

# Plausible deniability of *supporting evidence*.

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*The Platt Amendment — eight articles written into Cuba's constitution by U.S. statutory rider in 1901, embodied as permanent treaty in 1903, and cited by Roosevelt one year later as proof his new doctrine worked. The mechanism predates the doctrine that claimed to authorize it.*

## ARTICLES

Eight

Drafted by Elihu Root · sponsored by Sen. Orville Platt (R-CT)

## PRECEDED COROLLARY

3 years

March 2, 1901 →  
December 6, 1904

## CITED BY ROOSEVELT

Once

"With the aid of the Platt amendment Cuba has shown"

**The precedent the Corollary harvested.** Article III of the Platt Amendment grants the United States the right to intervene in Cuba "for the preservation of Cuban independence" and "the maintenance of a government adequate." That language — operative in Cuban constitutional text from June 12, 1901 — is the Roosevelt Corollary three years before Roosevelt articulated it. **Source.** National Archives, Milestone Documents. *Platt Amendment (1903)*. [archives.gov/milestone-documents/platt-amendment](https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/platt-amendment). The transcript above is the embodied treaty text of May 22, 1903, which incorporates the statutory rider of March 2, 1901.

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Bridge document — sits between Step 02 (Venezuela crisis) and Step 03 (Corollary) of the Five-Step Authorization Pattern. *we watch oil so your 401k survives it.*

# What Platt makes visible.

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INFERENCE · LABELED

Roosevelt did not invent the Corollary's mechanism. He inherited it, already drafted by Secretary of War Elihu Root, already sponsored by Senator Orville Platt, already embedded in the Cuban constitution by U.S. statutory rider, already operationalized by the Treaty of Relations of May 22, 1903. The mechanism predated the doctrine that claimed to authorize it by three years. Roosevelt's December 6, 1904 message cited Platt as evidence the Corollary worked — but Platt is also evidence that the Corollary was retroactive cover for a policy already running.

This is what plausible deniability of supporting evidence looks like. Citing Monroe made the Corollary look like a reading. Citing Platt would have made it look like an extension of a policy already in force. Roosevelt cited Monroe in doctrine and Platt in execution — two different framings of the same mechanism, chosen for what each concealed.

# The precedent, in order.

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**April 19, 1898**

Teller Amendment passed — Senator Henry Teller of Colorado attached the disclaimer that the United States would NOT exercise sovereignty over Cuba. The promise on the record.

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**December 10, 1898**

Treaty of Paris ends the Spanish-American War. Spain relinquishes Cuba. U.S. military occupation begins under General Leonard Wood.

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**July 1900**

Cuban Constitutional Convention opens. Notified that Congress intends to attach an amendment to its constitution.

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**1901 (early)**

Secretary of War Elihu Root drafts the eight articles that will become the Platt Amendment. Senator Orville Platt of Connecticut, as chair of the Senate Committee on Relations with Cuba, sponsors the language as a rider.

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**March 2, 1901**

Army Appropriations Act passed with the Platt Amendment as rider. Cuba is told to add it to the constitution as a condition of U.S. troop withdrawal.

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**June 12, 1901**

Cuban Constitutional Convention reluctantly adopts the Platt Amendment as an appendix to its constitution.

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**May 20, 1902**

Republic of Cuba established. U.S. military occupation formally ends. The Teller promise nominally fulfilled — under terms that nominally restore sovereignty while reserving intervention.

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**February 16/23, 1903**

Guantanamo Bay coaling-station agreement signed under Article VII.

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**May 22, 1903**

Treaty of Relations between the United States and Cuba — the Platt Amendment embodied as permanent treaty under Article VIII.

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**July 2, 1903**

Supplementary coaling/naval-station lease formalizing perpetual Guantanamo presence.

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<b>December 6, 1904</b>	Roosevelt's Fourth Annual Message — "with the aid of the Platt amendment Cuba has shown." The Corollary articulated, citing Platt as proof.
<b>September 29, 1906</b>	First U.S. intervention in Cuba under Platt Article III. Pattern entrenched.
<b>May 29, 1934</b>	Treaty of Relations of 1934 abrogates the Platt Amendment under FDR's Good Neighbor framing. Guantánamo Bay clause survives intact.
<b>December 2, 1823</b>	<i>Monroe's original line — defensive, passive, protective intent. Step 01 receipt. The doctrine being quietly converted into intervention authority decades later.</i>
<b>December 1902 – February 1903</b>	<i>Venezuela blockade. Step 02 receipt. The European-debt crisis Article II forecloses for Cuba.</i>
<b>December 6, 1904</b>	<i>The Corollary. Step 03 receipt. The doctrine that Roosevelt grounded in Monroe, but proved with Platt.</i>
<b>1906, 1912, 1917, 1920</b>	<i>Four formal Cuban occupations under Platt Article III. Step 04 receipt.</i>

*Cuba cannot enter into treaties that impair its independence or grant foreign powers a foothold.*

**"Cuba may not contract its way out of the American orbit."**

**Text.** That the government of Cuba shall never enter into any treaty or other compact with any foreign power or powers which will impair or tend to impair the independence of Cuba, nor in any manner authorize or permit any foreign power or powers to obtain by colonization or for military or naval purposes or otherwise, lodgement in or control over any portion of said island.

*Cuba cannot borrow beyond what its ordinary revenues can service — the Venezuela-style trigger removed in advance.*

**"The fiscal mechanism that produced the 1902 Venezuela blockade is foreclosed in Cuba by treaty."**

**Text.** That said government shall not assume or contract any public debt, to pay the interest upon which, and to make reasonable sinking fund provision for the ultimate discharge of which, the ordinary revenues of the island, after defraying the current expenses of government shall be inadequate.

*The Corollary, three years early. The United States may intervene to preserve Cuban independence, maintain stable government, and discharge Cuba's foreign obligations.*

**"This article is the Roosevelt Corollary in treaty form, written into Cuban constitutional text in 1901 — three years before Roosevelt's annual message articulated the same mechanism as hemispheric prerogative."**

**Text.** That the government of Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty, and for discharging the obligations with respect to Cuba imposed by the treaty of Paris on the United States, now to be assumed and undertaken by the government of Cuba.

*All U.S. military occupation acts are validated retroactively.*

**"The occupation that preceded the treaty is laundered into legitimacy by the treaty."**

**Text.** That all Acts of the United States in Cuba during its military occupancy thereof are ratified and validated, and all lawful rights acquired thereunder shall be maintained and protected.

*Cuba shall execute U.S.-devised sanitation plans — yellow fever as the public-health justification for ongoing American supervision.*

**"American interest in Cuban internal affairs is normalized through a public-health frame."**

**Text.** That the government of Cuba will execute, and as far as necessary extend, the plans already devised or other plans to be mutually agreed upon, for the sanitation of the cities of the island, to the end that a recurrence of epidemic and infectious diseases may be prevented, thereby assuring protection to the people and commerce of Cuba, as well as to the commerce of the southern ports of the United States and the people residing therein.

*The Isle of Pines is excluded from Cuba's constitutional boundaries — left to future U.S. negotiation.*

**"Territorial ambiguity is preserved as a U.S. lever. The Isle of Pines question remained unsettled until 1925."**

**Text.** That the Isle of Pines shall be omitted from the proposed constitutional boundaries of Cuba, the title thereto being left to future adjustment by treaty.

*Cuba shall sell or lease lands for U.S. naval stations — the legal root of Guantánamo Bay.*

**"The naval-station clause survives the 1934 abrogation. Guantánamo Bay remains under U.S. control today."**

**Text.** That to enable the United States to maintain the independence of Cuba, and to protect the people thereof, as well as for its own defense, the government of Cuba will sell or lease to the United States lands necessary for coaling or naval stations at certain specified points to be agreed upon with the President of the United States.

*The seven preceding articles shall be embodied in a permanent treaty — operationalized on May 22, 1903.*

**"What the statute imposed by rider, the Treaty of Relations of May 22, 1903 made permanent — and Roosevelt named one year later as proof the Corollary worked."**

**Text.** That by way of further assurance the government of Cuba will embody the foregoing provisions in a permanent treaty with the United States.