

Calvin Coolidge Says:

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NORTHAMPTON, Mass., Jan. 3.—Thousands of our citizens and about one-twenty-fifth of our national wealth are in foreign countries. For many generations international law has recognized that a government has an interest in its citizens and their property and is under a moral duty to protect them wherever they are. Otherwise a country could be seriously crippled by the destruction of property or its citizens themselves when they are abroad. These duties and interests require any government to protect its citizens and their property in the enjoyment of their rights under international law when they are on foreign soil. It is not a voluntary action, but a binding duty imposed by international law and is common to all nations. Sending marine forces for this purpose is not regarded as war.

Our government does not like to do this and avoids it when possible. But if we failed to do it in Central America, European governments would send their forces there to protect their corresponding interests. Our forces are not in any country because we want them there. They are there because of our obligation under international law. The observance and enforcement of such law is the best guaranty of order and peace.

CALVIN COOLIDGE