon the amendment in an instruction to General Wood, the Military Governor of Cuba, he stated that the right of intervention was not "synonymous with intermeddling or interference with the affairs of the Cuban Government," but that it was to be "based upon just and substantial grounds," namely, "for the preservation of Cuban independence, and the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty." It is true that he coupled with this the obligations "imposed by the Treaty of Paris on the United States," but this clause is of a special nature, involving, as it does, the interpretation of a definite treaty, and may be dismissed without comment in considering the applicability of the amendment from a broader point of view.

So much for the amendment as applied to Cuba. When Mr. Root drafted the amendment in his letter of instructions, dated February 9, 1901, to the Military Governor of Cuba, a great change had taken place in the international relations between the Latin American republics to the north of the Isthmus of Darien and the United States. Negotiations had been begun to abrogate the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of April 19, 1850, between Great Britain and the United States, which contemplated the construction, supervision, and protection of a channel of communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans by the contracting parties. The first Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of February 5, 1900, which

was, however, amended by the Senate in such a way as to be unacceptable to Great Britain, had been signed. The new and existing Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, dated November 18, 1901, was in process of negotiation and was the subject of much thought and reflection by the American Government, and in framing the amendment subsequently to be known as the Platt Amendment, Mr. Root had in mind the changed conditions incidental to the construction of a canal through the Isthmus of Panama, under the new treaty which acknowledged the right of the United States to build the canal without the co-operation of Great Britain, and gave it the right and imposed upon it the duty to protect the canal also without the co-operation of Great Britain. The privilege was an onerous one, for right and duty are correlative terms. The approaches to the canal must be safeguarded, and disorder in the countries to the north of the route and to the south of the Rio Grande would seriously impair the usefulness of the canal when built. The attitude of the United States toward Cuba through a long period of years has shown conclusively that the United States would not permit the island to pass under the control of any of the great Powers. This is equally true of the republics of Haiti and Santo Domingo in the Caribbean Sea, and of the republics to the north of the proposed canal.

As the second Hay-Pauncefote Treaty was between Great Britain and the United States, neither of which owned the territory through which the canal would pass, the United States need to enter into negotiations with the sovereign of the territory. The Hay-Herran Treaty of January 22, 1903, was, therefore, concluded between Colombia, then owner of the Isthmus, and the United States, giving the United States a right of way across the Isthmus. Advised and consented to by the Senate of the United States, the treaty was rejected by Colombia. Panama shortly thereafter revolted and established its independence, which the United States formally recognized and guaranteed to preserve in a treaty with Panama, dated November 18, 1903, which treaty gave the United States a right of way across the Isthmus for the construction of the canal in accordance with the terms of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of November 18, 1901.

It is thus seen that the negotiations resulting in the right to acquire, operate and control the canal were begun during the American occupation of Cuba, although they were terminated after the withdrawal of the American army on May 20, 1902, and the connection between the amendment and the canal suggests itself to the reader without further

comment, as the connection was undoubtedly evident, not merely to Mr. Root, Secretary of War, but to Mr. Hay, Secretary of State. The United States desires the independence of Cuba; it also desires the independence of the republics in the Caribbean and to the north of the canal. It wishes a government in Cuba adequate to maintain its independence and to guarantee life, liberty and the protection of property. It also wishes such a government in the republics in the Caribbean and to the north of the canal, not merely because it is interested in the independence of these republics, and in constitutional government generally, but also because the islands are within a stone's throw, as it were, of our territory, and because the countries to the north of the canal must be independent and orderly governments, if the canal is to be useful not merely to the United States and to them, but to the world at large.

The value to each of the republics of a stable and orderly government is no less important to them than it is to the United States, and there seems to be every reason in favor of a closer relationship, which shall guarantee law and order in each of them without jeopardizing independence. The obligation to maintain a stable government, to keep its public debt within the limits of the ordinary revenues, the duty to protect life, liberty and property do not seem to be too great a price for the guarantee of independence. This is exactly what each government wishes without such a guarantee, and the supervision necessary to secure these just and beneficent ends, does not derogate from independence and the exercise of sovereignty within the limits of international responsibility, as is shown by the experience of Cuba. That the right of intervention, "not synonymous with intermeddling or interference," reserved in the Platt Amendment, as interpreted officially by Mr. Root, will not be dangerous to the independence and development of the countries, is shown by the intervention of the United States in Cuba in 1906 and the withdrawal of the United States in 1909 upon the cessation of the disorders which caused the intervention.

It is believed, therefore, that the essential features of the Platt Amendment, due to the wisdom and foresight of Mr. Root, can properly form the basis of a policy of the United States toward the republics in the Caribbean Sea and to the north of the Canal Zone, as its sole purpose is to maintain independence and constitutional government, and that the republics can, in exchange for the guarantee of independence, properly accept the principles of the amendment, meant solely to maintain their independence against the world and their well-being at home.