

When discussing President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Haiti, historians usually focus on both the positive and negative aspects of his policy.

Historical Background

The U.S. occupation of Haiti began in 1915 under President Woodrow Wilson and lasted nearly 19 years. During the occupation, the United States controlled many aspects of Haiti's finances, military affairs, and government administration. Haitians frequently resisted the occupation, leading to protests and armed uprisings.

Roosevelt's Major Action: Ending the Occupation

After becoming president in 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced the "Good Neighbor Policy," which sought to reduce direct U.S. intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean. Under this policy, Roosevelt negotiated the withdrawal of U.S. Marines from Haiti. The last Marines left Haiti on August 15, 1934.

This decision was welcomed by many Haitians because it formally restored Haitian sovereignty and ended nearly two decades of military occupation. Roosevelt even visited Cap-Haïtien in July 1934 before the final withdrawal.

Criticism of Roosevelt's Policy

Many Haitian historians point out that although Roosevelt ended the military occupation, the United States continued to influence Haiti's finances after 1934. American financial advisers remained involved in overseeing Haitian debt and finances for years afterward. Haiti did not regain full control of its external finances until 1947.

Critics therefore argue that Roosevelt ended the visible military occupation but not all forms of American influence over Haiti.

Haitian Perspective

Many Haitians remember Roosevelt as the U.S. president who finally ended the occupation. However, they also remember that:

- The occupation itself caused significant loss of Haitian sovereignty.
- The occupation rewrote parts of Haiti's political and economic system.
- Forced labor policies and repression during the occupation led to Haitian resistance and casualties.
- Economic control by the United States continued after the Marines departed.

Why This Matters

For Haiti, the story of Roosevelt is complex:

Positive legacy

- Ended the U.S. military occupation in 1934.
- Adopted a policy of non-intervention toward Latin America.
- Officially recognized greater Haitian self-government.

Negative legacy

- Did not fully end U.S. financial influence in Haiti.
- Left behind institutions created during the occupation that continued to shape Haitian politics.
- Many Haitians believed true independence was incomplete until financial controls ended in 1947.

For many Haitian scholars, Roosevelt's most significant action regarding Haiti was not starting the occupation but ending it, making 1934 a major milestone in Haiti's long struggle to recover full sovereignty.

please elaborate Roosevelt other policies in Haiti

Franklin D. Roosevelt and Haiti: A Deeper Look at His Policies

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The relationship between Haiti and

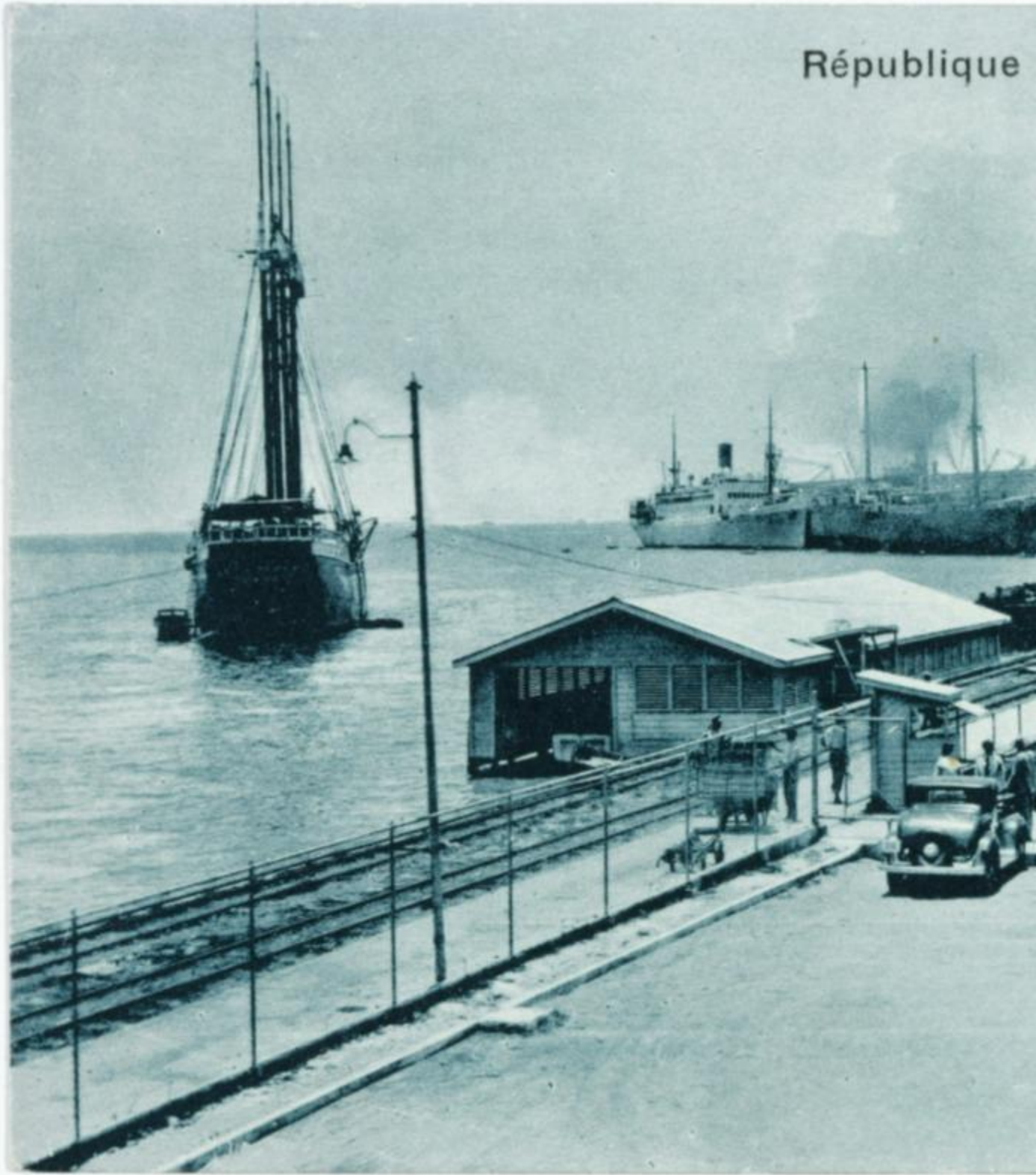
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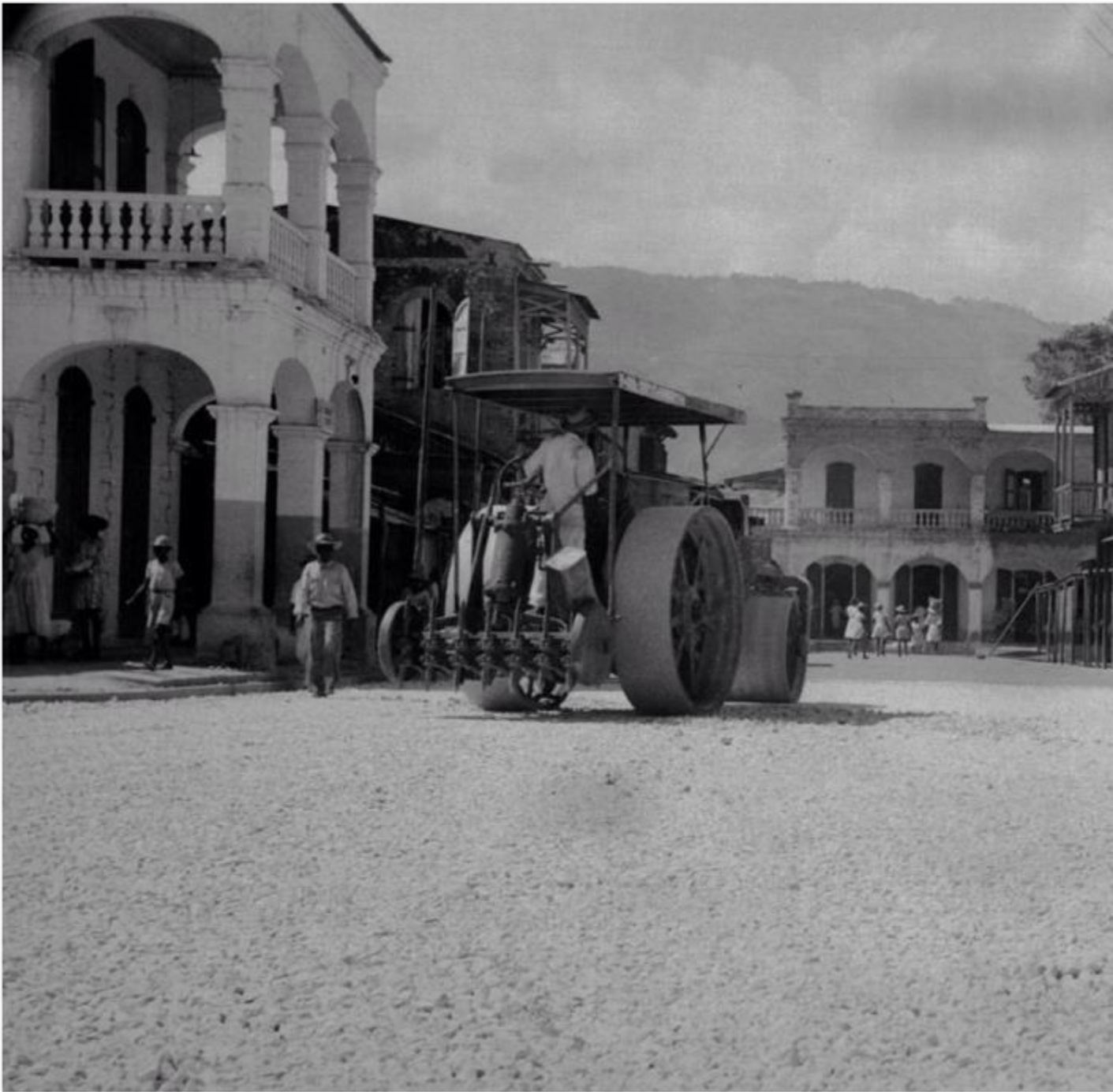
Franklin D. Roosevelt's policy toward Haiti did not begin and end with the withdrawal of U.S. troops in 1934. His approach was part of a broader shift in U.S. foreign policy in the Caribbean known as the **Good Neighbor Policy**, but it still carried several important economic, political, and institutional consequences for Haiti.

1. Ending the Military Occupation (but not all U.S. control)



République





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Roosevelt is best known for negotiating the **end of the U.S. military occupation of Haiti (1915–1934)**. However, the withdrawal of troops did not mean a full end of American influence.

- U.S. Marines left Haiti in 1934
- But U.S. advisors remained in key financial institutions

- Haitian sovereignty was restored politically, but not fully economically

This reflects Roosevelt's pragmatic goal: reduce visible intervention while maintaining stability and U.S. strategic interests in the Caribbean.

2. Financial Control and Customs Administration Legacy

Even after Roosevelt ended the occupation, the financial system created during the intervention remained largely intact.

Key points:

- The **Haitian National Bank** had been controlled by U.S. interests since before and during the occupation
- Customs revenues (Haiti's main source of income) had been previously managed under U.S. supervision
- After 1934, Haiti gradually regained control, but transition was slow and supervised

Roosevelt's policy did **not immediately dismantle the financial structure** created under the occupation—it was phased out gradually.

3. Treaty Revisions and Haitian Sovereignty

Roosevelt's administration worked with Haitian President **Sténio Vincent** to formalize the end of U.S. military presence.

- A new treaty framework was negotiated
- Haitian control of internal governance was restored
- U.S. Marines officially left in August 1934

However, some agreements ensured continued American advisory influence, especially in fiscal matters, for several years afterward.

4. Infrastructure and Public Works Legacy

Many of the infrastructure projects that began during the occupation were left in place and expanded cautiously under the post-occupation period.

These included:

- Roads connecting rural areas to Port-au-Prince
- Administrative buildings and government institutions
- Port and customs modernization systems

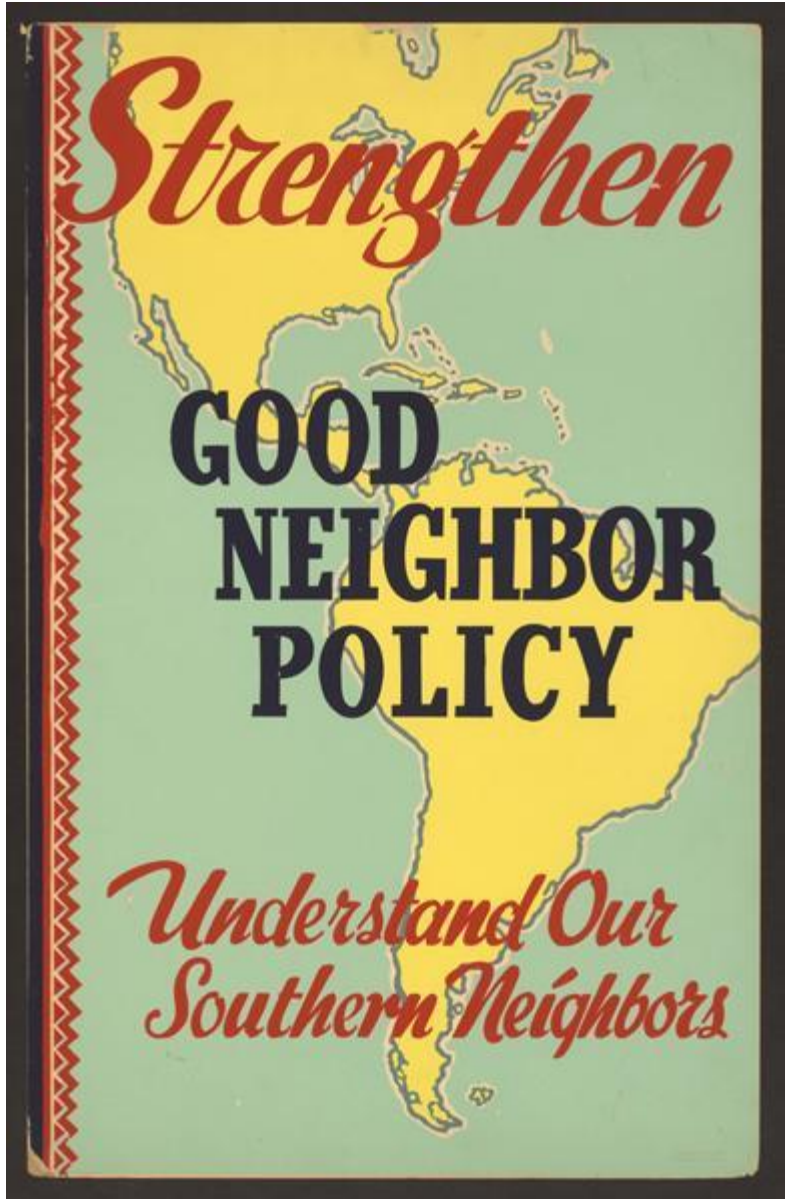
While these projects improved infrastructure, they were originally designed under U.S. strategic priorities, not Haitian-led development planning.

5. Military and Security Policy Changes

Roosevelt supported dismantling the **Garde d'Haïti (Haitian military force)** that had been reorganized under U.S. supervision during the occupation.

- The U.S.-trained constabulary was transitioned into Haitian control
 - Haiti's security forces remained influenced by U.S. training models
 - This shaped Haitian military structure for decades
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6. The “Good Neighbor Policy” and Symbolism





The Good Neighbor Policy



1933-



Roosevelt's Haiti policy was part of a broader diplomatic shift:

- Reduced military interventions in Latin America
- Emphasized cooperation instead of direct occupation
- Improved U.S. image after years of interventionism

In Haiti, this meant:

- End of direct military rule
 - Beginning of a more diplomatic but still unequal relationship
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7. Limitations and Criticism

Many Haitian historians and scholars argue Roosevelt's reforms were **partial, not complete liberation**.

Criticisms include:

- Economic dependence on U.S.-structured financial systems continued
- Haiti's sovereignty was still limited in practice, especially financially
- Development priorities were shaped by earlier U.S. occupation policies
- Haiti remained politically unstable in the post-occupation period

In this view, Roosevelt ended **visible control**, but not all structural influence.

8. Long-Term Impact on Haiti

Roosevelt's policies left a mixed legacy:

Positive outcomes:

- End of military occupation (1934)
- Restoration of formal sovereignty
- Reduced U.S. direct intervention

Ongoing challenges:

- Continued financial dependency patterns
- Institutional systems shaped by occupation-era design

- Long-term political instability partly rooted in this transition period
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Conclusion

Roosevelt's Haiti policy is best understood as a **transition strategy rather than a full reset**:

- He ended the military occupation
- Preserved much of the administrative and financial structure temporarily
- Shifted U.S. policy toward diplomacy instead of direct control

For Haiti, this period marks the end of foreign military rule—but also the beginning of a more complex form of economic and institutional influence that lasted well beyond 1934.

