1898: THE WAR AFTER THE WAR

(1898: La guerra después de la guerra)

Fernando Picó

Translated by
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Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Translation

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

I. About the author:

Historian, writer, teacher and priest, Dr. Fernando Picó, S. J., has taught history at the Río Piedras Campus of the University of Puerto Rico since 1972. The author of six books on the history of Puerto Rico, of which 1898: La guerra después de la guerra is the most recent, Dr. Picó brings to his work the understanding of a concerned brother for the plight of the disenfranchised and the downtrodden, the attention to detail of an enthusiastic researcher, and the educator's zeal for awakening in his students, or his readers, the desire to follow the leads and find the answers to the questions he poses in his books.

II. About the book:

1898: La guerra después de la guerra is a detailed account of the events that preceded, surrounded and followed the invasion of Puerto Rico by the United States Army during the last month of the Spanish-American War. Seen from the point of view of a broad spectrum of participants and observers — military and civilian, Puerto Rican and American, journalists and diarists, the rich and the poor, European and criollo — and, particularly in the case of the numerous newspapers
quoted, of various political persuasions, the narrative is set against the background of the social and economic reality of Puerto Rico in the last decades of the 19th century.

The book consists of a preface, seven chapters, and a bibliography. The preface and the first three chapters comprise the translation, which surpasses the 100 pages required by the Translation Program to fulfill the requirements for the Master's Thesis.

Why translate this book into English? The author, living and working in Puerto Rico, has discovered there is a need to set straight the record --even in Spanish-- of the events of 1898, and to strip away the partisan myths that cling to a momentous event that changed the course of Puerto Rican history a mere ninety years ago. There is all the more reason to make this information available in the language of the country whose soldiers and civilians, customs and institutions, laws and way of life were to become a pervasive part of the Puerto Rican social fabric.

To quote the historian Teresita Martinez-Vergne, Ph. D., whose suggestions and observations have added immeasurably to the quality and accuracy of this translation, "the field of Latin American and Caribbean history --of which Puerto Rican history is a part-- has a large English-speaking scholarly readership that will be interested in this book." English is also the language read by several million second and third generation Puerto Ricans born and educated in the United States.

As this is written, the 90th anniversary of the American Invasion is about to be observed, although in the form of the anniversary of the Commonwealth's 1952 Constitution. Yet there are today many English-speaking people --both in Puerto Rico and in the continental United

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States—who do not understand what makes Puerto Rico an entity unto itself, a separate and unique nation, and why it should wish to remain so, as opposed to being the outpost of a bigger state.

In *1898: La guerra después de la guerra*, Dr. Picó shows us an island nation rent by conflicting forces, both tangible and psychological. Two foreign armies are on its soil: one representing a distant, vacillating Old-World monarchy, but also the island’s cultural and linguistic heritage, and the other representing itself as the deliverer, the bearer of New-World ideals of democracy, equality, freedom and progress, but with designs upon the island nonetheless.

We see a population poised at the threshold of political maturity, eager for self-government under its newly-won Charter of Autonomy, torn between its paternal ties to Europe and its identification with its sister nations of the Americas. This population is heterogeneous and stratified. Agriculture and commerce, the wellsprings of employment, are dominated as often as not by European-born entrepreneurs. Prosperity, attained by only a small segment of the population, is threatened constantly by the fluctuations of international commerce. How Puerto Ricans reacted to the invasion by the United States Army is told in *1898* through a series of facts. Why they reacted as they did is the central concern of the book.

III. Translation problems

*1898: La guerra después de la guerra* addresses itself to a Puerto Rican readership. Its intimate tone is set in the fifth paragraph of the
Preface, when the author speaks for the first time of *nuestro país*, "our country." Dr. Picó speaks to his fellow islanders, to people who share a common trove of knowledge. This poses an interesting problem for the translator, who must bear in mind that a non-Puerto Rican readership may not bring to the reading the same frame of reference, either of information or of sentiment. It was decided that references to "our country," "our island" and "national" would be, wherever necessary, rendered without possessive pronouns, i.e., "the island," "the country," or "Puerto Rico." The effect, inevitably, is that clarity is achieved at the loss of the feeling of inclusion that second person plural pronouns impart.

Even though the quoted material contains repeated references to "*los americanos,*" and "*América,*" the author is careful always to use *norteamericanos* for the citizens of the United States of America, and *Estados Unidos* for the United States. Millions of Spanish-speaking citizens of all the countries of North, Central and South America resent the exclusive use of the term *American* to refer to the natives of one nation rather those of the whole hemisphere of the Americas. Here the term "Americans" is nevertheless used in the translation, since English speakers, unaware of this conflict, use that term as a standard, because there is no proper noun designating nationality, such as exists for other North Americans, that is, Canadians and Mexicans. The phrase "citizens of the United States of America" is, at seven words, too long and unwieldy to use in most instances.

On the other hand, the citizens of Spain are alternately called *peninsulares* or *españoles* if they are natives of mainland Spain, to
distinguish them from the numerous Spaniards who migrated to Puerto Rico from Balearic or Canary Islands. In the translation *peninsulares* become Spaniards, Spanish or peninsular Spaniards.

Throughout the book there are quotations from newspapers and town council records of proceedings which are written in a Spanish prose style that today sounds stilted and flowery. In some cases, delicate matters are dealt with euphemistically. For example, in Chapter 2, page 43, on the subject of gastrointestinal maladies, the journalist uses the phrase "glandular congestion of the digestive system," which is an oblique way of referring to diarrhea. The old, and sometimes odd flavor of the original texts was retained to the degree possible when rendering these paragraphs into English.

Some quoted material was written by individuals who were perhaps making an effort to compensate for a lack of formal education by using very affected expressions. For example, on pages 35 and 36 of the original, there appears an announcement published in the form of a press release in the newspaper *La Correspondencia*. The owner of a factory attempts to justify his decision to close his business rather than give in to the demands of his workers. It is written in the language of a self-made man and the tone is self-assured, even boastful. Metaphor follows metaphor. The writer's personality shows in his sentence construction and punctuation. These have been retained as much as possible. Another example can be seen on pages 91-93 of the original, in the letter from Rodulfo Figueroa, which is written in both the first and the third persons. Although it sounds odd to the ear in English, these transitions remain in the translation.
The format of some newspaper quotations, as on page 44 of the original, is now current usage only in poetry in English, but this format has remained unaltered as well.

The direct quotation from a Mayagüez newspaper in Chapter 2, page 78, contains a Spanish proverb, *amor con amor se paga*, literally, love is paid back with love. Research yielded no adage or proverb couched in positive terms. The *Appleton-Cuyás Spanish-English Dictionary*, normally a rich source of phrases, listed as an equivalent, "The punishment should fit the crime." Since the context required reference to the concept of love or good deeds, I translated the proverb as "a labor of love should be paid back in kind."

The author avoided the use of ideologically marked economic and political terminology. Instead, we see repeated references to "hegemonía," "sectores hegémónicos" and "figura hegémónica." Cognates for these words exist, but are not as frequently used as their nearest synonyms, "leading" and "dominant." The translation into English for a general readership made the use of certain class terms unavoidable, though wherever possible the author's policy guided the translation.

As each culture produces unique institutions, so it names them with words that often have no exact equivalent in other languages. One of the reasons English is such a rich language is that in apprehending a foreign concept it is hospitable to its descriptive terms. The translation contains words such as "plaza" and "hacienda," "machete," "junta," "peso," and "centavo" that have long been accepted into English or are to be found in a college dictionary. A number of nouns and adjectives that recur in the text, such as *fíbaro, criollo, agregado, cuerda, barrio, tiznado* and
others that, if translated, would diminish the Puerto Rican flavor of the text, have been kept in Spanish. Their meaning is made explicit in English the first time they appear, and thereafter they continue to appear in italics.

The English and French cognate of criollo, creole, has been identified with the populations of the English- and French-speaking islands of the West Indies, and the lingua franca of Haiti, and so does not serve this Hispanic context. In 19th century Puerto Rico, a criollo was a person born on the island, whose parents were either foreign or island born.

Laird Bergad, in the glossary to his book *Coffee and the Growth of Agrarian Capitalism* (Princeton: 1983) defines Puerto Rican agregados as "service tenants living on an estate, usually with land usufruct rights." The phrase "service tenants" was taken from this source to explain the meaning of agregados.

The names of barrios in Puerto Rico, which in this book are both the rural and the urban subdivisions of municipalities, often feature the words "arriba" or "abajo," that is, upper or lower, due perhaps to topographical accidents. These words appear in lower case throughout the book, as in the case of "barrio Vivi arriba" on page 101 of the original and "barrio Mameyes abajo" on page 103. In the translation, the words have been made part of the proper name, and therefore appear capitalized and in Roman characters, for example: Barrio Vivi Arriba. When the word barrio appears in its general meaning, it is italicized and not capitalized.

Spanish double surnames have been hyphenated throughout in order to
enable the English-speaking reader who wishes to delve further into the subject to find references in an alphabetical listing. These surnames as a rule are composed of the paternal and maternal last names, in that order, and are frequently confused in English with a person's middle and last names.

In those paragraphs where the author makes a transition or frames a rhetorical question using a historical present, the translation remains true to the author's characteristic style.

The form in which this translation is presented is derived in large part from the Modern Language Association Style Sheet, 2nd ed., and the Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations by Kate Turabian (Chicago: 1987). All notes appear at the end of the text.

IV. Author's Corrections

At the request of the author certain changes that were not included in the first edition of the book have been incorporated into the translation:

In the list of abbreviations that follows the Preface, two have been added: FGEPR and TSA.

Chapter 1, page 32, where five illnesses are enumerated, now reads "contagious and other diseases."

Chapter 1, endnote 1, second reference now reads III, 22-23, 64, 99.

Chapter 2, page 61, the name General Wilson has been corrected to read General Roy Stone.

Chapter 3, endnote 21, the last date now reads Jan. 5, 1899, p. 3.
IV. Acknowledgements

I am grateful to each and every one of those teachers, friends, relatives and classmates who helped me track down the meaning or the equivalent of an elusive term, who sustained me during those inevitable times when one feels unequal to a task, and who shared in the enjoyment of solving the wonderful riddles that translation poses. Most shall remain unsung here, but very much a part of a memorable year in my life. Mentioned below are but a few, without whose help my task would have been difficult indeed. I shall remain forever indebted to:

The author, Dr. Fernando Picó, S. J., who was always available for consultations on short notice: for his patience, his time, his invaluable assistance and his encouragement.

Robert James Díaz, who writes and translates poetry in English and Spanish, for his help and advice on the translating into iambic, measured feet the four lines of rhymed verse on page 44 of the original.

Lt. Colonel Félix Rivera, for allowing me to carry out research at the ROTC library in their facility off the Río Piedras Campus of the University of Puerto Rico.

Dr. Juan José Vilella, M. D., whose lifelong interest in the Spanish language began even before he attended medical school in Spain, for his clarification of the polite language of the quotation on malaria and influenza in Chapter 2.

Mercedes Santacruz-Pacheco de Solís, a licensed pharmacist, for explaining the nerve-calming effect of potassium bromide and bismuth (Chapter 2, page 77 of the original) and the side effects that put an end
to its 19th and early 20th century vogue.

Attorney James A. Toro, who spent several hours of his valuable time going over all the legal terminology of Chapter 3 and whose suggestions and corrections have been gratefully incorporated into the translation.

My professors at the Translation Program, Carmen Díaz Zayas, Sonia Casasnovas, Cándida González, Amparo Morales, María Vaquero, Marshall Morris and Angel Casares, all of whom were consulted throughout the preparation of this translation, my thanks for their help and for everything they taught me.

To my thesis supervisor and valued friend, Professor Marshall Morris, whose profound knowledge of the Spanish language will never cease to elicit my admiration, and without whose dedication, guidance, advice, and exquisite patience, it would have been impossible to write these lines today, gracias mil!

To my family: my husband Gregory Korwek and my two daughters, Heleni and Cristina, who received from me little quantity or quality time while the translation was drafted, checked, double-checked and rewritten: we have reached another milestone.

To my mother, Blanca A. Ower, whose faith in our talents was only exceeded by her wish to see her children apply them in the pursuit of university studies, I dedicate the work that completes the requirements for the Master's degree.

Sylvia Korwek
July 25, 1988
San Juan, P. R.
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"The most visible people in the town of Dorado," according to the newspaper *La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico* in its August 8, 1898, issue, "are in the habit of gathering in front of the house of the parish priest --an excellent gentleman, by the way-- for the purpose of exchanging impressions about the burning issue of the day. While gathered there a few nights ago, a passerby directed their attention to a beautiful, luminous point that sparkled in the sky, believing it was the Yankees' balloon. Immediately, spyglasses of various powers were trained upon the object in question, and in the end, all were convinced that it was nothing other than the planet Venus." That was the end of that evening's gathering. There were four days of combat still to come, but that was the only instance after the July 25th invasion and before the armistice that the press in the capital paid any attention to the fate of Dorado during the war.

Cabo Rojo, on the other hand, did not accept being bypassed by the military operations. In a session of the town council on August 14, 1898, the mayor, Manuel Montalvo Colberg, declared:

...as is well known, the troops of the United States Army, while marching from the city of San Germán to Mayagüez on the tenth of this month, had perforce to travel across the jurisdiction of this municipality, where they engaged the Spanish troops in a brief skirmish, which did not hinder the
Army's progress towards Mayagüez; and since that department is under the occupation and military domination of the American troops, Cabo Rojo being part of that department, in fact and legally Cabo Rojo is also under their control; and of course it therefore follows that this municipality and the areas under its jurisdiction be declared to belong to the United States of America.

The town council then declared that Cabo Rojo belonged to "the above-mentioned American nation." The mayor hoisted the flag of the United States from the balcony "to the cheers of 'Long live American Puerto Rico! Long live the United States of America! Long live Cabo Rojo!" Later, the mayor informed General Schwann of this self-proclaimed annexation.¹

It is interesting to re-encounter the effervescence, the rumors, and the expectations manifested in Puerto Rico during the summer of '98. "There are those who say our country will be called 'Richland.' That name shall soon be, under the American administration, richly deserved." That appeared in La Correspondencia of the 20th of August. But two days later, "a letter from St. Thomas claims that the Americans have signed up 15,000 individuals of the colored race to come and settle in Puerto Rico, offering them advantages that no one would disdain."

However, while the well-to-do segments of society were busy speculating about the future, buying English grammars and deliberating about changing the names of the streets, the farm workers and small landowners in the countryside were settling accounts with the past. To
understand fully what 1898 meant to Puerto Ricans one has to look beyond the epigrams of the elegant journalists of the day and beyond the solemn deliberations of town councils.

In 1898, the United States invaded a Puerto Rico that was seriously divided by social conflicts. The violent nature of the American intervention in the country also gave rise to violent expression of those pre-existing social conflicts.

This view of the immediate impact wrought by the invasion on the lives of Puerto Ricans runs counter to two quite different and naïve images of the year 1898 in Puerto Rico. One of these visions is shared by those who assume that Puerto Rico, before the invasion, was peaceful, prosperous and united. The other is favored by those who believe that backwardness, intolerance and oppression reigned before "the arrival of the Americans."

Both images of Puerto Rico previous to the Spanish-American War tend to promote moralizing interpretations of our collective past. But, a history of good guys and bad, of victims and saviors, does little justice to the need of every Puerto Rican to understand 1898.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Puerto Rico was in a stage of transition towards agrarian capitalism. The sugar industry had suffered a crisis at the end of the 1870’s and was still trying to recapture its former share of foreign markets. This is why the dominant elements of the sugar industry had become so acutely conscious of the island’s lack of political power. They were searching for a way to consolidate the manufacturing phase of sugar production in centralized sugar mills. The high cost of mechanization, however, as well as the stagnation in sugar
prices, lengthened the crisis in the sugar industry. From the beginning of the 1890's, this crisis had had repercussions on labor-management relations. Through a series of strikes the workers had demanded higher salaries in order to face the escalating cost of living, brought about by Spain's tariff policies.

In the face of pressures such as these, many sugar-cane growers preferred to convert their land to pasture. This option, of course, further complicated the situation for the sugar-cane workers, as they were displaced by cattle farming.

But if Puerto Rican sugar faced serious problems, worsened by its uncertain access to the American market, the situation appeared to be more promising in the coffee-growing zone.

Coffee production in the mountain ranges of Puerto Rico had been increasing by leaps and bounds since the 1870's, stimulated by the favorable prices that prevailed in foreign markets. Fertile and inexpensive land, new access roads to the interior, the relatively simple machinery in use then, and, above all, the enormously abundant, low-cost labor supply stimulated investment in coffee plantations.

The thriving coffee-growing centers in turn served as an incentive for the development of complementary activities in the mountain districts. Artisans and laborers from the coastal regions streamed towards the coffee-growing zones to take advantage of the boom.

This boom, though, had been due to the good prices commanded by Puerto Rican coffee in the European and Cuban markets until the middle of the 1890's. Toward the end of the decade, however, it became evident that Puerto Rican coffee would gradually be overtaken by its competitors.
and fall prey to a drop in prices in some recently-won markets. This was due to coffee production on a massive scale in other Atlantic regions. In order to meet this challenge, Puerto Rican coffee growers needed to increase both the quality and yield of their product, which called for even greater access to credit. Toward 1898, many coffee growers were very deeply in debt to the commercial firms that had lent them capital at high interest to build the coffee mills where the grain was processed, or to extend existing plantations.

Coffee production was widely distributed among plantations of all sizes. Market conditions, however, were beginning to point toward the advantage of concentrating the processing of the beans in those units that were equipped with the most efficient, fastest means of production. Though the large farms were not dominant in total volume of production, they were in the processing and marketing of coffee. The numerous small growers obtained credit from the hacienda owners' store and then settled their debts in coffee berries, that is, in unshelled coffee beans. It is not surprising, therefore, that the relationship between larger and smaller producers led to conflicts of interest.

Sugar and coffee dominated, but did not monopolize, the economy of Puerto Rico in the 1890's. Cattle farming, tobacco, subsistence crops and the cultivation of cash crops rounded out agricultural production. Although manufacturing played a very small part in the economy, the production of cigars and cigarettes in small and medium-sized shops and the numerous artisans' shops in the towns provided a living for many families. Other activities, such as fishing, salt production, and construction, rounded out the picture. It was clear, nevertheless, that
these were not enough to meet the people's need for gainful employment. Both sugar cane and coffee employed a maximum of people during the height of their harvest seasons, but, save for a few exceptions, they did not offer year-round employment. Tobacco crops were harvested in small lots and for this reason workers were needed to process the leaves only a few months per year. The government encouraged the construction of public works, particularly roads, during the months of reduced agricultural activity, but those projects often depended on the meager financing that the municipalities could provide.

The precarious financial situation of the workers often was evident in conflicts that the state sought to minimize. Strikes were forbidden by law. Employers could dismiss workers arbitrarily. This state of affairs was particularly acute in the coffee-growing zone, where workers often lived in houses built by the coffee grower. To be dismissed from a farm meant also to lose the roof over the family's head.

The incipient labor movement enjoyed greater strength among workers such as typesetters, whose numbers and capabilities were enough to stop production. In rural areas, collective efforts to improve conditions tended to take on the characteristics of uncoordinated protests. As often as not these were directed against the police, rather than the employers. The fact that the government chose to downplay the importance of these manifestations of unrest, and the lack of coordination and scant organization of these activities created an image—which even the most liberal newspapers favored—that the farm workers, the fíbaros, were incapable of fighting for their rights.

But in 1898-99 it was impossible to underrate the joint acts of
small landowners and farmworkers. This is a book about the armed bands, the groups of *tiznados*—so called because they blackened their faces with charcoal—or seditious parties which, in the months immediately after the American invasion of Puerto Rico in 1898, attacked first the farms and rural stores belonging to Spaniards, and later on those of native-born Puerto Ricans of European descent, or *criollos*.

The study is based upon the correspondence of the American military forces during 1898–99, on the records of those tried by military commissions for their participation in the armed bands, on the briefs of criminal complaints filed by the landowners who were the target of raids in the areas of Utuado, Adjuntas, Lares, Ciales and Arecibo, on documents filed in the old municipal archives of Utuado and Ponce, and on newspapers and other publications of the time.

The research was carried out at the General Archives of Puerto Rico, the National Archives in Washington, the Ponce Municipal Archives, the Puerto Rican Collections of the University of Puerto Rico in Río Piedras and Sacred Heart University in Santurce, and in the library of Northwestern University in Evanston.

This effort to approach our past with new questions is not isolated. From page one onwards, this book owes much to the historiographical discussions generated by many of my colleagues who are engaged in similar projects: Gervasio García, Andrés Ramos-Mattei, Blanca Silvestrini, Francisco Scarano, María de los Angeles Castro, Angel Quintero-Rivera, Juan José Baldrich,Arcadio Diaz-Quíñones, Rubén Dávila, Jorge Rodríguez-Beruff, Guillermo Baralt, Mariano Negrón, Rafael Ramírez, Lolita Luque, María Barceló-Miller, Carmen Raffucci, Francisco

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**ABBREVIATIONS**

- **Adjuntas Letters Sent**
  - NARA, RG 395, entry 5868, Adjuntas Letters Sent from May 24, 1899 to July 25, 1900.

- **AGPR**
  - Puerto Rico General Archives.

- **Aguadilla Letters Received**
  - NARA, RG 395, entry 5875, Letters Received Aguadilla, PR 1898 1899 1900 and Telegrams Received Aguadilla P. R. 1898-1900.

- **Aguadilla Letters Sent**

- **Aibonito Letters Sent**

- **AMP**
  - Ponce Municipal Archives.

- **Arecibo Letters Sent**
  - NARA, RG 395, entry 5890, Post of Arecibo,

CFRU

AGPR, Fondo de Obras Públicas, Catastro de Finca Rústicas.

FGEPR

Fondo de Gobernadores Españoles de Puerto Rico, Archivo Histórico.

General Orders

NARA, RG 395, entry 5841, General Orders and Circulars, Headquarters Department of Puerto Rico, Office of the Military Governor 1898 and 1899 (1 vol.)

Headquarters

NARA, RG 108, entry 122, Headquarters of the Army in the Field. Letters and Telegrams Received. Vols. 188-191.

Headquarters


Lares Letters Sent


Mayagüez Letters

NARA, RG 2 385 entry 5908, Mayagüez, P. R. + West. Dist. of P. R. Letters Received. Boxes 1-3.

Mayagüez Letter

NARA, RG 395, entry 5904, Post of Mayagüez. Letters Sent. 5 vols.

NARA

Washington, D. C. National Archives and Records Administration.

Padrón 1900

AGPR, Fondo de Obras Públicas, Propiedad Pública, Utuado, exp. 170, "Relación de los terratenientes que..."
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CHAPTER ONE

Rural Order in Puerto Rico in the 1890's

What was Puerto Rico like before the American invasion of 1898? In the twentieth century, this question, which sounds so natural, has been fraught with emotional connotations.

In view of the impact of the economic depression of the 1930's and the evident failure of the single-crop sugar economy, some of the country's thinkers have looked back upon events in the past --before the time of the invasion-- in search of a way out of the quagmire in which Puerto Rico found itself. The desire to return to a previous age, one that did not bear the mark of an economy based upon large, machine-powered sugar mills, induced some thinkers to theorize about an idyllic past: a flourishing country, not yet trampled upon by invaders, a country which produced a large variety of foodstuffs on small farms and bustling with the endeavor of thousands of independent artisans. Pedro Albizu-Campos, for example, put it this way:

The Yankee invasion found our people spread along fertile valleys in villages founded in healthful locations, and well
organized to render religious, social and public services...

When the Yankees forced their way into our ports, we enjoyed an educational system designed to forge a strong, forward-looking community. The sexes were educated separately, boys had male teachers and girls female teachers... Puerto Rico was the healthiest country in the Americas...

Puerto Rico was rich in name and fact; our Christian heritage had created a model family and a solid society; the nation appeared in the forefront of modern civilization...

In his reply Mr. Albizu-Campos explained that at the time of the American invasion, Puerto Rico was a creditor nation, that the Government of Puerto Rico and all the municipal governments had a surplus of gold in their coffers, that wealth was fairly distributed, that the poor of Puerto Rico were people who owned eight or ten acres of land and had two or three hundred pesos stored up in their wives' stockings... ¹

In that happy land there was no hunger, no social conflict, no overwhelming crime... and autonomy, the highest aspiration of the majority of Puerto Ricans, was about to be obtained, through negotiations with the government in Madrid.

That idyllic view of Puerto Rico in the 1890's has crumbled under the relentless scrutiny of such researchers as Gervasio Garcia, Andrés
Ramos-Mattei, Angel Quintero-Rivera, Laird Bergad, Guillermo Baralt, Lydia Milagros González, Carlos Buitrago, Luis Díaz and María Barceló-Miller. In the light of these findings, it is obvious that by 1898 both the living and working conditions of a great number of Puerto Ricans had undergone substantial modification, through processes such as the concentration of landholdings into sugar cane latifundia, the mechanization of the industrial phase of sugar production, the enlargement of cigar- and cigarette-producing workshops and the control of the harvesting, processing, selection and shipping of coffee beans. The economic and political structures of the time tended to favor the aspirations and interests of certain sectors, especially of the merchant class. Widespread dissatisfaction with the social order and the virulent nature of the social conflicts induced the authorities to employ mechanisms of repression and intimidation which, in any case, never managed to quell resistance.

The economic bases of rural order in the 1890’s

In the 1890’s Puerto Rico was an eminently agrarian country. Nearly eighty-five percent of the population lived outside of towns of over two thousand inhabitants. But the basic resource of agricultural production —land— was not equitably distributed. In the most fertile areas of the coastal lowlands, the tendency had been for land ownership to become concentrated in large estates. In the coffee-growing highlands of the Cordillera Central, small farms were numerous, but there were also large haciendas that encompassed almost
all of the acreage in the *barrios*, or municipal subdivisions, such as Rio Prieto in Yauco, Guilarte in Adjuntas and Jayuya Arriba, then part of Utuado. Municipalities such as Camuy and Corozal, where small properties were the rule, played a complementary role in their regional economies, which did not always guarantee solvency and adequate living conditions for small farmers.

Agrarian production was not oriented to the country's need for food but to the stimulus of foreign markets. By the 1880's, Puerto Rico did not produce enough to feed itself. Flour, corn, potatoes, herring, codfish, dried beef, salt pork, rice and many kinds of sausages and canned foods were imported from Spain and the United States. Agronomists who wrote in the 1880's and 1890's in Puerto Rico pleaded for a more appropriate balance of production that would fulfill the basic needs of the country better and would not be as vulnerable to the price fluctuations of international markets. The appeal of rising coffee prices and the weight of investments in sugar cane production were, however, more convincing than the warnings of agronomists. In municipalities such as Utuado, subsistence crops lost ground to coffee, even though the population had doubled since mid-century.

The majority of Puerto Ricans had no land of their own. In the coffee-growing highlands, the "landless" lived as *agregados* or service tenants on the farms. The owner would allow them to build huts with boards cut from highland palms, thatched with palm leaves, or else made tin-roofed houses or rooms in sheds available. Heads of families labored during the year for what were often token wages: at the turn of the century, 35 to 50 centavos of the local peso. They took staples on
credit from the hacienda store and paid with their labor. The debt was rarely satisfied. Only at coffee harvest time, when the whole tenant family participated, did they earn a higher income. That was when, as a rule, they purchased a change of clothes and the few utensils that equipped their households.

Wages tended to be better in the cane-growing zone than in the mountains, but only during harvest time, which at the most extended over a period of six months. The workers lived in the lands that bordered the towns and coastal villages, and during the off-season between harvests tried to make ends meet by engaging in complementary activities such as fishing, the burning of charcoal, public works projects and personal services.¹⁰

Although in theory most Puerto Ricans worked for wages, it was common practice both in the lowlands and in the mountains to take staples on credit and then settle the account with services rendered by the wage earner and the rest of his family. The granting of credit allowed the owners to have a pool of workers to draw from as needed during cultivation and harvest times. Until accounts were settled with a previous employer, debtors could not work elsewhere, or move to another municipality without due permission from the municipal authorities. The hacienda stores' account books carefully registered the workers' weekly debts and the partial payments they made with wages earned.¹¹

Small farmers were caught in a debt cycle analogous to the workers' situation.¹² They used their harvests to settle the debts incurred during the year, but oftentimes they still owed sums to the store owners in town or to neighboring farmers. Sometimes they worked for their
neighbors during harvests to supplement their income. To cultivate their own land, however, they depended on the labor of the whole family. The tendency was for several generations to live together on those small farms, and, as a result of close family ties, this pattern was reinforced by marriages between cousins. Even though small properties were vulnerable due to the economic difficulties of their owners, and to divisions among heirs, they usually remained stable, if not in the hands of the same families then within the same group of small-scale farmers. Ownership changed, but the small farms were not easily absorbed by the large properties unless the neighboring hacienda owner was particularly interested in that parcel of land. This coexistence is understandable if we bear in mind that the small farmer generally handed his harvest over to the hacienda owner in payment for the debts accumulated at the hacienda store, and served as an occasional or supplementary hired hand for harvest chores.

The financial position of medium and large farms was always precarious. Even though the hacienda owners kept their workers tied down through their debts, they in turn depended on the credit extended them by the merchants. The latter set the value of the harvests that the farmers turned over to them as debt payments, and also set the interest rates—which could fluctuate between 12 and 18 percent per year—until the final settlement was made. In this way, in doing business with farmers the merchants had three different sources of income: they set the price of the articles they sold to the farmers, they set the interest rate on the credit granted, and they determined the value of the crops they received in payment. The lack of banks, a need which was finally
met in the very decade of the 1890's, assured economic domination by the merchants, particularly in the highland municipalities.

The long chain of debtors did not end with the merchants, however. They in turn often purchased shipments of merchandise on credit from North American and Western European exporting firms. At this level also debts were settled with the shipment of harvested crops. And at this point the precarious situation of Puerto Rican agriculture became very obvious, because the prices paid for sugar and coffee, the two most important items in Puerto Rico's export commerce, were set not on the island but abroad.

In the 1880's the price paid for Puerto Rican sugar on its main market, the United States, remained unchanged at 2.9 cents per pound. But even the scant earnings that this price allowed Puerto Rican exporters were threatened during the 1890's as a result of tariff battles between the United States and Spain. In the case of coffee, prices fluctuated in the mid-1880's. Then, from 1887 to 1896, there was a memorable increase in price. The best-informed people in Puerto Rico were aware that the price rise of the 1890's would not last forever, because it was due to setbacks affecting Brazilian production. The difficulties faced by Brazilian coffee growers were the incentive that was encouraging other planters in Latin America and Africa. As a result, new production would soon flood the European market, the most important one for premium-quality Puerto Rican coffee.

Credit and marketing problems were not the only impediments to the development of single-crop farming in the coastal lowlands and the highlands of Puerto Rico. Hauling and transportation problems also
complicated matters for coffee growers. Towards the 1890's, the island's largest coffee-producing centers were located in the most recently populated zones. The great coffee plantations had been developed in inexpensive, virgin highlands. Particularly outstanding were the plantations in the most isolated barrios of Utuado (especially Jayuya), Las Marías, Maricao, Lares, Yauco, Adjuntas, Ciales, San Sebastián and Juana Díaz (Villalba.) Communications between the coffee-growing zone and the coast, however, were poor. As a rule, the municipalities of the interior depended upon just one or two roads for access to ports that were allowed to engage in foreign trade. Apart from these routes, the barrios were connected to the towns by means of trails. During the rainy season, travel on these paths became very difficult and load-carrying almost impossible. The farms that did not have enough animals of their own had to hire mule trains and pay mule drivers, whose skills commanded the sort of wages paid other specialized workers. Sometimes the owners of large farms provided these services for pay. 17 The roads were unsafe, not only because of frequent rains and flash floods, but also due to holdups and a whole variety of mishaps. The outcry for new roads produced numerous projects, but very little construction. Apart from the Central Highway, few roads were considered adequate and safe.

The highway from Cayey to Guayama, a project that dated from the 1850's, was finally completed in the 1890's. Other roads, planned from the time Governor Fernando de Norzagaray was in office (1852-55), were still in the design, consultation or initial stages. The road from Comerio to Bayamón, for example, had seen only two kilometers of
construction in the 30 years that plans and drawings had been sent back and forth to obtain Madrid's approval.18

On the coast, where sugar cane and cattle farming were located, the infrastructure was better than in the hinterlands. The main ports were connected by daily schooner service, as well as by other small vessels. By 1898, the train service that was supposed to circle the island had reached from Camuy to San Juan, from Ponce to Yauco, from Mayagüez to Aguadilla and from Río Piedras to Carolina.19 The coastal towns were connected by highways that, in general, were considered adequate.

The island's main artery, however, was the highway from San Juan to Ponce, by way of Río Piedras, Caguas, Cayey, Aibonito, Coamo and Juana Diaz.20 This Central Highway, which was wide, with gradual elevations and easy curves, solidly-built culverts and bridges and ditches that received constant maintenance from a system of road crews, made the crossing of the mountain range quite comfortable. Bundles of tobacco sent to the workshops in San Juan, Caguas and Cayey, mule trains transporting coffee down to the port of Ponce, loads of plantains and tubers, casks of molasses, and cattle destined for the slaughterhouses all flowed along this highway, which also saw the comings and goings of sales representatives, government officials, the mails, vendors, soldiers and volunteers sent to relieve detachments perpetually guarding the beaches, and itinerant workers in their never-ending hustle and bustle in search of a way to make a living. Ever since it was conceived as the main means of communication between San Juan and Ponce, this Central Highway fulfilled its double mission of facilitating the flow of merchandise and services between the two
coasts while guaranteeing the capital’s control over that area of the island which was politically and commercially most fully developed. For this reason, the Central Highway would become, in 1898, one of the principal military objectives of the United States Army.21

Living conditions

The precarious condition of Puerto Rico’s agrarian economy in the 1890’s was fully reflected in the living conditions of the masses. In the towns, where there were doctors, hospitals and pharmacies, public health had made notable progress, but the vast majority of the rural population depended upon the services of curanderos, or healers, who with their traditional herbal medicine had been able to provide for a wide range of ailments and illnesses in the preceding centuries. By the end of the 19th century, however, the development of single-crop agriculture brought with it the dispossession of the jíbaros. As a result, the daily diet became poorer, and contagious and other diseases, such as tuberculosis, anemia, bilharzia, typhoid fever and malaria proliferated. Folk medicine, with its teas, infusions, emetics, massages and poultices could not cope with the endemic diseases from which the emaciated population was suffering.

The greatest degree of deterioration in the quality of life of the workers occurred in the coffee-growing areas, which had been rapidly populated in the last decades of the 19th century. For example, mortality rates toward the end of the century reveal a desperate struggle for life in the district of Utuado.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mortality rate per thousand inhabitants</th>
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<td>1788</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1802</td>
<td>18.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>17.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1835</td>
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<td>1866</td>
<td>21.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
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Sources: Death registers of San Miguel Parish, Utuado, Demographic Registry, and population censuses at the Scarano Collection of the General Archives and other documentary sources.

The number of deaths in the crisis year of 1899 --the year of hurricane San Ciriaco-- is exceptional, but it illustrates how vulnerable the population was to the famines and epidemics that followed this disaster. The excessive dependence of coffee-growing municipalities on
the price that their harvests obtained abroad also kept the inhabitants hostage to the international price variations of this commodity. When the price of coffee began to fluctuate considerably in 1897, the insecurity of the highland population could only increase.

To sum up, the living conditions of the masses in the highlands of Puerto Rico towards the end of the 19th century were marked by the scourge of epidemic and endemic diseases, the harshness of plantation work, the decline in quality of the standard diet, and the economic insecurity caused by conditions in the production of coffee.

Facade of law and order in the 1890's

This worsening of living conditions in the countryside gave rise to acts of protest that were not always recognized as such by the press in Puerto Rico. It was necessary to preserve a façade of law and order to obtain credit in the United States and Europe. This became doubly necessary when the Cuban War of Independence broke out in 1895. Thus in its October 23, 1895, issue, the newspaper La Correspondencia posed the rhetorical question, "Cui Prodest (A Quién Aprovecha?)":

We have been informed by a trustworthy source that it is not just one letter (published in yesterday's paper) but several letters that businesses in this capital have received, from Europe and the United States, denying or limiting credit to firms that heretofore could be quite sure of obtaining it. The reason for this lack of confidence, as the letters themselves
indicate, is the current state of turmoil in this country, as judged by the news being published in some newspapers.

If we should lose the credit that we have striven so hard to protect, the financial survival of an essentially agricultural and commercial province such as ours would become absolutely impossible. 22

At approximately the same time, an issue of the newspaper *La Democracia* blamed diehard Spanish loyalists for "making up stories about separatist movements on this island which run counter to tradition, to history, and to the very nature of this country." The writer of the editorial was in agreement with his counterpart at *La Correspondencia* about the negative effect that rumors of insurrection had upon foreign credit. He quoted a letter from a foreign business firm to a Puerto Rican one in which it was stated that

while the present circumstances prevail, as described by some Puerto Rican newspapers, not only is it not desirable to broaden our dealings with those countries by opening new accounts but, we shall be forced to restrict our existing business dealings. 23

In this manner, the autonomist press stifled, or tried to stifle, the rumors of struggles for independence on the island, and persisted in
creating an illusion of order and serenity. However, when a journalist such as Evaristo Izcoa-Díaz, editor of *La Bomba* tried to discuss the country's deep unrest and lashed out at government officials, he was swiftly deprived of his freedom to warn others that such boldness would not be tolerated. Yet it was not conspiracies of a separatist nature that best illustrated the degree of resistance among the peasants and farm workers and the level of dissatisfaction with working and living conditions that prevailed on the island. In the final decade of the 19th century, the Puerto Rican labor movement was beginning to be a force to be reckoned with. Among typesetters, construction laborers, tobacco workers and people employed in the sugar-processing factories, associations were being founded, with the express purpose of redressing injustices, to the discomfiture of management, whether pro-Spain or autonomist. These cracks in the social edifice, built upon the weak foundations of a single-crop economy, could not be so easily disguised as the political aspirations of those who sought independence.

During the 1890's, a series of strikes and public demonstrations revealed the importance and strength of the workers in the towns. Legislation then in force, however, that made strikes illegal and allowed employers to settle many issues arbitrarily, still inhibited displays of this new-found strength. For example, on April 27, 1892, José Rodríguez-Fuentes closed his cigar factory, *Las Dos Antillas*. He gave his reasons for the firing of one hundred workers in the following release, which was published in the newspaper *La Correspondencia*:

> It is true, and I am very sorry, that the industry is going
through this temporary crisis because I have lost control of
the ship, and when the crew imposes its will upon the
captain, the vessel starts to take on water and it's every man
for himself; as for me, after forty-two years in these parts,
with a terrific struggle I have made it safely through, and my
children's daily bread is assured.

I cannot fight against such ingratitude without giving my
mind some rest in order to take up the struggle once again,
for if in five days I have cast out of my house seven thieves
whom I had taught to work --following the parable of Jesus
which says "by the sweat of thy brow thou shalt earn thy
daily bread"-- and if there is no respect for the man who
gives it and teaches how to earn it, then that is reason enough
to postpone for a time the reconstitution of *Las Dos Antillas*

God save me! For if I had sense enough to found this business,
and by dint of hard work raise it to its present position
--irrespective of the best Havana has to offer in its class and
development in the art of cigar production-- I cannot be
blamed if the workers do not measure up to the demands of
the job and poverty rears its ugly head... 26

Workers did not enjoy the same access to the national press of
Puerto Rico as their employers. Slowly, as they warmed to the battle,
they found the strength to demand redress publicly and consistently, and
as they made converts to the cause of organized labor, they began to publish their own newspapers and pamphlets. In this manner, literate workers in cities and towns started permanent organizations to obtain their basic rights.

Rural order in the 1890's

In the countryside, however, where most of the workers lived, there were fewer possibilities of creating lasting instruments to defend the workers' interests. Still, it would be naïve to assume that these difficulties in establishing the means for collective struggle totally prevented shows of opposition.

Delgado-Passapera has reviewed the cases against farmworkers who were arrested in Utuado in 1891 and in Arroyo in 1895 for acts that were classified as subversive or related to the boycotts against Spanish businesses in 1887. The interesting fact about both groups of persons tried is that neither seems to have had ties to political groups from the dominant sectors of society. Most of those arrested had no direct, provable ties to Puerto Rican national political organizations. They appear to have belonged to local organizations designed to resist the economic domination of peninsular Spaniards.

On a much more spontaneous level there were many cases, recorded at the time in the Puerto Rican press and in court proceedings, of individual acts of protest. For example, according to *El Buscapié*, the following incident took place in Toa Alta on September 24, 1895:
...emboldened by drink, a farm worker was making crude and inappropriate remarks about a roast pig --a sow-- that a group of volunteer soldiers was going to eat after finishing their target practice. The unit commander sent the laborer to jail with two of the volunteers, who were armed. It is said that once on the road a neighbor by the name of Francisco Martínez intercepted them and requested that they let the man go free, since he had acted under the influence of drink.

...The fact is that a shot rang out and Martínez was killed and the man under arrest, Plácido Beltrán, was wounded. He did not die because the bullet hit the blade of a knife he carried inside his shirt.28

In this type of incident, stories of personal animosities tended to become mixed up with the participants' notions of political order. In particular the Guardia Civil --the Civil Guard, or Spanish state police-- intimidated people, provoked conflicts and on some occasions, armed confrontations. The fine line that separated incidents related to public order from incidents related to the native-born population's rejection of the Spaniards became quite blurred, especially in the minds of the common people.

Beyond these clashes with the authorities, there were numerous incidents of gang robbery, assault and murder in the countryside. The frequency of these crimes proves how precariously the authorities held power in the rural areas, and the high level of violence that social
struggles had reached by then. This is why, in the 1890's, in documentation related to hacienda owners and rural merchants, there is copious reference to shotguns, mastiffs, fences, enclosures, padlocks, locks, bolts, strong hinges, and even private telephones to link country and town. And this is also why so much stress falls on administrators, stewards, bosses, overseers and superintendents, who bridge the enormous gaps that were developing between the powerful and their peons. *La Charca*, written by Manuel Zeno-Gandía, paints a vivid picture of that world of animosity, distrust and human suffering that characterized the coffee-growing highlands during the boom times. The bloodiness of the attacks carried out by seditious parties during 1898-99 is not surprising to anyone who has read or examined criminal court documents of the previous decade.

The countryside was not immune to negative influences from abroad. In November 1895, *El Buscapié* reported the discovery of "a secret society in Juana Díaz for the promotion of the deadly vice of morphine consumption," in which minors were given injections. Presumably, elsewhere on the island there were other centers that catered to morphine addicts.

In these and other circumstances the state demonstrated that it had insufficient control over the territory it sought to continue governing.

*Two mentalities: the harmless jibaro and the dangerous jibaro*

If the State barely managed to govern the countryside, it is not surprising that each of the dominant classes tried to explain this
deficiency in ways that were consistent with their political sympathies. For certain sectors closest to the Spanish regime, disorder in the countryside was evidence of the natives' inability to govern themselves: the *jibaro*, of mixed race, illiterate, superstitious and indolent, erratic, taciturn and given to unexpected violence, needed to be compelled, once and for all, to accept the discipline of salaried labor. What the countryside needed was more policing and supervision. Only thus would the necessary order prevail on the island. It goes without saying that many who were unconditionally committed to Spanish rule shared this line of thinking.

The attitude of the *criollo* sectors that favored autonomy was much more patronizing. The *jibaro* was ignorant, but educable. His crimes were a reflection of his abject poverty. He was illiterate, and thus incapable of acts of political subversion. Basically harmless, a *jibaro* would threaten the life of another person only when in the grips of desperation. More a slave of his ignorance than a master of his fate, the anemic *jibaro* was the dead weight that slowed the country's progress. This interpretation of the life of mountain folk did not attribute to them either political initiative or social conscience.

The year 1898 would reveal a *jibaro* that was far different from the stereotypes developed by the dominant classes in San Juan and Ponce. For a period of time, the rural order that heretofore had been guaranteed by the owners of large plantations, but subjected to their arbitrariness and disruptions, would lack the backing of the police power that had flowed from the cities. Puerto Rico was to discover to what degree country folk had their own views about the social order.
CHAPTER TWO

The Invaders and the Invaded

The year 1898 began with a very long drought. By mid-May, El País lamented: "No matter how you look at it, the weather is getting worse. It has not rained at all: February, March and April, and now May, so far, have only brought a searing sun, together with strong south winds that scorch the grasses and are even harder on the crops than the sun."\(^1\) It finally rained during the last ten days of May. From Ponce the news was: "It has rained a great deal in this area, so agricultural activities are on the rise." From Utuado it was reported that "We have been favored with rains lately, farmers are delighted and minor crops are being planted." Shortly after, the news from Arecibo was that "farmers are happy because the heavens have taken pity on them."\(^2\)

And rain it did. By July, the amount of rain was beginning to cause alarm. In San Juan, La Unión complained:

The weather is still too wet: it has rained off and on for three days and three nights. Last night and this morning there been long, heavy downpours. At 8 o'clock, the torrent of
water that ran down Tanca and other streets in the southern section of San Juan towards the Spanish Gate was so strong that it eroded the soil and poured into the Ubarri streetcar station, flooding the station coffee shop. And it seems that the storm will continue.  

A month later, it was the Americans who were complaining about the rain. Carl Sandburg, a private in the 6th Illinois Volunteer Regiment, would recall in his old age the incessant rain that had bogged down the march and made sleeping difficult during his campaign days in Puerto Rico:

> We had set up our pup tents, laid our ponchos and blankets on the ground, and gone to sleep in a slow drizzle of rain. About three o'clock in the morning a heavy downpour of rain kept coming. We were on a slope and the downhill water soaked our blankets. We got out of our tents, wrung our blankets as dry as we could and threw them with ponchos over our shoulders. Then a thousand men stood around waiting for daylight hoping the rain would let down.  

First the rain was an adversary and then an accomplice in General Schwann's military operations in western Puerto Rico. No sooner was the armistice declared than both Americans and Spaniards, within their respective territories, had to turn their attention to problems of rivers overflowing their banks, impassable roads, and illnesses related to the
floodwaters. In its August 20 issue, La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico quoted an unidentified local daily:

Due to this season’s abundant rains, the predominant sickness is malaria; there have also been a number of cases of influenza, fortunately in its benign form. Gastrointestinal diseases have become more widespread in the last few days, with cases tending toward glandular congestion of the digestive system. There are also neuroses of all types and manifestations, all of them emotional responses to the circumstances.6

If not the neuroses, at least the rains seemed to paralyze the country. On October 10, El País stated that “because of the excessive rains of the last few days, the train tracks near Manati have been displaced by the water. Until yesterday, train service to Arecibo had not resumed.”7 So between downpours the American military forces occupied Puerto Rico and their Spanish counterparts bid adieu to the island.

The war: from April to July

When the Spanish-American War broke out, Puerto Rico was just beginning to enjoy home rule under its Charter of Autonomy. Puerto Rican newspapers had in fact been paying more attention to the political changes related to the new constitution than to events leading to the
declaration of war between Spain and the United States. Only the economic pressures generated by the imminent war forced journalists to turn their attention to what was happening beyond the mouth of San Juan Bay. A correspondent from Vega Baja had the following to say in the April 17 issue of the Mayagüez newspaper La Bruja:

The election period has come and gone, and our town has returned to its monotonous lifestyle, and I say monotonous, because it is completely dead. Agriculture is paralyzed. Thousands of people are jobless. Businesses have retrenched, and the price of staples is sky-high. Hunger is already knocking at our doors, and the only voice heeding its call is want. Heaven help this country! 8

The Spanish government harbored no illusions about what could be expected should Puerto Rico become a theater of war. The island, however, was overflowing with patriotic prose. La Bruja, in Mayagüez, complained in May that with the war "a swarm of bad poets has invaded even the darkest corners of this country. Would-be bards spring up everywhere, singing the praises of the war, of Spain, of May 2nd, and of their old man's saber." By way of proof, it quoted a few verses that had appeared in La Correspondencia, which started like this:
Arrived at last the longed-for day
Courageous sons of noble Spain
Yankee daring ye shall abate
Which has provoked your rightful rage.  

With the inflated verse, rumors proliferated about battles, bombings, fleet movements, secret pacts, world wars:

My uncle knows, always from official sources, where the warships are; what they lack, what they have too much of, what their admirals' intentions are, what exercises they carry out, what they will do next... Ships have been sighted behind Desecheo Island? He knows which ones they are. Has a lady clad in black gone to City Hall and spoken with the Mayor? He knows the reason for her call, and how that meeting is related to the conflict with the Yanks.  

The offers to fight to defend Spanish nationality to the last drop of blood were truly impressive. On the 25th of April, El País reported that San Juan "presents a delightful military aspect... every patriotic young person has turned into a resolute soldier; ladies from all classes have become members of the Red Cross... and in this atmosphere, our young ladies go to normal school to take their exams, and children go to school happily, eager to be commended for their dedication."  

Virgilio Ramos-Vélez, of Manatí, went to San Juan "to offer his
services, those of his sons and of two hundred available men, representing that town's pro-Spanish committee.\textsuperscript{12} A Local Defense Committee was organized in Utuado:

We have had the immense satisfaction of seeing this town pulling together... forming one solid mass, all minds thinking as one, and all hearts beating in unison, full of enthusiasm because of the love they profess for the unvanquished Spanish nation, our true motherland. Of all the great and important gatherings that have taken place in this town to discuss the present circumstances and to take the necessary steps to defend the integrity of the territory and the area, the greatest and most important gathering turned out to be the one that took place last night... the people, cheerful and enthusiastic, responded to the patriotic exhortations of its orators... All the inhabitants of the city at the center of the island have signed up as soldiers with the Local Defense Committee, formed under the leadership of the lawyer \textit{Señor} Casalduc, to defend the interests of the upstanding Spanish citizens of Utuado in general.\textsuperscript{13}

Admiral Sampson's bombardment of San Juan toward the middle of May barely interrupted this collective excitement. Many people seemed convinced that the cannonfire from El Morro had inflicted severe losses, such as the destruction of Sampson's best battleship, and that hundreds of his men had died... but it was obvious that Sampson's blockade had a
stranglehold on the country. A lack of basic commodities --which the single-crop economy had turned into imported goods-- was soon to be felt. The municipalities began to regulate the sale of such basic foodstuffs as tubers and plantains, which now became the focus of an attention they had not received in a long time. Hunger and dissatisfaction started to proliferate in the countryside.

**Getting ready for the invasion**

In May, when steps were being taken in Washington to prepare for the invasion of "Number Two" --the military high command's preferred euphemism for Puerto Rico-- justifying the projected invasion was the last thing on their minds. On May 9, Philip Hanna, United States Consul in Puerto Rico, now working out of St. Thomas, informed the State Department in Washington that there were only some 4,600 regular soldiers in Puerto Rico: 2,000 in San Juan, 1,000 in Ponce, 1,000 in Mayagüez and about 600 distributed among the rest of the municipalities. There were also about 7,000 volunteers. Hanna continued:

I am still of the opinion that Puerto Rico should be taken and held as a coaling station, thus supplying our Navy and cutting off Spain. In order to accomplish this we should land in Puerto Rico not less than 10,000 men. Let them land at Ponce or Fajardo, or some other port, and march through the Island to meet the American fleet at San Juan. Let the fleet knock down the fortifications there which are the only ones on the
Island, and our land forces of 10,000 can hold the island forever... From Ponce to San Juan there is the finest road in the whole West Indies, and an army could march across to San Juan with no bad roads to interfere.\textsuperscript{14}

Henry Whitney, a lieutenant attached to the newly-created Military Intelligence Service, visited the island in May posing as a British seaman, to observe the condition of the forces that the government of Spain could rely upon in Puerto Rico.\textsuperscript{15} Upon his return on June 9, he reported that the regular troops amounted to about 8,000, mostly deployed for the defense of San Juan, that there were some 12,000 auxiliary troops, but that everywhere on the island it was strongly doubted that when the time came, the island-born volunteers would back the Spaniards in battle.\textsuperscript{16}

Whitney noticed that it was likely that armed groups of Puerto Ricans would support efforts to eject the Spanish from the island, and he pointed out the advantages of various points around the island as possible initial bases of operation.

Major General Nelson A. Miles, 59, was nominally commanding general of the United States Army. Born into a family of smallholders in Massachusetts, Miles had become a soldier during the Civil War. At age 22 he had recruited his own company of volunteers, but the Governor, instead of naming him captain, had given him the rank of lieutenant, placing a political protegé in command. Infuriated by this injustice, the young Miles arranged a transfer to another company. Due to this painful experience, Miles would always be wary of politicians and of military
officers who had obtained their commissions through patronage. In the midst of the invasion of Puerto Rico, he brought about the resignation of the colonel and other officers of the 6th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment for irresponsibility in one of the battles following debarkation in Guánica. In telegrams sent at the time to the Governor of Massachusetts, the rancor of that incident in his youth was still palpable.

At the end of the Civil War, Miles held the rank of brigadier general of volunteers. He decided to remain in the Regular Army with the rank of colonel during the years following the war. He married one of the daughters of Judge Sherman, of Ohio, one of whose brothers was General Sherman and another the Republican politician John Sherman. The latter eventually became a senator from Ohio and the first Secretary of State in President McKinley's administration. His family connections did not prevent his promotions from being few and far between while he remained in the West fighting Indians and avoiding a desk job in Washington. Under President Cleveland, Miles finally attained the highest possible rank for a career officer in those days, that of Commanding General of the U.S. Army. Miles had been expected to be influential during McKinley's presidency, since his wife's uncle was Secretary of State, but Secretary Sherman had to resign when he disagreed with the interventionist turn that McKinley's policy towards Cuba was taking. Miles was no longer part of the inner circle of advisers to the President. As a result, he had very little influence over the military policies that the United States adopted in its war against Spain. His standing was further complicated by the outbreak of the
Spanish-American War, which brought to the fore not only the generational struggle that was taking place in the Army between those officers who remained from the Civil War and the new cadres trained in the Military Academy, but also the institutional struggles between the Army and the Navy.

Miles was put in charge of the preparations for the Cuban expedition, but he soon found himself trapped between the insistent directives of President McKinley, on the one hand, who wanted a quick solution to the war before the November congressional elections, and cumbersome procedures needed to requisition and transport war matériel, to train volunteer troops, and to organize a comprehensive military plan, on the other. The difficulties came to appear insurmountable. Trains arrived in Tampa crammed with boxes whose contents were not labeled. Tens of thousands of volunteers from eastern cities, who had never in their lives held a rifle or slept in open fields, complained to their congressmen and journalists about everything. Their protests ran the gamut from the bite of southern mosquitoes to the taste (and very soon, the stench) of canned meat. Worse problems were soon felt, such as the proliferation of typhoid fever, the intervention of politicians in decisions pertaining to internal military organization, and the breakdown of discipline among volunteer troops.

On the 6th of June, the former consul of the United States in Puerto Rico, Hanna, sent the Secretary of State a telegram from Saint Thomas. He urged that the expeditionary forces to be sent to Puerto Rico consist of no less than 25,000 men. Hanna feared that the government would underestimate the number of Spanish forces in Puerto Rico. Miles for his
part aspired to command personally an expedition made up of between 15,000 and 30,000 men to conquer and occupy "Number Two." The American press, however, speculated that the expedition would be commanded by General John A. Brooke.23

Once the expedition set sail for Santiago de Cuba on June 12, Miles turned his attention to the plans for the invasion of Puerto Rico. The difficulties that the American forces encountered in Cuba were duly taken into account: Miles did not want a reprise of the errors committed in Oriente Province, which had so captured the attention of the press. It was imperative that the troops undertake the campaign well equipped, with sufficient support from navy transports, artillery, the siege train for the eventual capture of San Juan, and medical personnel and equipment.

One point that turned out to be crucial to Miles' planning was the health of the members of the invading force. A repetition of the many casualties that yellow fever had caused in Cuba could not be allowed. Since it was not yet known that the illness was transmitted by a mosquito, Miles took all conceivable precautions so his men would not carry the infection with them to Puerto Rico.24

When it became obvious that the city of Santiago was going to fall, Miles took an important decision for the development of the Puerto Rico campaign. In view of the fact that so many regular troops in the Cuban expedition were suffering the ravages of yellow fever, he decided to take no men who had participated in the Oriente Province campaign. That is, he would use fresh troops--but this meant that most of the expeditionary force would be made up of volunteers. The majority of the
The use of volunteers for the Puerto Rico campaign was politically expedient for President McKinley and the Republicans in power. Fed by the yellow press, the popularity of the war generated demands for citizen participation in the triumphs that were expected. All available information on the number of Spanish troops on the island coincided in that these were not sufficient to resist the projected American invasion. The blockade, destruction and capture of the Spanish fleet in Santiago de Cuba made it impossible for Spain to send last-minute reinforcements. It was expected that Spain would sue for peace as soon as Santiago fell, thus avoiding the loss of Puerto Rico and the Philippines, since the separation of Cuba seemed inevitable. Therefore, a military campaign in Puerto Rico promised to be a short and easy one, exactly what was needed to fulfill the state regiments' expectation of participation and glory. The young volunteers, who had grown up hearing tales of glory from the Civil War, were eager for the chance to emulate their veteran fathers. The war was coming to an end, however, and most of them had not seen active service. In order to appease the politicians from the northern states -- whose support was considered crucial in the Congressional campaign of 1898 -- the Administration was trying to provide an opportunity for the volunteers from those states to prove their mettle and so get the satisfaction they desired.

The use of predominantly inexperienced, volunteer troops in the Puerto Rico campaign, however, carried its risks. Many of the soldiers

regular troops were either in Cuba, on the way to the Philippines or Hawaii, or else stationed at the various bases in the United States that were considered vital to the security of the nation.
who had signed up for adventure in the war had scant military training. How they would react in actual combat remained to be seen. A high number of casualties among the volunteers would undoubtedly lead to political complications for Congress in an election year. Miles would have to rely more on the quantity than on the quality of his troops, and on his military hardware. It was imperative, therefore, to avoid direct confrontation with the Spanish forces. The idea was to make the enemy yield ground, to overwhelm them by the sheer force of numbers in the flanking operations. In the early years of the Civil War, encirclement had been one of the customary deployment tactics for inexperienced northern troops, when faced with veteran Confederate soldiers. The commanding general’s expertise would be very useful.

Miles had agreed with Secretary of War Alger and with Admiral Sampson, who was in command of the naval forces in the Caribbean, that the United States troops would debark in Fajardo. From there, covered by the fleet’s cannon power, the troops would march west to lay siege to and take the capital. When San Juan had fallen, the rest of the island would be occupied.26

Once on the high seas, Miles changed his plan and decided to invade through Guánica. San Juan, instead of being the first objective, would be the last. Several interpretations have been given to this decision, and it is quite likely that Miles carefully weighed most of the reasons that have been suggested for his change of mind. The one he would eventually present most vigorously, however, does not seem convincing. He alleged that knowledge of the projected landing in Fajardo had become widespread in Washington and that the Spanish were aware of the plan.
For weeks, however, the press had been debating the possible landing sites in Puerto Rico, and had been insistently mentioning some point on the south coast near Ponce, together with the Fajardo option. On the very eve of the invasion, *The New York Times* indicated on the front page that the chosen site was Guánica. The surprise value in selecting Guánica was quite relative.

Perhaps the choice that Miles made had more to do with the rivalry between the Army and the Navy. Up to that moment, the greatest glories of the war belonged to the Navy. The victories obtained by Dewey in Manila and Schley at the Bay of Santiago, as well as Sampson's maneuvers in Cuban and Puerto Rican waters, had captured the attention of the press. To march to San Juan under the protection of the Navy, would, therefore, not contribute to the prestige of the Army or its commander. In any case, the intervention of the warships' guns would be necessary to destroy San Juan's waterfront fortifications.27

On the other hand, an invasion through Guánica would have the advantage of delaying an encounter between Spanish and American troops, which would allow the untested volunteers to develop some confidence in their fighting ability. An added advantage of the south coast was that it would make it possible to achieve the occupation of the most populous municipality on the island -- Ponce-- as well as the occupation of the most vital centers of economic activity, in a relatively short time. It was known that the zone was not well defended. On the south coast, it was to be expected that, in municipalities such as Yauco, there would be support from *criollos* who were known to be averse to the Spanish regime.28
We could speculate, within the context of the events that in fact took place in Cuba and the Philippines, that Miles was aware of the political advantages that the United States would derive from occupying all the seats of municipal power that the Spaniards vacated. As a first military objective, a protracted siege of San Juan would have resulted in bands of island-born civilians dislodging the Spanish authorities and taking over the towns farthest from the capital. The eventual transition from a provisional criollo government to a military one would have been more difficult.

That, of course, is to think the historically unthinkable: What would have happened if...? Miles decided to attack through Guánica and the events that followed proved that he chose the most appropriate option for the annexationist interests of the United States.

_The invasion_

On the morning of July 25, the ship "Gloucester", a privately-owned vessel that had been converted to military use, sent a broadside of grapeshot over the peaceful settlement of Guánica. A launch was then lowered and 30 men were taken ashore. After taking down the Spanish flag from the Customs house, and exchanging fire with the few volunteers who were defending the vicinity of the port, they erected a barricade of barbed wire at the end of the only street in Guánica.29

Then, following Miles' plans step by step, the invading units --the 6th Massachusetts and 6th Illinois Regiments-- went ashore, drove out the scant armed resistance that they encountered and quartered
themselves to wait for military supplies to be brought ashore. The night of July 26, a few nervous soldiers, alarmed because a horse had entered their camp, woke up practically the entire contingent, including General Miles, with gunfire.\(^{30}\)

Even if the invasion had its farcical moments, it did not deviate from the rigidly precise course that Miles had set. On July 27, Yauco was occupied without difficulty. The invaders installed a new mayor, who welcomed them with a proclamation that the editorial writer for *The New York Times* was to call comical for its marked obsequiousness.\(^{31}\) The son of the late president Hayes hoisted the American flag over City Hall.

The invading forces traveled from Guánica to Ponce by sea. It was in Ponce that the fate of the war in Puerto Rico was sealed. From a strictly military point of view, the Spanish high command could have sacrificed Ponce to retard the advance of the invading troops and deny the United States the enormous advantage that the infrastructure of the port and the city had to offer. Destroying Ponce, however, to slow down the progress of the invasion by seven or ten days would have amounted to an invitation to general insurrection in that city and throughout the island. The innumerable appeals to the authorities from civic and consular leaders won out and the city escaped becoming a battleground. The Spanish forces retreated in a hasty but orderly manner, by the Central Highway. The Spanish had taken the crucial decision of the war: the greatest battle, unless the armistice that everyone expected occurred first, would take place on the slopes of the Asomante.\(^{32}\)

Neither the Americans nor the *criollos* were hoping for decisive
On July 30, the mayor of Guayama sent a three-person delegation with a message for the officer in command of the United States forces in Ponce, General Wilson, saying that the garrison of one hundred Spanish soldiers had departed the city at dawn, but it was feared they would return to set it afire. Could the American forces protect Guayama? Wilson communicated with Miles in writing about this matter, and Adjutant General Gilmore made this notation in pencil on the letter: "Seen by General Miles. Will be attended to in a few days. July 31/98 J.C.G."³³

The occupation of Guayama was an intriguing possibility, because it opened the way to advance towards Cayey, in which case the Spanish defense of the Asomante would become academic. As soon as General Brooke arrived in Puerto Rico with the troops he had been assigned, Miles put into practice this change in his plan to proceed by way of the Central Highway. On August 1, the "Gloucester" repeated in Arroyo the landing operation first tried out in Guánica.³⁴ Two of the ships that carried the horses, artillery and telegraph equipment, however, ran aground in Ponce and Guánica. The delay allowed the Spaniards to entrench their troops between Cayey and Guayama, in the heights of Guamaní. Even so, Brooke occupied Guayama on August 5, after a slight skirmish with the Spanish forces. On August 12, when he was about to launch an offensive on the slopes of Guamaní, word arrived of the armistice arranged between Spain and the United States.³⁵

On August 1, Clotilde Santiago, a Coamo merchant and owner of vast tracts of land --whose son Florencio Santiago had become mayor of Coamo under the banner of the Unconditionally Spanish Party-- met in...
Ponce with General Stone, who was in command of the city. Santiago proposed to sell the Army 500 head of cattle in Santa Isabel, and suggested that the troops detour through Salinas to take the old town of Coamo without having to test the Spanish defenses on the Central Highway. He reported that there were 1,000 Spanish troops in Coamo and 4,000 in Aibonito. While the father was conducting business with the Americans, the son was playing host in Coamo to the commander of the Spanish troops. Later La Correspondencia would report, with its characteristic unctiousness, that "The only municipal employees who remained firmly at their posts when the Americans marched into Coamo were the Mayor, don Florencio Santiago, and the Secretary, don Manuel Márquez, who are still discharging their duties."37

On the Central Highway, the Spaniards put up a brief but vigorous resistance to the enemy forces advancing from Juana Diaz. Once Coamo was secured, Wilson gathered troops and matériel, and pretended to proceed towards Aibonito, while in reality giving Brooke time to advance from Guayama to Cayey. The plan called for Brooke to occupy Cayey, forcing the Spanish to relinquish Aibonito, and once this was accomplished, Wilson's and Brooke's columns were to move forward together toward Caguas and San Juan.38

At the same time, Miles was planning to dislodge the scant Spanish forces that were left in the central and western parts of the island. General Roy Stone, together with some 30 soldiers, mostly from the signal corps, and several dozen criollos who were anxious to put an end to Spanish domination, took possession of Adjuntas on August 2. The following morning they descended to take Utuado. Stone had orders to
open up the road between Adjuntas and Utuado. A brigade commanded by General Henry was to march down that road on its way to Arecibo. The most violent encounters between American and Spanish forces took place in western Puerto Rico. The three regular regiments that participated in the invasion saw action under General Schwan. The town of San Germán had lived through days of anxiety as it experienced successive occupations by bands of civilians and Spanish troops which had returned. The mayor contacted the Americans at Yauco and urged them to seize San Germán forthwith, to free the city from the anarchy it seemed destined to suffer. Troops from General Schwan's brigade occupied the town on August 10. From there they continued on to Mayagüez in pursuit of the Spanish troops.

The latter had few alternatives. If they remained in Mayagüez, they ran the risk of being trapped between the vessels of the United States fleet and the American troops. On the other hand, bands of criollos were beginning to spring up in the western area, with the purpose of harassing the Spanish soldiers. The option they did have was to regroup in Lares all the manpower available in the west and to delay General Schwan's combat operation, for they expected that Schwan, after ridding the west of Spanish troops, would march towards Arecibo to join with General Henry's forces. The Spanish engaged the Americans in battle near Hormigueros, and after sustaining the loss of one man and nine wounded, they retreated toward Las Marias. Schwan then occupied Mayagüez without opposition.

The Spanish were forced to fight under disadvantageous conditions on August 13, after the armistice had been decreed, because the Guaso
river was swollen. The combatants did not receive the news on time. This battle turned out to be the most important one of the whole campaign. Spanish casualties amounted to five dead and 14 wounded. Fifty-six men either were taken prisoner or surrendered. When word of the armistice reached him, Schwan was planning to eliminate the rest of the Spanish forces in the area and extend his sphere of action toward Lares and Aguadilla. His casualties in the campaign were one dead and 16 wounded.41

Between July 25 and August 12, the military operations of the troops under Wilson, Brooke and Henry had aimed at the flank of the scant regular Spanish forces on the south side of the island. The support that the Puerto Rican population gave the invaders was crucial. Auxiliary forces made up of men on horseback, volunteers on foot, mule drivers, suppliers, guides, interpreters, harbor pilots and stevedores carried out vital functions that resulted in a smooth military operation. Puerto Rican youths, such as Carlos Patterne and Rafael Larroca, carried out dangerous missions behind Spanish lines in order to obtain military intelligence for the Americans; but, above all, it was the enthusiasm of the throngs in town after town that gave a feeling of confidence and security to the invading troops, and convinced the Spaniards they could not retain the island.42

*How the invasion was interpreted at the time*

The resounding success of the American invasion required explaining, since it stood in such stark contrast to the bitterness and
anguish of the expedition to Santiago de Cuba. Ever since, the events of 1898 in Puerto Rico have seen no shortage of interpreters. What had happened and why were twin questions whose answers were soon to be framed in such a way that the one depended upon the other.

It is interesting to note the substantial shift that occurred in the American interpretation of the events of 1898 in Puerto Rico. The newspaper account that prevailed at first, as disseminated by the Associated Press, was that the invasion had been a "picnic" because Puerto Ricans had enthusiastically welcomed the troops that came to release them from the yoke of Spanish bondage. The towns asked to be occupied quickly. The Spanish, realizing they lacked support, retreated to entrenched positions in the mountains of Aibonito and Guayama. Even though the American military forces time and again gave proof of the inexperience of its volunteers, they managed to advance easily, with the cooperation of the Puerto Rican people who showed them the way, provided them with supplies, and made suitable places for setting up camp available to them. The success of the invasion was due to the cooperation of the criollos and the vulnerability of the Spanish forces, rather than the thrust of the Federal Army.43

This interpretation, of course, did not satisfy the generals. For them the success of the invasion was due to the painstaking care that Miles and his officers had taken to plan all the important aspects of the expedition to "Number Two." If the invasion had been a "picnic," it was due to the military genius of its organizers.44

Richard Harding Davis, the well-known novelist and war correspondent, who had been one of the two journalists present during
the first wave of the invasion, and therefore, responsible for the initial interpretation, did not take long to adopt the version that favored officialdom. By Christmas, 1898, when the market for books about the recently-concluded war was at its peak, Davis had a book about his war experiences ready. In it, Miles and the other officers received all the credit for the success of the invasion of Puerto Rico:

In comparison to the Santiago nightmare, the Porto Rican campaign was a *fete de fleurs*. Porto Rico was a picnic because the commanding generals would not permit the enemy to make it otherwise. The Spaniards were willing to make it another nightmare --they were just as ready to kill in Porto Rico as in Cuba-- but our commanding general in Porto Rico was able to prevent their doing so... The reason the Spanish bull gored our men in Cuba and failed to touch them in Porto Rico was entirely due to the fact that Miles is an expert matador...

This is not saying that it was not a picnic, but explaining why it was so...

An eyewitness of both campaigns must feel convinced that the great success of the one in Porto Rico was not due to climatic advantages and the cooperation of the natives, but to good management and good generalship.45

Some of the soldiers that took part in the marches and countermarches of the campaign had a different story to tell. For them,
military organization had been criminally deficient. The lack of adequate supplies, the time it took to debark in Arroyo, negligence in the health services, the insistence that heavy uniforms be worn in the tropical summer, slow communications, the lack of experience of volunteer officers and pointless marches had been the hallmarks of the military campaign in Puerto Rico. In September, soldiers from the 3rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment, quartered in Guayama and eager to return to the States, declared to *The Chicago Daily News* correspondent that the hardships of the campaign had been the harsh camp life and the myriad diseases for which the Army had hardly prepared. One of the regiment's doctors was court-martialed for hospitalizing what was deemed to be an excessive number of soldiers. He was acquitted, which apparently angered General Grant, who was in command of that brigade. Soldiers of the 3rd Illinois also revealed to the press the arbitrariness of the higher officers, as well as the incredible shortage of rations, which impelled *The Chicago Daily News* to proclaim on its front page: "Starvation prevails in 3d Illinois at Guayama, Porto Rico."46

Of course, the soldiers tended to exaggerate their capacity to endure hardship. Corporal Charles B. Wagner, of the 3rd Illinois "D" Company, in a letter written to his mother August 10, spun a mythical tale that was not backed by the official documentation of his brigade:

We were under fire all day and all night and all we had to eat in the twenty-four hours was two oranges apiece... Our regiment's loss is twenty-nine killed and fourteen wounded. In one of the towns we captured I spotted a Spaniard on top of
a three-story house aiming at one of our officers. I 'nailed' him in the head and he fell down into the street.\textsuperscript{47}

In fact, the 3rd Illinois did not lose a single man in action in Puerto Rico, although it did suffer many casualties due to typhoid fever. When Carl Sandburg wrote his reminiscences of the efforts of "C" Company of the 6th Illinois Regiment, he preferred to cast them in an ironic tone. Refuting Richard Harding Davis' "fete de fleurs" opinion, he wrote about the Puerto Rico campaign:

Mud and mosquitoes are not roses and poinsettias. Nor is sleeping in the rain and marching in a baking sun carrying fifty pounds a feast. Few are the picnics where they eat from baskets holding canned beans, hardtack, and 'Red Horse' and then they take off their shirts and pluck out 'seam squirrels.' Dicky Davis lived with the high commanding officers...\textsuperscript{48}

Five graduates of Princeton's Class of '98 enlisted in the 1st Volunteer Engineers Regiment and went to Puerto Rico in August 1898. Shortly after returning to the United States, two died from diseases contracted during the campaign. The other three recounted their war experiences to their classmates when they were getting ready to celebrate their fifth graduation anniversary in 1903. For them, the memorable thing about the campaign was the disorganization of the health, food and transportation services.\textsuperscript{49}

Similar testimony was offered by Anthony Fiala, a member of Troop
"C" of the New York Volunteer Cavalry. Conditions aboard the "Massachusetts" --the vessel that transported the troop to Guánica--were unbearable. The soldiers were crowded together, drinking hot, dirty water, without hot meals, and sleeping in cramped spaces:

The accommodations were bad and sanitary arrangements vile; the expedition was dispatched with such haste and so many troops were on board that comfort was out of the question. A place had been planned where the soldiers could wash, but there was no time for its completion, and in the early mornings when the sailors would wash down the quarter deck, the only luxury on board was to strip and jump into the stream of salt water.50

These and other accounts from individual participants had little impact upon the versions of the war that were soon to predominate. One reason why the story took another tack was the direction followed by public debate between imperialists and anti-imperialists in 1898-99 in the United States. Imperialists were in favor of annexing Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and, if possible, Cuba. Anti-imperialists felt that the institutions of the republic would be in danger if the United States became a colonial empire, in the manner of France and Great Britain. Neither side contemplated the possibility that the annexed territories become part of the federal union.

Among the anti-imperialists, the tendency was to believe that the triumph in Puerto Rico was achieved easily because Spain had put up
little resistance:

From the debarkation at Ponce, to the occupation of the insular capital, there was nothing that could be called a war. The islanders submitted with equanimity to the invasion -- to the substitution of the control of the United States over the incapable government of Spain. The majority of the people, perfectly indifferent to the ownership of the island, simply desired to be left alone. The conquest was complete with the mere appearance of the United States forces. We wanted the island; Spain was powerless to hold it, and it was ours.51

Such an interpretation annulled the efforts made by Miles and the other officers to underscore their organizational talents, and was in agreement with the version already suggested by war correspondent Stephen Crane in his narrative on the taking of the town of Juana Díaz.52 The natives' indifference toward their eventual fate was easier to fit into an anti-imperialist interpretation of the war, whereas their enthusiastic participation was not. The latter could present the problem of what exactly the Puerto Ricans were trying to achieve when they helped to defeat and expel the Spaniards.

For the imperialists, however, as long as the peace treaty between Spain and the United States was under consideration in the Senate, it seemed important to underscore the willingness of Puerto Ricans to aid the Americans. Once over this hurdle, the tendency -- which would become the received tradition -- was to minimize the importance of
Puerto Rican collaboration in the war, just as was done with that of the Cubans. Thus, there was no proof that political debts had been contracted with the people of Puerto Rico.53

The invaded

On June 8, 1898, at 8 in the evening, in a warehouse belonging to the Sureda family of Utuado, "great throngs of people" responding to the summons of the mayor, the district court judge, the parish priest, the municipal judge, the district attorney, the lieutenant of the Guardia Civil and the Utuado municipal attorney, assembled to create and install a Local Defense Committee. "Of all the great and important meetings held in this town to deal with the present circumstances and take whatever steps are necessary to keep this territory and this district intact," this one, according to a correspondent, "turned out to be the greatest and most important." Mayor José Lorenzo Casalduc, Father Francisco García, Attorney Felipe Casalduc-Goicoechea, Doctor Manuel Quevedo-Baéz --a physician and "pure" autonomist leader-- all addressed the crowd. "The people responded with joy and enthusiasm to the patriotic exhortations of the speakers." The committee was established, and all the town's citizens became members "to defend the interests of the upstanding Spaniards of Utuado in general."54

This marvelous concord of all the leading members of Utuado's economic and political sectors was put to the test on August 3, when the invaders --against whom the Defense Committee had been constituted in
June-- marched into Utuado. These amounted to some 30 soldiers under General Roy Stone, escorted into town by several dozen riders who were members of the most prominent local families. All along Comercio Street (soon renamed General Stone Street, now Dr. Cueto Street) about 5,000 persons, according to Stone's probably self-serving calculations, cheered the arrival of the invaders. The most prominent criollo families hung garlands across the street. The officers were invited to dances in the homes of the well-to-do. And José Lorenzo Casalduc, the same mayor who had presided over the creation of the Local Defense Committee, sent a warm message to General Miles in August:

...this district shall owe a debt of eternal gratitude to the Government of the American Union and to its illustrious General Stone, who was the first person to raise the Stars and Stripes over this town.55

Now then, what is the historian to make of these two testimonies? What can he surmise about Utuado's elite, which bubbles over with patriotic prose in defense of the Spanish territory in June and then, with the same fervor, proclaims in August its allegiance to the Stars and Stripes? What is one to believe about these mayors, judges and district attorneys, who, first under one, then another political system perorated and prospered?

A simple reading might give rise to the following logical options: 1) They were sincere in June and hypocritical in August. 2) They were hypocritical in June and sincere in August. 3) They were neither sincere
in June nor in August. 4) They were as sincere in June as in August, and in each instance they perceived the situation in an intense and particular manner.

The historian, however, does not have many reasons to question people's motivations. In any case, the sincerity issue is not a subtle enough key to understand the rejection of Spain and the welcoming of the Americans, a drama that was being played out in Utuado as well as other municipalities throughout the invasion.

What had occurred and what interpretation of events could take shape in so short a period of time?

There is an incident, alongside the invasion, that can serve as a starting point for reflection. Early in August, 1898, before the armistice, Captain F. W. Rodgers, of the U.S.S. "Puritan," sent a handful of men ashore to reactivate the Fajardo lighthouse, which had been out of commission since the beginning of the war. Dr. Santiago Veve-Calzada --owner of one of the largest tracts of land in the district of Ceiba, which had just recently become part of Fajardo-- convinced the captain to send a detachment to occupy Fajardo. Years later, Esteban López, the Fajardo physician, collected his impressions in an intimate memoir:

...one afternoon at three, the town of Fajardo was invaded by 13 United States Marines in the company of Dr. Santiago Veve, who had told them to come down into town and lower the Spanish flag that flew over City Hall, and to raise the Stars and Stripes.

It was said that the invited naval officer was unwilling,
because those were not his orders, but that he acceded to the doctor’s repeated entreaties and to his assurances that all the residents desired it (this was not true, as not all of us were pro-Yankee) and that besides, there would be no danger, because the Spaniards had left us.

I was extremely upset because I was never a sympathizer, and I truly regretted changing nationalities; I loved Spain, was never a separatist, and even though I detested the Spanish Governments in Puerto Rico, I loved my mother country, my Hispanic-Latin heritage, my Roman Catholic religion, my language — so rich — in which I think, in which I entrust myself to God and pray for the deliverance of my soul and that of this poor land of mine.

From the balcony of my home I witnessed the arrival of the 13... soldiers... I also witnessed the enthusiasm of some native sons of Fajardo (who would have cheered the arrival of the Zulus with the same enthusiasm) acclaiming the Yankees, the Americans from the Continent, without knowing them or whether they would treat us better or worse that those departing.

After a brief occupation, however, the Americans had to choose to abandon Fajardo, because they did not have enough men on the “Puritan” to resist the approaching Spanish troops. Desperation then spread rapidly among those who had cheered the invaders on:
When the news of the officer's response became known, to the effect that they could not spare any troops to leave behind in Fajardo, a panic spread throughout the neighborhood that would have provoked laughter, if only the situation had allowed it. Some scenes were quite funny. Many who had boasted they would eat the Spaniards alive had to calm their nerves with potassium bromide and bismuth; others, with rum...

The following afternoon the Spanish troops arrived, went directly to City Hall, lowered the American flag and raised the Spanish standard amidst thundering hurrahs that were repeated by the crowd, which no doubt included a few people that hours earlier had cheered the other forces. Wretched humanity!!...56

If you will, the Fajardo example is the other side of the Utuado coin. The arriving Americans are embraced enthusiastically, the panic-stricken collaborators disband when the occupation fails, and the Spanish return, with the dreaded "Patria" battalion:

Fortunately for Fajardo, among the troops there were some officers and companies which had been quartered here before and they knew us... Still, some excesses were committed...

Both in Utuado and in Fajardo the American occupation was promoted by a group of anti-Spain youths from prominent criollo...
families. In both cases this elite mobilized the masses to acclaim the Americans and reorganized the municipal administration to set up its own political program. The American occupation of Utuado was followed by acts of retaliation against economically powerful Spaniards. When the Spaniards re-occupied Fajardo, there followed arrests, robberies and vandalism directed against the property of United States sympathizers. These personal revenges and acts of retaliation reveal pre-existing rifts within the elite and between the elite and the masses.

It would be superficial to interpret Puerto Rican allegiance to the United States and rejection of Spain in 1898 in terms of loyalties and feelings. Young professionals who had been educated in the United States and Europe, criollos who owned businesses or tracts of land and were most impatient with the political regime, and sectors of the working masses in social or labor conflicts with those in leadership positions had different reasons to desire a change in the political order. But the invasion was the juncture that brought them together to welcome the Americans and reject the Spaniards. Then they saw themselves as redeemers of their country. A Mayagüez newspaper expressed it in these terms in October 1898:

The Americans came, we believe, and so believes the country, in truth the whole country, to deliver us from the yoke of a cursed and denigrating oppression, and it was our duty, bearing in mind that a labor of love should be paid back in kind, to lend them all the assistance necessary to put an end to the presumption and the grand posturing of a great many of
the demoralized and ambition-ridden Spaniards residing in these latitudes.\(^5\)

The writer and medical doctor Manuel Zeno-Gandia, who, years later, would write a novel with the ironic title *Redentores* (The Redeemers), was among those who jubilantly celebrated the end of the old order. Zeno wrote a letter to Miles dated August 13, 1898, to tell him he had been the medical director of the port of Ponce since 1882, but that in July, “due to his well-known pro-American sympathies, he had been forced to leave the island.” \(^5\) At this early date people had neither the perspective nor the desire to differentiate between the rejection of the old order and the acceptance of the newly imposed order.

On July 25, 1899, on the first anniversary of the invasion, Evaristo Izcara-Díaz, one of the first journalists to remark upon the contradictions of American military government policy, wrote this:

We who are admirers of the wise institutions of the American people, and who had to bear the burden of a tyrannical regime, we believed that the descendants of Jefferson had plunged into the hazards of war in the name of oppressed humanity, and that they would come to our land to broadcast the irrefutable voice of Universal Rights. We received them with enthusiasm. We opened our doors to them. We aided them in their triumphs... That was yesterday. Today... let us not dwell upon details that the people of Puerto Rico know only too well.\(^5\)
It is in this context of rejection of the old Spanish order that the raids of seditious bands, the *tiznados*, took place in 1898-99, and that several sectors entered into conflict with the new American order.
CHAPTER THREE

Activities of the Armed Bands
from July to October, 1898

According to the stipulations agreed to by the peace negotiators, Spain was to leave Puerto Rico before signing the peace treaty with the United States. A joint committee of Spanish and American officers designed a schedule for the surrender of the municipalities, which would culminate on October 18 with the transfer of San Juan. Even though that part of the agreement was adhered to without serious problems, the transition period between the armistice on August 12 and the final departure of the Spanish authorities was beset with trouble.

During that period, different regions of the island experienced a political vacuum. The Spanish State, which had, with much difficulty, managed to rule in the farthest and most troublesome areas of the country, was dismantled. The new American political and military apparatus replacing it, however, started off by wielding its power in a hesitant, uneven manner.

Both the Spanish and the Americans confronted countless difficulties in trying to govern the Puerto Ricans during those months, particularly after the armistice of August 12. In the zone that was in
Spanish hands at the time of the armistice, there were many armed bands operating in open rebellion against the government in San Juan. Many soldiers and volunteers deserted their garrisons and joined the multitude of fugitives, vagabonds and wanderers who roved the country’s highways and roads. Since Admiral Sampson’s bombardment in May, a large number of public officials had deserted the capital, and, having sought safety in Guaynabo, Río Piedras or Bayamón, hesitated to return to their posts. Others hastened to resign and return to Spain, hoping that by arriving home before their peers it would be easier to find a new job.

The town councils barely hid their disloyalty to the Spanish government. On August 18, Captain DeFuniak and a few soldiers of the 1st Kentucky Cavalry Regiment announced that they had occupied Aguada, and with the consent of the mayor raised the flag of the United States. That night, some 30 Guardias Civiles sent by the Spanish authorities in Aguadilla occupied Aguada and took Mayor Antonio Sánchez into custody. In the melee that ensued, the guards fired into the crowd, killing two civilians. The mayor was arrested and sent to San Juan, but before reaching Bayamón he escaped. The incident caused much tension between the Americans and the Spaniards.

In the southern zone, occupied by the United States, the difficulties were of another sort, but they also made the functioning of the basic institutions of government quite slow. The invading forces had installed provisional mayors in a few municipalities, but these did not know the conventional way of conducting business. Most of the pre-invasion mayors were still in office, but not all were able to count on the loyalty of their employees or the cooperation of the public. Many people stopped
paying taxes, with the result that it became hard to meet payrolls. Municipal and civil guards, fearful of retaliation and reprisals, abandoned their posts. Conflicts between mayors and American officers in charge of local detachments became more and more frequent because their respective functions under the military government were not clearly spelled out. The municipal assembly in Ponce in particular, which thought that it had achieved more autonomy under General Henry, governor of the military district, than it had under Spanish domination, was soon frustrated in its plans to implement its fiscal and administrative policies.3

General Miles had decreed that the country should go on being governed under the same laws and institutions as before unless they were in open contradiction with the Constitution of the United States. In criminal cases, however, the courts followed traditional procedure, which clashed with American sensibilities. This sometimes gave rise to conflicts between the judges and military authorities. The sudden separation of church and state also led to conflicts in the operation of social agencies which had up to that time been run by priests and nuns.4

On the other hand, discipline was beginning to break down among American volunteer troops, who were eager to return home and resume civilian life. In the streets and plazas, incidents between civilians and drunken soldiers became more frequent. The problem of exchanging the local currency for dollars was becoming acute. Coffee wholesalers refused to extend credit so that the coffee growers could pay the harvesters unless they were guaranteed what was considered to be excessive interest.5 There were delays in the organization of a new
school year.

A swarm of adventurers, publicists and hustlers from the United States was descending on Ponce and Mayagüez. The tone of relations between military officers and both local and stateside journalists was increasingly sharp. For its part, Washington made recommendations and suggestions to its military officers, which they, faced with what they perceived to be the real circumstances of Puerto Rico, found inapplicable. The schedule by which the Spanish transferred municipal power forced the American army to disperse its most capable officers throughout the territory. Competent and honest interpreters were needed because those available translated badly and were occasionally accused of acting in a biased manner.

It was in these circumstances, both in Spanish-administered territory and American-occupied zones, in which the phenomenon known as seditious bands or tiznados occurred.

Prior history of armed-band activity

Before the Spanish-American War broke out, the newspapers would occasionally mention bands of armed men who held up farms and isolated country stores. Once the war began and rural policemen had to be concentrated in the district capitals, the problem of maintaining law and order in the countryside worsened. On May 30, El País reported a gang robbery in Barrio del Real near Ponce. On July 9, La Unión carried a brief description of the arrest of eight individuals in Barrio Hatillo, Añasco, for gang robbery.
Public opinion attributed such incidents to the serious economic crisis that Puerto Rico was undergoing since the American blockade had paralyzed commerce, and to the prevailing uncertainty. This discouraged investment in agriculture, and as a result employment of day laborers decreased. Municipal governments tried to counteract these effects by generating activities in the areas of public works and private construction. In Ponce, for example, Mayor Ulpiano Colón suggested to the town council on July 4, 1898, that "in order to provide employment for the members of the working class, so that they may earn a living under the present circumstances... that the citizenry be granted permits free of charge to carry out all kinds of home improvement work during a period of six months." The council sent the proposal to a committee, where it died.10

A group of residents of Adjuntas petitioned Secretary of the Interior Luis Muñoz Rivera asking that the road construction project in Adjuntas be reactivated, in order to provide employment for many wage earners who would otherwise be without an income.11 But the very crisis that the country was undergoing affected its revenues, forcing the government to reduce its expenditures.

Armed groups which aided the invaders

One of Miles' justifications for invading through Guánica rather than Fajardo had been that its proximity to Yauco would favor the recruitment of bands of Puerto Rican auxiliaries. To coordinate these he was counting on the assistance of Antonio Mattei-Lluveras and Mateo
From Guánica, General Guy V. Henry sent a memo on this subject to Adjutant General Gilmore on July 28, 1898. Gilmore was in charge of communications for Miles' high command. Henry pointed out that several residents of mountain communities had come down to Yauco that day to offer their services as soldiers and guides to the United States Army. In exchange, the Army would provide them with rations. Henry accepted the offer to send a group of these mounted volunteers, together with a few soldiers, to bring some Mauser rifles that were stored 16 miles from Yauco. It is possible that one of these "volunteers" was José Maldonado, the famous "AguiJa Blanca," who, the following summer, would display a license to carry firearms signed at the time by Henry.

Whether authorized by the Americans or not, bands of armed men on horseback harassed the Spanish forces and aided General Miles' troops until the day of the armistice. The commander of one of the bands had this to report to General Henry on August 1:

Sir: In the night of yesterday, July 31, I took possession of the City of San Germán in the name of the glorious American Army. The mayor received me courteously and we went to the City Hall as they had not any police to keep the order in case it would be necessary. I immediately ordered six of my men for that purpose. I do not need to say that although it was past 10 o'clock the people all the families received me with the same content at Guanica, Yauco and Sabana Grande [sic]. I returned last night and now, eight o'clock a.m. I leave again
for that place with all my men which number fifty. I will collect some more over there to the number of (100) one hundred. I have put some men to fix up the telegraph wire to able the communication to be reestablished. I will reestablish the mail service. 15

Julio Tomás Martínez Mirabal wrote in his memoirs about his participation in the auxiliary party that went from Ponce with General Roy Stone to take Adjuntas and Utuado. Correspondence between Stone and Miles' headquarters shows what an important part this auxiliary troop played in the occupation of Jayuya, in patrolling the area's roads, and in obtaining supplies. 16

On August 6, a large party of mounted men --mostly from Utuado-- charged with aiding the American military forces in the district of Lares left unpaid a bill totaling 51 pesos at the home of Andrés Delgado, in Barrio Angeles, for the following items: a 375 lb. steer, priced at 45 pesos, 25 lbs. of raw sugar, 12 lbs. of inferior-grade coffee, and one peso's worth of garlic, peppers and cumin seed. Days later Delgado also made available to the band two horses and a mule, with saddles, and some cane sugar syrup "to attend the needs of these American forces that are concentrated in this area." 17 Unable to obtain payment from the Americans for the provisions or the unreturned animals, Delgado sued his customers for swindling.

On August 7, thwarted in their purpose to proceed towards Lares, the same band took part in a notorious ride that stopped two blocks short of the main plaza in Arecibo. 18 According to Dr. Pedro Hernández
Paralitici, the group has gone down in Utuado's oral history as the "turkey band" for that was the trophy that they brought back to Utuado.

The Ciales case

One of these operations came to a tragic end. The Spanish military forces had abandoned the town of Ciales. The day after the armistice, that is, August 13, two bands of criollos occupied the town and raised the flag of the United States over the city hall. An auxiliary force of pro-Spanish volunteers arrived from Manati on the afternoon of the same day in order to re-occupy Ciales. An armed confrontation ensued, with unfortunate results for the local group. The skirmish and the occupation of the town produced eight deaths.

Those deaths caused great uneasiness both in Ponce and in the capital. In San Juan, the government had printed and distributed copies of a clarification by the Ciales town council, which answered the charge that there were more than 100 dead. At the same time, responsibility for the deaths was attributed to local armed bands. A copy of the declaration was sent to American military headquarters. After Ciales was turned over to the Americans, the people who had signed the proclamation sent a letter to the newspapers declaring that they had signed under duress. Miles also received a report written by Rodulfo Figueroa, a leader in the town of Ciales:
To General Miles:
The undersigned wishes to apprise you of the following facts:
Saturday, that is the day before yesterday, when the volunteer Spanish forces had retreated from Ciales, the townspeople pronounced themselves in favor of the United States, whose flag they raised above city hall.
But the same day in the afternoon, at 3 o'clock, the aforementioned volunteer troops returned, joined by the volunteers from Manati; all of whom, taking positions behind the cemetery, aimed their fire towards the town, which is said to have suffered much damage. Previously they had lowered the American flag, which they tore up and stepped on.
The same day, the undersigned was on the way to Ciales with fifty men, joined along the way by other men who also wanted to pursue the miscreants and fugitives who are indulging in all manner of excesses in that area, when a band of about fifty men bearing a Spanish flag was encountered on the road some two hours away from Ciales. In the exchange of gunfire, the Spanish casualties were about four dead and several wounded, and their flag was taken, after which they retreated and dispersed into the nearby hills.
When the undersigned arrived in the vicinity of Ciales, seeing that the enemy forces that had taken cover behind the
cemetery were far superior in number, and that it was already 5 o'clock, he positioned his forces behind a small cart and opened fire, which was returned by the volunteers; Figueroa lost a horse, the one Pascasio Fernández was riding, which was felled by two bullets, and another horse belonging to Manuel Budet was wounded in the nose. Both men are members of the force under the command of the undersigned. All cartridges spent, and having received word that more Spanish forces were on the way, it was necessary to retreat towards Ponce. At this time, a resident of that area came and said that the Spaniards were tying up the dead so as to be able to say that Figueroa had shot defenseless men.

There is a peninsular Spaniard running loose around the countryside together with a bunch of outlaws, who is using the name of the undersigned in his raids.

Besides the flag, I confiscated from the forces I met on the road to Ciales two Remingtons (rifles) and a short carbine, which I have stored.

The flag I have the honor of presenting with this letter.

Mr. Antonio Olivieri from Limón farm in Juana Diaz sent three guardias civiles with a patrol --Hilario Chicano, Antonio Priego-Navas and Carlos Rodriguez-- who had come from Aibonito and turned up, without weapons, at his farm.

With this report I hand over to you the three aforementioned guards.

Ponce, August 15, 1898
Pro-Spanish bands of auxiliaries

In the letter quoted above it becomes clear that there were armed bands that aided and abetted the Spanish forces. Elsewhere on the island, Spanish nationals and their Puerto Rican adherents took part in patrol operations, which did not cease when the armistice was proclaimed. For example, Esperanza Mayol, in her autobiography, describes how Matías Ferrer organized all the Majorcans in the town of Adjuntas to defend their common interests during this period. On August 20, 1898, the mayor of Sabana Grande, Pablo Pietri, wrote General Schwan:

Since rumors have reached this town that guerrillas and Guardia Civil forces are operating in its environs and may attempt to duplicate what happened in Ciales, the residents, foreseeing that such an attack could have deadly consequences, have approached me pleading that I request from you a force of 100 men, because this town is completely defenseless and at the mercy of anyone who desires to bring mourning and weeping to its streets, squares and fields.

In San Sebastián, even after the armistice was signed, the volunteers continued to serve the Spanish government, since this zone, bordering the one occupied by the United States Army, was home to a large number of people of anti-Spanish sentiment. Nevertheless, when it
became known that Spain would cede Puerto Rico to the United States, the armed bands that aided the Spaniards ceased operating. Still, on December 9, alarm spread in Maricao when several Spanish youths, who had partaken too freely of drink, paraded one evening to the sound of a military bugle. Furthermore, on occasion during September and October the criollos tried to place the blame for holdups and the burning down of haciendas on armed bands of Spaniards.

Were there pro-independence bands?

For the period between the invasion by the American army on July 25 and the formal installation of the military government in San Juan on October 18, 1898, none of the existing documents consulted bears witness to activities by bands whose avowed purpose was to obtain independence for Puerto Rico or to resist the installation of the American regime on the island.

The members of the Junta of Puerto Ricans in New York who traveled to Puerto Rico during that period all cooperated with the American forces. So did all the bands of anti-Spanish Puerto Ricans who have been identified so far.

In recent times there has been an attempt to cast the activities of José "Aguila Blanca" Maldonado, in pro-independence terms. In chapter 5 below there is a section on Aguila Blanca that examines his activities during 1898-99 in another light.
During the weeks following the invasion it was quite evident that people were in a mood to settle scores with the Spaniards. In Ponce, the multitude turned against those pro-Spanish volunteers who had laid down their arms and accepted the terms of surrender. They were hauled to the public square by force:

Bloodhounds could not have been more savage. Most of the Spaniards in hiding, upon being discovered, were hailed in triumph by hooting, jeering mobs to Gen. Wilson's headquarters or to the Provost Marshal's Office in the municipal buildings. Some of the natives even began looting the residences of the Spaniards.25

In the towns it was relatively easy for the Americans to contain these outbursts of violence. Partly for this reason, most of the attacks against the persons and property of the Spaniards took place in the countryside. Already after the taking of Yauco it had been feared that the criollos would loot, kill, and destroy property in the rural areas, in retaliation for the many years of bad Spanish government.26

This mood to settle scores, together with the need for food among the peasants and the laborers in the highlands, was responsible for the first sorties of the armed bands.

On August 8, La Correspondencia reported that out in the country
a peaceful group has been formed --since it carries no weapons-- made up of some 70 men, who go to the farms of the well-to-do asking for something to eat. They visited Mr. Lorenzo Joy, the wealthy owner of Cialitos, who ordered a heifer killed for them, and with 100 lbs. of rice an abundant feast was prepared, which they dispatched with vigor and determination. Afterwards they departed amidst cheers for Mr. Joy and his family.27

As the bands that had been forming in the highlands began to need supplies, they would go to the farmers and merchants in the area to request food. But the typical band in search of food did not behave in this idyllic manner. As often as not the members killed and consumed an animal in the open fields, or they took possession of the stock of rice or corn meal from the hacienda store without any formalities.28

Once the armistice was proclaimed, the bands that were organized for military purposes were, by and large, dissolved. In their place we see the emergence of night raids by bands whose members blacken their faces with charcoal or cover their features in order to go unrecognized. And now what seems to motivate the tiznados is not so much the search for supplies to feed its members as political or economic retaliation.

One of the earliest and most notorious cases took place on the night of August 18 to 19, in a barrio of Ponce called Coto del Laurel. According to the night watchman's declaration, a large group of people arrived at
the store belonging to a peninsular Spaniard, Felipe Martínez, between 10 and 11 p.m. One pointed a gun at the watchman’s chest while the rest opened the store, tossed the merchandise out in the street and set fire to Martínez’s buildings. The flames reached neighboring structures and 16 or 17 houses burned down. But the throng that surrounded the place, instead of helping put out the fire, proceeded to loot. When an American military detachment arrived, they found that the people, in a festive mood, were pouring buckets of water on one another.29

On Friday, August 19, at 9:30 p.m., a band of 30 to 40 people showed up at Hacienda Santa Cruz, belonging to the heirs of the Castañer estate, in the municipality of Yauco. They wounded the overseer, Bartolomé Oliver, with their machetes, and burned down the farmhouse in which he lived, the machinery building and the warehouse. Oliver managed to identify 13 of his assailants.30

On August 25, between 9 and 10 p.m., a group of unknown individuals, “calling on behalf of American Guards” appeared at the home of Higinio Gómez, in Barrio Portillo, Adjuntas. They tore the lock off the door and stole men’s and women’s clothing, two watches, two gold watch chains and a saddle.31

By September and October 1898, isolated coffee plantations in the highlands which were the property of Spaniards had become the favorite target of these bands. They would show up after dark, some on horseback, others on foot. They would steal food from the hacienda store or the warehouse, as well as liquor, clothing, saddles, and perhaps a piece of furniture from the main house. They would threaten the overseer, the administrator, or the landowner present, and sometimes they set fire to
the hacienda buildings.

The number of members who reportedly made up the bands that operated between mid-August and mid-October fluctuated between eight and 200 men. It is possible that the higher figures are an exaggeration on the part of the plaintiffs, either through miscalculation or an unwillingness to give the impression that the victims had yielded to a mere handful of men.

In most of the cases reported, the plaintiff declared he was unable to recognize any of the perpetrators because their faces were coal-blackened, because they wore a mask, or because there was insufficient light to see their faces. As a rule, when the band arrived, the house was locked up and there were no lights on. The tiznados banged on the doors, threw rocks, and threatened to set the house on fire if they were not allowed in. Most times the man in charge opened the door and a few band members went inside, tied up or kept an eye on the older males, instructed the women to remain in their rooms, and proceeded to loot.32

In some cases the landowner or his administrator sustained bodily injuries. Court records seldom give information on the rape of women. It is possible that few victims of such abuse cared to testify and be subjected to questioning. Nevertheless, the oral tradition kept alive the memory of many attacks on women.33

If the buildings were going to be burned, the residents of the house were escorted out. The fire was ignited with a torch or a burning rag. In some cases the assailants subjected the owner or administrator to some type of humiliation and in a very few cases, they wounded or killed him.
On departing, they made menacing remarks, to the effect that the Spaniard should go home to Spain, or abandon the farm.34

These armed bands that operated in the coffee-growing zone during September and October of 1898 were undoubtedly moved by a desire for retaliation. The Spaniards lost the war and had to pay the consequences. Occasionally, conflicts of an economic nature are alluded to, and a few times, reference is made to the period of the compontes (1887).35

Armed bands in the judicial district of Utuado

Let us examine in greater detail what happened in one of the areas that was most intensely affected by the armed bands, that is, the zone under the jurisdiction of the district court of Utuado, which at the time included Adjuntas, Ciales and Lares.

According to an accusation made afterwards, on the night of August 21 a band of at least ten men from Jayuya, armed with revolvers and machetes

stopped Mr. Eusebio Grau and his peons Pedro "Puché" Rivera, Medero Vázquez and Ysldro Andújar, on the road known as "La Pica" and threatening grievous violence took possession of a 200 lb. load of codfish, two loads of salt of 300 boxes each, one box of 400 packs of cigarettes, a suitcase containing a change of clothes, as well as 200 pesos in cash, and one mule. The stolen provisions was [sic] the property of Mssrs. N. Canales and Co., the cash belonged to Mr. Julio Grau and the
suitcase and clothes to Mr. Eusebio Grau.\textsuperscript{36}

Eusebio Grau was the grandson of the criollo Eusebio Pérez, Jayuya's conservative political boss, and the son of Julio Grau, who administered Pérez's properties and also served as petty mayor of Jayuya. To assault him on a public road was to challenge the old order openly. Of the ten assailants identified, four were members of families that owned small properties and six were day laborers from the area. It is interesting to note that even though all were residents of that municipality (Utuado, to which Jayuya belonged), the six laborers and three of the other four persons accused had been born in other towns. Despite the upheaval brought on by the invasion, it would seem that to challenge the power of an Eusebio Pérez, it was necessary to have been born in another community, a place where such a figure had not reigned over local life for more than 40 years, as had been the case in Jayuya since the 1850's.

As in other occasions, the court in Utuado refused to entertain the case because a state of war prevailed and the case fell under military jurisdiction. In November, the commander of the military district of Ponce, General Henry, ordered the Utuado district court to proceed with the prosecution of the case. On April 8, 1899, the criminal court in Mayagüez, with José de Diego among its judges, found three of the laborers and one of the small-property owners guilty. They were sentenced to eight years, 11 months and 11 days imprisonment, and to pay damages to the victims.\textsuperscript{37}

On August 25, between 9:00 and 10:00 p.m., a band showed up at the
home of Zacarias Gómez, in Barrio Portillo, Adjuntas, "claiming to be American Guards." The residents slipped away and sought refuge with José María Delgado. Upon returning the following day, "they found the house open and everything in disarray, men's and women's outer wear missing, as well as two watches, two gold chains and a saddle." The case was never resolved in the courts.38

The nights of September 3 and 4, unknown individuals set fire to all the buildings on a farm in Barrio Vivi Arriba, in Utuado39. The property owner, Pedro Castro-González, declared that, ever since Utuado had been occupied "by the American forces," he and his family had gone to live in town, leaving no one to look after his property. He had been informed of the fires by the laborers. Questioned by the authorities, the laborers accused no one. Neither could Castro identify any suspects:

"...the testifier supposes that the fires were intentionally set, though he has no suspects, and he bases this supposition on the fact that the area had been rife with rumors that fires were going to be set... and besides, since the neighborhood was left without patrols, he had recently agreed to move with his family into town, believing they would all be safer..." 40

In Utuado's Barrio Mameyes, the evening of September 4, between 10 p.m. and midnight, a group of ten to 12 armed men demanded that the Spaniard Joaquín Rodríguez unlock the store he had on the ground floor of his house. Born in Santa María del Páramo, León, Spain, Rodríguez had been a member of the Guardia Civil in 1868 and then a store clerk
for three years. In 1877, he purchased with his savings three *cuerdas* [one *cuerda* = .97 acre] of land in Mameyes and set up the first store in the area. By 1885 he had founded Hacienda Vista Alegre, which in 1896 comprised 400 *cuerdas*, 150 of them planted in coffee. At that time the hacienda included a machinery building with two tanks for washing coffee berries, a building used for selecting and processing the berries for export, a house where laborers and employees slept, a two-story building with 16 movable drying trays that could be rolled out into the sunshine, a dispatcher's booth, a two-story residence, 30 houses for laborers, stables, a lumber-storage shed, a building that housed the general store, a wooden structure that housed the neighborhood school, and a station house for the Civil Guards. Two smaller farms were dependent on the hacienda: one was "Santa Barbara" and the other "Los Montes" of 85 and 120 *cuerdas* respectively. Rodríguez also owned an 86-*cuerda* farm in Barrio Frontón, Ciales. With the exception of harvest time, the plantation owner employed 116 laborers on his farms.41

Rodríguez let his assailants enter and they carried off between 300 and 400 pesos worth of shoes, codfish, rice, lard, sugar, china, pots, spoons, bolts of waterproof material and various other items. Later he described the members of the band as "dark men who seemed to have their skin artificially blackened." Apparently it was the same band which, that same night, robbed a nearby farm belonging to Gaspar Homar.42 Even though the petty mayor of Jayuya, Julio Grau, went as far as mentioning the names of suspects in both cases, the district court of Utuado refused -- *motu proprio*-- to entertain the case and continued the proceedings until November, at which time they were reopened by order.
of General Henry. In spite of the depositions given by the three clerks that Rodríguez employed, and that of Mayor Grau, the investigation did not produce solid clues for the prosecution and the case was dismissed in May of 1899.43

According to an accusation that was made much later, on September 6, 1898, "José Alcasa, his brother Francisco Alcasa, Amelio Alicea and several unknown men gained access to the home of Narciso Sierra, raped his wife, and carried off everything that was in the house." Both José and Narciso Alcázar died while at the Arecibo Jail, before their trial could be held. Some time later, José "Sule" Monserrate Pérez, was also charged in connection with this case. In 1900, the year the charges were filed, Narciso Sierra was the owner of 73 cuerdas of land in Mameyes Abajo.44

A 404-cuerda farm in Utuado's Barrio Santa Isabel, which belonged to the estate of Pedro Rullán, was the object of a raid late in the evening of September 8. According to Bartolomé Arbona, who represented the estate, the band members took 27 pesos worth of corn and locally-grown rice. Arbona and the people who worked in the house attacked the raiders, who retreated after shouting "Don't worry, you won't get away." They left behind two horses which turned out to belong to the owner of a small property nearby, who stated that the animals had been stolen. A resident of the area, Adelo Alicea, the only suspect named in the investigation, was never prosecuted.45

The night of September 14, two shots were fired by members of a band into the house of Francisco Márquez, in Barrio Bartolo, Lares. According to his testimony, the assailants, under cover of darkness,
identified themselves as "Americans." Márquez retorted that they were bandits. "Don Pancho," they called, using his nickname, "open the door or you will suffer the consequences." Márquez, afraid that his dehusked coffee would be stolen, as had happened to other landowners in the vicinity, refused. The band members aimed their fire towards the door. Márquez then pretended he was not alone and shot at them from different windows. When the raiders tried to force their way through the door, Márquez shot one of them. They dispersed, leaving the wounded man behind.

The latter turned out to be Manuel Arroyo, age 20, who would later declare that he had been compelled to participate by Pablo Vélez, Pablo Ferri and Marte Morales, with another 14 to 20 men. In fact, in December Vélez and Ferri were accused of belonging to a secret society that bore the anarchistic name "La Mano Negra" --the Black Hand. Based on the testimony that Arroyo gave before dying of his wound on October 4, a military commission convened in Mayagüez in April 1899 sentenced Vélez to three years in prison. He was the son of a woman who owned a small estate in Lares.

In Utuado's Barrio Don Alonso, also on September 14, about 10:30 p.m., a band came to the home of Rafael Herrera Varo, an Andalusian. According to his testimony, there were about 80 or 100 men, armed with revolvers and machetes. They banged on the door, discharged their firearms several times, and after tearing off a window, they came in demanding the keys to the hacienda store and the warehouse.
The keys were handed over, and they proceeded to open them.

Among the goods stolen from Herrera that night were six hundredweights of salt, 8,000 ears of corn, two hundredweights of codfish, two hundredweights of sugar, 220 empty sacks, 84 tarpaulins, 8,000 cigars, one box of Epsom salts, 12 dozen spoons, 14 or 15 baskets for collecting coffee beans, one set of funnels and measures, oil, starch, fabrics, rum and anise. The assailants "tore up all of the store's account books," but Herrera "could not recognize any of them because almost all were disguised, that is, their faces were coal-blackened." 49

The night of September 19, in Barrio Vegas Arriba, Adjuntas, a band of men with pack animals, claiming to belong to the police force, showed up at a farm that belonged to the Majorcan Vicente Morey Castañer. The owner was away, but his brother Antonio opened the door. Four men dressed as guards entered first, followed by a group of partisans armed with guns and rifles. Both Antonio Morey and the overseer, Antonio Barceló Mestre, who was also from Majorca, were tied up. The raiders stole clothing, bed linens, shoes, a watch, a ring, four or five pesos in cash, and rice, codfish, lard, onions, soap and rum. Then they marched the two Majorcans out of the house, tied them to trees, and set fire to the house with fuel-soaked clothing. The house burned down. The identity of the attackers was not known, but Morey described one

...who had blackened his features with charcoal, but with perspiration the blackening streaked and the witness was able to observe that his natural color was white, that he was
young, dressed in civilian clothes, wearing shoes and a slightly soiled jacket, short of stature, and with a scant mustache.50

The case was not resolved judicially.

In Barrio Guayabo Dulce, Adjuntas, on September 24, about 12 individuals showed up at the home of Jaime Oliver, fired shots in the air and threatened to set the house on fire if they were not allowed in. They carried off Oliver’s provisions, and three horses. The victim thought that among his assailants were four individuals who had just the previous morning inquired where a certain neighbor lived. The neighbor, however, declared that he had been ill on that day and had not received visitors. The case did not prosper in the courts.51

Ulpiano Rodríguez, who lived in Barrio Guilar, Adjuntas, filed a complaint because on the night of September 27 he had been held up by ten or 12 men who had fired seven shots. Rodríguez escaped through a window; the men broke down a door and stole money, a watch, clothing, shoes, alcoholic beverages and documents. Rodríguez did not recognize any of his assailants, but thought they were from another barrio. The case was never resolved in the courts.52

American soldiers intervene for the first time

On the morning of August 19, soldiers from "K" Company, 19th Infantry Regiment and cavalry from Troop "C" of the New York Volunteers went to Coto del Laurel to try to put out a fire and stop the looting of the property belonging to Francisco Martínez. In September, a
military commission found probable cause against Juan Martínez, Félix Rigau and Francisco Lanzo, who were accused of participating in the events of Coto del Laurel the night of August 18.53 This is the first known case of military intervention in the activities of the bands.

For the military authorities, such acts were the work of "bandits." Roads and highways were not safe during those months, and even travelers were held up from time to time. In August, the area of Barros (Orocovis) was already considered unsafe.54 Towards the end of September, a band of robbers held up the mail coach that traveled from Coamo to Ponce.55

The criollos were not the only ones responsible for such misdeeds. On August 29, General Ernst reported to General Gilmore that two soldiers, armed with revolvers and riding native horses, had participated in a hold-up on the highway between La Playa and Ponce. The assailants claimed to be messengers from headquarters.56 In Guayama, other soldiers held up a store and confiscated cash and goods in the name of the American occupation.57 These and other criminal acts committed by the American volunteers placed further strain on the fragile fabric of law and order.

Hacienda owners in different parts of the zone occupied by American military forces had since August been calling for the military to protect them from the raiders. In the region of Utuado, it was common during that period -- at the end of August and the beginning of September, when there were still large numbers of troops concentrated in the area -- to assign a pair of soldiers to watch over the hacienda of people who so requested. Chaplain Thomas Sherman, General Miles' cousin by marriage,
described one of these night watches in an article that would appear in print months later in the United States. It was about Hacienda San Gabriel, the property of José Blanco in Caonillas Abajo, in the foothills of Cerro Morales:

Three of the civil guard [sic] arrived at supper-time armed with Remington rifles and with well-filled cartridge pouches. Lights were placed commanding the approaches to the buildings in all directions, sentries set, and we retired with our revolvers loaded and at hand. I realized then that the hacienda was in a state of siege and I gathered that the owner, a lieutenant-colonel by the way in the Spanish volunteers, was especially unpopular in the district and that the "venganza" people, as I choose to call them, had vowed his utter destruction. About midnight the dogs began to bark furiously and a single pistol shot rang out on the night air. Instantly we were out peering into the dark for dusky forms approaching. None came, but somewhat later on, the sky was lurid with the flames of a neighboring hacienda... Later still came the rumor of a party advancing up the mountain. I hallooed to them, and was answered in a tone quite distinctly American... They proved to be two soldiers, friends of Señor Blanco, who had defended his property of their own accord a few nights before and had come again to continue their work. The poor colonel embraced them as his children and then went to bed and to sleep with the utmost confidence.
As the volunteer regiments began to be shipped back to the United States, however, and as Spain formally handed over the municipal governments in the middle of September, it became undesirable, from a military standpoint, to spread the small number of forces throughout the network of haciendas. These were left unprotected. That is why, in the coffee-growing zone in the center of the island, starting in the middle of September, there was an increase in the number of incidents involving armed bands.

The avalanche of complaints filed in the district courts as a result of this resurgence was so overwhelming that the courts opted to declare themselves incompetent, since, technically, a state of war prevailed on the island, and referred the files of the complaints and accusations to the headquarters of the American forces in Ponce. The lack of action on the part of the judiciary in turn encouraged the frequency of the raids and the audacity of the raiders.

Given the circumstances, the military detachments that had been assigned to the municipalities began to patrol the main roads. There were soon clashes between the patrols and several armed bands. Following the suggestion of hacienda owners, the patrols carried out searches in the homes of peasants and agregados looking for stolen goods. The troops tried to make their visible presence the main means of discouraging the raiders. Instead of disappearing, however, the bands became more cautious and took greater care in planning their operations.
ENDNOTES

PREFACE

1 NARA, RG 395, entry 5858, "Miscellaneous Letters," copy of the record of the August 14, 1898, proceedings of the town council of Cabo Rojo.

CHAPTER ONE


2 See bibliography for the work of these authors.

3 See Cayetano Coll y Toste, Reseña de estado social, económico e industrial de la isla de Puerto Rico al tomar posesión de ella los Estados Unidos (San Juan: 1899); United States War Department, Report on the Census of Porto Rico, 1899 (Washington: 1900).

4 See Andrés Ramos-Mattei, La hacienda azucarera: Su crecimiento y crisis en Puerto Rico (siglo XIX) (San Juan: 1981); Carlos Casanova, "Propiedad agrícola y poder en el municipio de Manatí: 1885-1898" (M. A.
thesis in History, University of Puerto Rico [UPR], 1985); Cruz Ortiz-Cuadra, "Crédito y azúcar: Los hacendados de Humacao ante la crisis del dulce: 1865-1900" (M. A. thesis in History, UPR, 1985).


6 See Peter Katsilis Morales, "Economía y sociedad del pueblo de Camuy, 1850-1868" (M. A. Thesis in History, UPR, 1986). Corozal at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries is the subject of a thesis by Rafael Cabrera.


8 Cuerdas (.97 acre) of land under cultivation in Utuado, 1851 and 1897:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coffee</th>
<th>Cereal grains and minor crops</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>1,491</td>
<td>6,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>15,883</td>
<td>4,874</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Riqueza Agrícola del Pueblo de Utuado, 1851", in FMU: Jorge Saldaña, Café en Puerto Rico (San Juan: 1935), p. 15).


10 See Ramos-Mattei, p. 25. In Worker in the Cane (New Haven: 1960), Sidney Mintz explains in detail how precarious life was in the countryside during the off-season in the 1940’s.

11 See Díaz, pp. 53-55; Bergad, pp.197-98; Carlos Buitrago, Los orígenes históricos de la sociedad precapitalista en Puerto Rico (Río Piedras: 1976), pp. 27-28, 40-42.

12 Ibid., 44.

13 See Ana Mercedes Santiago de Curet, "Crédito, moneda y bancos en Puerto Rico durante el siglo xix" (M. A. Thesis in History, UPR, 1978).


15 See Loida Figueroa, Breve Historia de Puerto Rico, part II, Desde el crepúsculo del dominio español hasta la antesala de la Ley Foraker, 1892-1900 (Río Piedras: 1977), pp. 26 ff.

16 Coll y Toste, pp. 21-22.

17 By way of example, Bergad uses the case of Juan Sella, who in 1882 paid Castañer Hermanos six Puerto Rican pesos to haul approximately 49 and a half hundredweights of coffee from his farm to the Castañer warehouse, 75 cents per hundredweight to haul the same load from Barrio Bartolo to Yauco, and 20 cents per hundredweight from Yauco to Ponce (Bergad, p. 158).
18 Guadalupe Rivera wrote a monograph entitled "La carretera #9," while at UPR-Río Piedras. [In the author's personal files. --Tr.]


22 La Correspondencia, October 23, 1895, p. 2.

23 "Ecce Homo", La Democracia, October 29, 1898, p. 2.

24 See the 1895 issues of La Bomba in the Puerto Rican Collection of Sacred Heart University, San Juan.

25 See Gervasio García and A. G. Quintero-Rivera, Desafío y solidaridad (Río Piedras: 1982), chapters 1 and 2.

26 La Correspondencia, April 28, 1892, p. 2.


28 El Buscaplé, September 24, 1895, p. 2.

29 See Díaz, pp. 56-57; Buitrago, Los orígenes, pp. 39-40; FGEPR, box 379, official report to the governor, dated February 1, 1895, on the fire that razed 40 cuerdas of sugar cane at Hacienda "La Estrella" in Playa de Ponce.

30 El Buscaplé, November 29, 1895, p. 2.

31 See, for example, the declarations regarding farmworkers

32 See, for example, what was said about the Arroyo farmworkers in El Buscapié ("Croniqueta Lo de Arroyo," October 25, 1895, p .2): "That society --for lack of a better word-- was made up of miserable day laborers from the countryside, incapable of any purpose but foolishness, since there can only be real conspiracy where there are ideas"; in La Correspondencia (October 24, 1895, p. 2): "most of the arrested men are relatively unimportant persons who do not even know how to read or write..."; and in La Democracia (October 28, 1895, p. 2): "poor frightened jíbaros." In 1898 Evaristo Izcoa wrote in La Bomba, (Sept, 29, 1989, p. 1): "Our poor jíbaro, that living automaton, that backward human being who has only natural instincts --which are not always the best-- to guide his development, barely realizes what goes on around him."

CHAPTER 2

1 "Por el campo", El País, May 18, 1898, p. 1.
2 Ibid., May 26 and 30, 1898, p. 2.
3 La Unión, July 9, 1898, p. 3.


6 *La Correspondencia*, August 20, 1898, p. 3.

7 *El País*, October 10, 1898, p. 3.

8 “Ecos de Vega Baja,” *La Bruja*, April 17, 1898, p. 4.


12 “Manatí,” ibid, p. 2.


14 Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 188, p. 22.


19 Tolman, pp. 30-31.

20 See Robert L. Beisner, Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-

21 See correspondence in Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 188 and

22 See G. J. A. O'Toole, The Spanish War: An American Epic, 1898

23 Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 188, p. 61; Headquarters
Letters Sent, vol. 184, p. 27; RG, entry 5857, "Miscellaneous Reports,"
copy of a letter from Secretary of Defense Alger to Miles; "Brooke to

24 "San Juan's Turn Now: Puerto Rican Expedition to go Forward at

25 See New York Times, "Woes of the Fifth Illinois, not Co. Culver's

26 Telegram from Alger to Miles, Headquarters Letters Received, vol.
189, p. 57; Robert Seager II and Doris Maguire, eds., Letters and Papers
of Alfred Thayer Mahan (Annapolis: 1975), vol. II, 573; "General Miles
Places Blame," New York Times, August 24, 1898, p. 1; Angel Rivero,
Crónica de la Guerra Hispanoamericana en Puerto Rico (San Juan: 1972),
pp. 206-07.


28 Rivero, pp. 182-83; "Miles' Move a Surprise," New York Times,
July 27, 1898, p. 1: "The neighborhood of Guanica and Ponce is said to be
the section of the island where the opposition to Spanish rule is strongest and where a propaganda in favor of accepting the Americans as deliverers instead of as enemies could be most advantageously begun. Gen. Miles has with him some representatives of the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Junta. It is believed that one of his objects in touching near Ponce is to establish contact with the insurgents and set on foot a movement which may result in making the American occupation of the island much easier than it would be if all the efforts of the invaders were confined to fighting their way along. Gen. Miles had a number of conferences with representatives of the revolutionists of the island before he left here, and he is known to have counted on doing as much toward winning over the people of the province by friendly overture as possible, having regard to the ultimate benefit of such a policy on the permanent American rule, which it is proposed to establish here." Miles declared to the Associated Press correspondent: "Guanica and Cinga [sic] are in the disinfected portion of the island. Matteo [sic], the insurgent leader lives at Yauco, a few Miles inland. Had we landed at Cape San Juan a line of rifle pits might have stopped our advance." ("Our Flag Raised in Puerto Rico," ibid., p. 1). In his second autobiography (the first one was from before 1898) Miles repeated the arguments he had invoked for the press in 1898 (Nelson A. Miles, Serving the Republic, [New York:1911] pp. 296-97).


32 See “Copy of the Report Sent to Her Majesty’s Consulate by Mr. Vice-Consul Fernando M. Toro, on the invasion of the district of Ponce, Porto Rico, by the Forces of the United States of America,” in Albert E. Lee, An Island Grows (San Juan: 1963), “Appendix I,” pp. 135-42; “Sobre ‘llegada de los Americanos’ a esta Ciudad,” AMP, Asuntos Varios, sheaf 159, dossier 178; see also “Virtud de acuerdo del Ayuntamiento disponiendo se entregue a los miembros del cuerpo Consular, Don Fernando C. Toro, Don Pedro Rosaly, Don Enrique C. Fritzi y al ciudadano Inglés Don Roberto Graham una medalla de oro a cada uno por el decidido y valioso concurso que prestaron para conseguir se rindiera a los americanos de una manera honrosa esta Plaza el día 28 de Julio”, ibid., dossier 162; see also Rivero, pp. 224 ff.; see also Socorro Girón, El Teatro La Perla y ‘La Campaña de la Almudana’ (Ponce: 1986), pp. 343 A ff.; see also “The Surrender of Ponce,” New York Times, July 30, 1898, p. 6.

33 Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 189, p. 65.

for August 3, 1898," "Trimonthly Field Return of U.S. Troops at Guayama, PR Commanded by Major General John R. Brooke, USA, for August 31st 1898" and "Trimonthly Field Return of Artillery Battalion 1st Army Corps."


36 Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 189, p. 74.

37 Rivero, pp. 241 ff.; La Correspondencia, August 23, 1898, p. 1. Reporter Richard Harding Davies later claimed to have been the first American to have entered Coamo and to have been handed the surrender by the mayor. See "The Taking of Coamo" in The Notes of a War Correspondent (New York: 1911), pp. 101-12.

38 "The turning movement was commenced to-day, when Gen. Brooke landed 8,000 men at Arroyo, sixty miles east of here. From there he can strike the military road leading to San Juan de Puerto Rico, at Cayey,
beyond Abonitas [sic]. This will compel the Spanish commander, Gen. Otega [sic], who has a great reputation, to abandon his stronghold or be caught between two fires. It is possible that a second column may move on his left flank also, in which case the present advance on his front is only a feint" (New York Times, August 5, 1898, p. 1, "May Be a Fight At Abonitas"). On August 9 Gilmore advised Wilson that Brooke had received orders to proceed toward Cayey: "Should he accomplish this, it will render the position at Albonito untenable." The same day Wilson was told to obtain information about a road from Coamo to Barranquitas (Headquarters Letters Sent, vol. 185, p. 127).

39 Headquarters Letters Sent, vol. 185, pp. 73, 74, 92: Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 189, pp. 87, 88, 92, 95.

40 Rivero, pp. 296-97; Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 189, pp. 77-78, 82, 89, 96, 133.


42 See Rivero, 635. The Spanish public was greatly disappointed about the attitude of Puerto Ricans toward the invaders (see "Spaniards Feel Disheartened," New York Times, August 18, 1989, p. 2; "Derecho del Pataleo," La Bomba, September 24, 1898, p. 1).

us. They show their sympathy in a thousand ways. When we came through Mayagüez the women began to cry and put their arms around our necks, shouting, "Viva America!" (Chicago Daily News, September 7, 1898, p. 3). Comments such as this one, made during the weeks following the invasion, may serve to illustrate the degree of frustration that Puerto Ricans felt with the Spanish régime, and the enthusiasm with which they collaborated with the invading forces.

44 "Some people have been disposed to regard the conquest of Puerto Rico as ridiculously, if not absurdly, easy, and there is no doubt that the disposition of the inhabitants had much to do with the comfort and safety of the invaders. Spaniards are Spaniards, however, and they can fight-- in a way. There is no reason to suppose that the forces under Gen. Macias paid much, or even any, attention to the cheers of the islanders or to the proclamations of village Alcaldes. They observed the adequacy of Gen. Miles preparations, and retired to Aibonito or to some other place, distant and therefore tenable... It's a great thing to have a reputation, and a greater one to deserve it" ("Personal," New York Times, August 11, 1898, p. 6.).

45 Richard Harding Davis, The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns, pp. 299-300, 305.


Sandburg, p. 418.

See Lewis Hanlow, Van Deusen et al., eds., Quinquennial Record of the Class of Ninety-Eight of Princeton University (Philadelphia: 1903), pp. 41-42, 49, 186.

Anthony Fiala, Troop "C" in Service: An Account of the Part Played by Troop "C" of the New York Volunteer Cavalry in the Spanish-American War (Brooklyn: 1899), pp. 56-58. Fiala also describes the ineptitude that caused the transport ship to run aground at the entrance to the port of Guánica.


See, for example, Endwin Erle Sparks, The Expansion of the American People: Social and Territorial (Chicago: 1900), pp. 445-46.

La Correspondencia, June 13, 1898, p. 2.


Esteban López-Jiménez, "Epoca de dolor: Páginas Tristes," in "Escapes de Vapor," an unpublished volume of three autobiographical essays. I am grateful to Dr. Luce López Baralt for access to a photocopy of this invaluable testimony, written in January of 1900. About these
events see also Rivero, chapter 22, "Sucesos de Fajardo."


59 "Ayer y Hoy," El Combate, Year 1, no. 55, Tuesday, July 25, 1899, p. 2.

CHAPTER 3

1 The San Juan press refers to residents of the capital --particularly civil servants-- who escaped to live in the countryside during the war as embiscados [embriscar, according to Rubén del Rosario, Vocabulario puertorriqueño, 3d ed. (Rio Piedras: Editorial Edil: 1980) means to flee or escape. --Tr.] (See Rivero, p. 564). In Quebradillas and other municipalities the embiscados were members of the armed bands, called tiznados elsewhere.

2 NARA, RG 108, entry 122, Army Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 190, pp. 105, 113; vol. 191, p. 20. The way events were first reported in La Bruja, published in Mayagüez, the Guardia Civil had accused the mayor, Sánchez, of not having enforced law and order ("De Aguada, La Verdad," August 31, 1898, p. 3.) but the report and the letters received by Miles, including a report from an agent in San Juan, show
Sánchez openly fraternizing with de Funiak’s detachment.

3 See “Nombramiento de una comisión para celebrar entrevista con el Mayor General Henry sobre las facultades del Ayuntamiento en sus distintos organismos...,” AMP, Asuntos Varios, sheaf 156, box 147, dossier 183, which includes a copy of the “Memoria presentada por una comisión de este ayuntamiento al honorable General Henry y aprobada por esta superior autoridad del distrito sobre extensión de la autonomía municipal” (Ponce, October 5, 1898).

4 See La Bruja, September 4, 1898, p. 2, “Fuego graneado.” About the removal from office of the mayor of Adjuntas in August, 1898, see “Miscellaneous Reports” in NARA, RG 395, entry 5857.

5 See “Robo incierto,” in La Bomba, September 24, 1898, p. 1: “Some merchants who do business with the farmers and receive payment in harvested coffee are extending the due date on the promissory notes until March or April, at which time they expect our currency will have been replaced by U.S. dollars, so they will be paid in American gold for what they sold for Puerto Rican pesos.”

6 Puerto Rico Letters Received, vol. 8, number 1953; Mayagüez Letters Received, box 1, letter from Capt. James Buchanan to Lt. Jenkins. On October 23, 1898, The Chicago Tribune, under the headline “Anxious to be Clerks in Porto Rico” reported on its front page that the State Department was swamped with letters requesting jobs in Puerto Rico and Cuba. On January 24, 1899, Brigadier General Grant wrote to the Adjutant General at State, “…nearly every steamer from the United
States brings a lot of impecunious characters to the island who are unable to secure employment, and soon find themselves in a destitute and deplorable condition.” (San Juan Letters Sent vol. II, p. 30, number 841).


See La Correspondencia, January 2, 1892, p. 3, and October 10, 1895, p. 3; AGPR, Ponce Superior Court, Criminal 1890-99, box xv, Audiencia de lo Criminal de Ponce, Minutas de Sentencias Dictadas... en Octubre, Noviembre y Diciembre” (1891) no. 337.

El País, May 30, 1898, p. 2; La Unión, July 9, 1898, p. 3.

AMP, sheaf 157, box 148 A, dossier 112, "Manifestación de la Presidencia respecto a que se concedan gratis toda clase de reparaciones de casas por término de seis meses a fin de dar trabajo a la clase obrera."

La Correspondencia, June 13, 1898, p. 3.


NARA, RG108, entry 122, Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 189, p. 61, Henry to Adjutant General.

Ponce Letters Sent vol. I, p. 158. Decisive proof does not exist that the photograph of an armed band with the flag of Puerto Rico taken somewhere in the south coast depicts Aguila Blanca's band. This attribution originates in the 1905 publication of Our Islands and Their Peoples (vol. 1, p. 362) and is due to efforts made -- in the above and
other publications of the times-- to cast Cuban and Puerto Rican partisans as bandits, as part of an effort to justify the annexation of both Antillean islands. What is odd is that this allegation has been repeated without corroboration, and that Aguila Blanca has been described as holding certain political beliefs which were never ascribed to him by either Puerto Rican or American contemporary sources. See pp. 135 ff.

15 Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 189, p. 77. The author of the message [reproduced here in the original English --Tr.] is listed as "E. Sugoring." The premature occupation of San Germán led to the return of the Spanish troops, who abandoned the city as Schwann's troops approached. In the report filed by Schwann about his activities in the western part of the island, he mentions the cooperation of criollo auxiliary troops.

16 See Julio Tomás Martínez-Mirabal, Colección Martínez: Crónicas íntimas (Arecibo: 1946); Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 189, pp. 87, 95, 98, 118.

17 AGPR, TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 957, "Juzgado de instrucción de Utuado, Sumario 423 1898 Contra Don Salvador Pérez-Gerena y Don Ramón Hernández-Olivencia por Estafa". In 1900, Salvador Pérez-Gerena owned 40 cuerdas in Barrio Angeles and Ramón Hernández-Olivencia owned 18 and a half.

18 On August 9, 1898, 2nd Lt. W. H. Paine, of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, submitted an official report about this armed band to General
Stone. See Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 190, p. 35.

19 Juan Manuel Delgado has written a book on this subject, El levantamiento de Ciales (Rio Piedras: 1980). The letter from Figueroa to Miles quoted below, however, points towards a different interpretation of the "Sucesos de Ciales," as the press of the times used to refer to the case.

20 See Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 190, pp. 63, 77, 80, 92-93; vol 191, p. 39; vol. 186, p. 54; La Bruja, October 19, 1898, p. 3, "Sucesos de Ciales".

21 Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 190, p. 77. See also B. Vélez, "Los Sucesos de Ciales," Boletín Histórico de Puerto Rico 6 (1919), pp. 80-85. Rodulfo Figueroa was in jail under suspicion of having been involved in the burning of the property of a peninsular Spaniard, Francisco Martin, and the fire at Caserío de Coto in Ponce. General Henry freed him early in December, 1898. At the beginning of January, 1899, Figueroa was named chief of police of Juana Díaz. In this capacity he cooperated in the arrest and trial of the members of an armed band that operated around Ciales and Jayuya. (Correo de Puerto Rico, December 9, 1898, p. 2, and January 5, 1899, p. 3; NARA, RG 153, box 2969, dossier 11182).

22 Esperanza Mayol, Islas, 133-34.

23 NARA, RG 395, entry 5858, "Al General Schwann Jefe de las fuerzas americanas que operan en Mayagüez E. U."

24 Ibid. "Miscellaneous Letters," letters from Maricao's mayor
Lignet to Colonel De Russy; Puerto Rico Letters Received, vol. 9, no. 2024.

25 New York Times. August 1, 1898, p. 1, "Puerto Rico an easy conquest." The following day the Times reported that instances of vandalism and revenge had taken place in other villages in the district of Ponce ("Another Town in Puerto Rico Ours," p. 1).


27 La Correspondencia. August 8, 1898, p. 2.


29 NARA, RG 396, entry 5857, "Proceedings of a Military Commission which Convened at Ponce, Porto Rico, pursuant to... Special Field Order number 29."


31 AGPR, TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 957, dossier 266.

32 Interview with doña Carmen Bauzá González, daughter of the Majorcan landowner Miguel Bauzá, November 9, 1986, in Río Piedras.

33 See Esperanza Mayol, 129.

34 See Edwards, op. cit., 233 ff.; El País, p. 3, "De la Isla;" Headquarters Letters Received, vol. 190, p. 17 letter from José González-Hernández, mayor of San Sebastián, to the military authorities, October 11, 1898 (NARA, RG 395, entry 5858, "Miscellaneous Letters").

36 TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 959, lawsuit no. 260.

37 AGPR, Justicia, Confinados, box 89C, no. 504, Penal history of the mulatto prisoner Aniceto Orta y Arocho.

38 TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 957, indictment no. 266.

39 Towards 1894 Pedro Castro-González owned two tracts of land in Vivi Arriba. One measured 19 cuerdas and the other 15, with a total of six cuerdas planted in coffee. The name of one of the farms was "Covadonga," which suggests Castro might have been a native of Asturias. By 1900, however, he was paying taxes for 214 cuerdas in the same barrio (CFRU numbers 258 and 263; 1900 Census, 10v).

40 TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 958, dossier 270.


42 In 1900 Gaspar Homar owned 40 cuerdas in Jayuya Arriba (1900 Census, 16r).

43 TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 959, indictment no. 280.

44 TSA, Civil, Utuado, box 271, indictment no. 3 of the Utuado Municipal Courthouse and no. 391 of the Arecibo Justice Court; 1900 Census, 5v. Apparently this case was heard by the Provisional Federal Court; I am unaware of the outcome.
Regarding this group see TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 965, dossier 442. Pablo Ferrl, an illiterate, was still in jail awaiting trial in May, 1899, when Lino Guzmán wrote a letter in his name to the military commander in Mayagüez requesting that "work be assigned to me so that with the money they might wish to give me I may purchase a change of clothes" (Mayagüez Letters Received, box 1, no. 614). "La Mano Negra" was a popular name for anarchical rural groups in Andalusia toward the end of the 19th century. See Clara E. Lido, "Agrarian Anarchism in Andalusia: Documents on the Mano Negra," *International Review of Social History*, 14 (1969), 315-52; Temma Kaplan, *Anarchists of Andalusia, 1868-1903* (Princeton: 1977).

In 1900 Rafael Herrera owned 75 *cuerdas* in Don Alonso (1900 Census, 12v).

Rigau and Lanzo were acquitted.

*La Correspondencia*, August 23, 1898, p. 1; August 31, p. 2.
55 El País, October 7, 1898, p. 3.
57 San Juan Letters Sent I, pp. 88-89.
58 Thomas Sherman, S. J., "A Month in Porto Rico," Messenger of the Sacred Heart 33 (1898), 1078-79. I am grateful to my fellow Jesuit Manuel Maza for sending a photocopy of this article. Blanco started by acquiring 80 cuerdas in 1890. Towards 1896, his hacienda measured 400 cuerdas, of which 260 would produce the coffee harvest. At the time, the hacienda was equipped with a double warehouse with 20 movable drying trays, another warehouse with ten, a wood storage shed, another building with an oxen-powered mill, a building that housed machinery, tanks for washing coffee berries, a family residence, an overseer's office, a paved area used for drying coffee in the sun, a cistern, and 32 houses for workers. By 1900 Blanco's property measured 522 cuerdas (Morel Campos, Porvenir, 146-47; CFRU numbers 116 and 118; 1900 Census, 6 r).

59 For example, on the 24th of September Judge Félix Santoni, of Utuado, wrote a letter to the Mayagüez District Court to report that he was disqualifying himself from hearing the case in which Eusebio Pérez-Grau had been the victim of a band of robbers, because it fell under military jurisdiction (TSA, Criminal, Utuado, box 959, dossier 260, 1 r).