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The Omaha World-Herald and the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1914

Jennifer M. Pedersen

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THE OMAHA WORLD-HERALD AND THE
MEXICAN REVOLUTION, 1910-1914

A Thesis

Presented to the
Department of History
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Jennifer M. Pedersen

August, 1985

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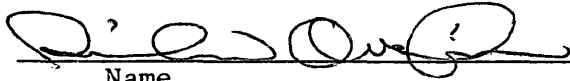


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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of
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PREFACE

By the early twentieth century the American newspaper was a primary means of disseminating information to the people. In Omaha a significant portion of the population learned of events--local, national, international--from one of the major newspapers in the city, The Omaha World-Herald. Because of the potential impact of The Omaha World-Herald on its readers, scholars have conducted several studies of the editorial opinion of the paper regarding its position on various subjects. If newspapers do influence readers by the type of stories covered, the method of presenting those stories and editorial opinion, it is indeed important to understand the position of a particular newspaper in relation to a given event. Hopefully, an examination of a newspaper's coverage of the event will lead to a better understanding of a society at the time.

The Omaha Evening World was founded by Gilbert M. Hitchcock, Frank J. Burkley, William V. Rooker, William F. Gurley, and Alfred Millard, in 1885.¹ In 1889, Hitchcock, the sole owner of The Omaha Evening World, combined it with The Herald to form The Omaha World-Herald, which he continued to own until his death in 1934. At his death Hitchcock provided in his will for ownership of the newspaper to remain in his family.² Throughout Hitchcock's life, The Omaha World-Herald

consistently supported the Democratic party.³ This was true even though Hitchcock was elected to the United States Senate in 1910 and no longer managed the newspaper. Editors Harvey Newbranch, Walter Christenson, and Frederick Ware, who served successively after 1910, pursued the political philosophy of the World-Herald's owner.⁴

The Omaha World-Herald presented its political views very clearly in 1894 when it supported free silver and the fusion of the Populists with the Democrats.⁵ This was done under the auspices of Hitchcock and his assistant Metcalfe. Shortly thereafter they hired William Jennings Bryan as editor-in-chief of The Omaha World-Herald, a position which he retained until his Democratic presidential campaign in 1896.⁶ This interest in national policies, according to Roger J. Jacob, in his thesis "A Study of the Editorial Attitude of The Omaha World-Herald Toward The Cuban Crisis, 1895-1898," represented an expansion of the newspaper's scope beyond the local arena of Omaha to encompass both the state and the nation.⁷

In years following, The Omaha World-Herald was concerned with and involved in many national issues. The paper supported Woodrow Wilson for president, both in 1912 and 1916, as well as issues such as tariff reform, independence for the Philippines, the ending of child labor by federal legislation, and support of the federal bank bill.⁸ Of the various issues dealt with editorially by The Omaha World-Herald, scholars have examined three to determine the attitude of the newspaper: The Cuban Crisis, 1895-1898; The Spanish-American War; and The Philippines Insurrection.

In the case of the Cuban Crisis, according to Jacob's thesis, The Omaha World-Herald maintained a neutral attitude toward the Cuban situation until it became apparent that the Cuban patriots could not achieve victory and when American interests in Cuba were threatened and even destroyed by Spanish misrule of the island.⁹ According to Jacob, the Omaha newspaper and Hitchcock were extremely sympathetic and sincere but objective toward the Cuban Crisis and reports in the newspaper informed the readers primarily of the conditions that prevailed on the island. Thus, The Omaha World-Herald was a Democratic political organ which eventually supported Cuban independence, even though that meant siding with a Republican president, McKinley. As Jacob stated, "Hitchcock's cries for 'Cuba Libre' were sincerely expressed for what he thought to be the temper of the American people."¹⁰ This study portrayed not an imperialistic attitude by The Omaha World-Herald but rather one of protectiveness of American lives and property.

The editorial opinion studied by Catherine Fogarty in her thesis "The World-Herald's Editorial Reaction To The Spanish-American War" continued to be Democratic and supportive of the revolutionaries, but in 1895 did not support United States intervention. However, the newspaper also opposed European involvement in the western hemisphere.¹¹ By 1897, The Omaha World-Herald "called for overt American intervention on behalf of the troubled island."¹² In taking this stand, the paper opposed the Republican President, who at this time was against the war, although he supported independence for Cuba. The Omaha World-Herald was one of the press proponents of the war which affected McKinley's decision, by helping to create an emotional and sympathetic attitude for Cuba among the

American people, and more specifically among Nebraskans. By 1898, the newspaper was treating the war as a necessary and humanitarian cause, and no more complex reasons were uncovered by Fogarty in regard to The Omaha World Herald's standpoint on this imperialistic venture.¹³

According to the thesis of James M. Bechtel, "The Omaha World-Herald and the Philippines Insurrection: A Study in Anti-Imperialism," the newspaper's stand was against imperialism in the late nineties. Bechtel felt the newspaper pursued this line partially due to the association of imperialism with capitalism, the Republican party, and expense to the taxpayers.¹⁴ The editors were, in fact, concerned with the morality of the intervention in the Philippines but also the extent to which this type of activity would divert finances and energy from the United States and its development.¹⁵ Humanitarian reasons also played a part in The Omaha World-Herald's objections to American involvement in the Philippines. According to Bechtel, the newspaper felt "militarism was the final evil fruit of imperialism."¹⁶ Therefore, The Omaha World-Herald's opposition to the United States intervention in the Philippines "was multi-faceted."¹⁷

Indeed, The Omaha World-Herald's editorials have proved pertinent in their portrayal of its attitude toward various events. In fact, the studies of Jacob, Fogarty, and Bechtel have shown that the newspaper in its editorials often supported the Democratic party's position on foreign policy, but did at times agree with intervention in the western hemisphere. Intervention could be justified if it was to protect American lives or to prevent European powers from intervening. And as Catherine Fogarty has pointed out, the World-Herald may have

been instrumental in creating a pro-intervention sentiment among Nebraskans.

The purpose of this study is to examine the editorial opinion of The Omaha World-Herald concerning the Mexican political crisis which existed from 1910 through 1914, that is, from the overthrow of General Porfirio Diaz, the President of Mexico, through the assassination of his successor, Francisco I. Madero, Jr., the regime of Huerta and finally the mediation of the A,B.C. governments. During this time, The Omaha World-Herald and its readers expressed concern over events in Mexico, their causes and possible solutions. The newspaper did so by means of its editorials, cartoons, and the printing of stories from other newspapers and various columns of national and local origin, columns such as "The Truth About Mexico" and the "Thought of the Day." Readers contributed their opinions through "The Public Pulse." In examining these various attitudes regarding the Mexican crisis of 1910-1914, the author will attempt to answer several questions. First, did the editorial position of The Omaha World-Herald differ from that expressed during the previously mentioned crises? That is, did The Omaha World-Herald support or oppose intervention in Mexico? Second, what motivated the newspaper to take its position toward the crisis of 1910-1914? And third, did The Omaha World-Herald disagree in any way from its readers, at least as they expressed their opinion in "The Public Pulse"?

Endnotes

- ¹Peter Boughn, "Omaha World Herald," The Nebraska Newspaper, 1939, pp. 5 and 6.
- ²Paul Vanard Peterson, "The Omaha World and World-Herald, 1885-1964," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1966, p. 4.
- ³Ibid., pp. 372 and 377.
- ⁴Ibid., pp. 357 and 367.
- ⁵Ibid., pp. 367 and 401.
- ⁶Roger J. Jacob, "A Study of the Editorial Attitude of The Omaha World-Herald Toward The Cuban Crisis, 1895-1898," Masters thesis, University of Nebraska at Omaha, June 1967, p. 14.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 15.
- ⁸Peterson, p. 357.
- ⁹Jacob, p. 16.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 115.
- ¹¹Catherine Fogarty, "The World-Herald's Editorial Reaction to the Spanish-American War," Masters thesis, University of Nebraska at Omaha, August 1975, pp. 6 and 16.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 6.
- ¹³Ibid., pp. 7 and 106.
- ¹⁴James M. Bechtel, "The Omaha World-Herald and The Philippines Insurrection: A Study In Anti-Imperialism," Masters thesis, University of Nebraska at Omaha, December 1974, p. 84.
- ¹⁵Ibid., pp. 85 and 86.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 86.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 89.

CHAPTER 1

PRELUDE TO REVOLUTION: THE DIAZ YEARS

Porfirio Diaz became president of Mexico in 1876. He had risen from the obscurity of a mestizo background from Oaxaca by means of a military career, which began when he joined the revolt against Santa Anna in 1853. Afterwards, he remained in the army and built his power and authority. Diaz's career was highlighted by such notable incidents as the Battle of Puebla, in which he defeated the French, and the Three Years' War, both of which brought him fame and power. He also acquired a reputation for bravery and honesty as a result of his military activities. But most important was his advancement in Mexico's military hierarchy, a necessary prerequisite for any potential ruler of the nation. This martial position of Diaz was of great importance when he made his bid later for the leadership of Mexico.¹

Before 1876 the Mexican government had been highly unstable. In fact, it was rare for an administration to complete its elected term. According to one source, "between 1821 and 1868 the form of Mexican government was changed ten times, . . . over fifty persons succeeded one another as presidents, dictators, or emperors, and . . . more than three hundred successful or abortive revolutions were recorded."² In the early 1870s Mexico continued to experience political strife. From 1871,

the year of President Benito Juarez's re-election, to late 1876, the beginning of Diaz's presidency, violent struggles broke out among the liberals in Mexico. There were two major factions in this political group, the followers of Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, the Vice-President of Juarez, and those of General Diaz. In 1872 Juarez died and Lerdo gained temporary ascendancy by becoming the new President. But in early 1876 General Diaz declared that the dictatorship of Lerdo should be overthrown. During the year Diaz drove Lerdo out of Mexico and into exile in the United States, and on November 21, 1876, Diaz forcefully entered Mexico City. By May 1877 the Mexican Congress had recognized Diaz as the President of their nation, and a new dictatorship took over the reigns of power in this Latin American country. According to Virginia Prewet, in her book, Reportage On Mexico, "the Mexicans always want an improvement, something better, so desperately that they will clutch at any hope."³

The Mexico of which Diaz assumed control was a predominantly rural society dominated by large landholders.⁴ The country had been abused and used by self-serving rulers and war.⁵ Mexico was a nation racked and ruined by a half-century of civil war, with little indigenous capital and with no credit abroad. Agriculture was poor, there was no industry and modern transportation was non-existent.⁶ To this nation of poverty and hopelessness Diaz brought peace and modernization.⁷ Through his methods Diaz made Mexico a productive nation in which there were opportunities for improvement.

Diaz intended to create economic change in Mexico primarily by encouraging citizens of other nations to invest in his country.⁸ In

order to accomplish this goal, he would have to change much of the tradition and political system of Mexico, a very difficult task. To produce such a dramatic revolution, he needed thorough control of much of the Mexican nation and its people. The methods of President Diaz were stringent. They brought about the changes in the nation he desired, but they made him a recipient of hatred and fear.⁹

Of the various methods used by Diaz to produce change in Mexico, few were as controversial as his campaign to rid the nation of its bandits and rebels, who not only threatened the nation's stability but also caused outsiders to be dubious over venturing to enter the country both physically and financially. For this reason, and to subdue his political opposition, Diaz formulated his force of "rurales," a military group which utilized the "ley de fuga" or law of the gun, to enforce his wishes. The "rurales" technique was to arrest an individual and proceed with their prisoner to a place of incarceration. On the way he would "attempt to escape" and be shot. To impose political stability by eliminating his opposition, Diaz arranged either the assassination or imprisonment of his chief political opponents as well. Through these two chief forms of activity the Diaz administration was able to solidify and stabilize the nation politically and also provide a more palatable climate to foreign investors.¹⁰

President Diaz enhanced his regime's position by controlling the press within Mexico and press releases outside the nation. He did so by closing down or censoring Mexican newspapers which took a position in opposition to his dictatorship. The image of the nation presented to

the outside world was created by Diaz and therefore even more conducive to financial involvement.¹¹

The final methods which Diaz applied to the alteration of Mexico were the omnipotent control he placed upon government, both local and national, and land ownership and its utilization. President Diaz and his administration placed the governing power throughout the nation in the hands of his supporters, and eventually these individuals also received economic power. These Diaz supporters were allowed to control the political aspects of their region thoroughly, and with the later economic control, took further positions away from the local inhabitants and traditional leaders.¹² However, ultimate power was always in the hands of Porfirio Diaz. He dominated the state governors on the local level and his own cabinet and Congress on the national level.¹³

The control over land and its usage symbolized a further nationalization of the country and expansion of the power of the government. It also caused more antipathy toward the administration late in Diaz's reign.¹⁴ The traditional owners of the land were evicted and the land put to use in the administration's interests.¹⁵ With this national control of the government and of the land, many Mexicans felt alienated. There was no longer any individual or regional leadership within the nation. Those who did not receive benefits from Diaz felt they were not being considered in regard to the actions of the administration. This group felt that it was being neglected, if not forsaken.¹⁶

The cause of this concern, of course, was Porfirio Diaz's campaign to increase foreign investment in Mexico.¹⁷ As previously stated, President Diaz saw investment by foreigners as an avenue for the

modernization of his nation. His theory was not incorrect. For ultimately this was accomplished, but at some cost to the inhabitants of Mexico and to his administration's popularity.¹⁸

Americans, along with other foreigners, gained immensely from the concessions which were granted by the Diaz administration as well as by the preferential position in which they were placed throughout his regime.¹⁹ They gained property, wealth, a steady work force, and power.²⁰ Eventually, though, these gains were partially the cause of an evolving anti-foreign feeling, especially American, within Mexico.²¹

From the start of his regime President Diaz favored foreigners economically by aiding them in their industrial development in Mexico.²² While these industries utilized the labor and raw materials of Mexico, they did benefit the nation.²³ During the presidency of Porfirio Diaz the national income of Mexico and exports increased five times, imports eight times, and railroad mileage nearly forty-fold. At the same time, harbors were improved and the cotton, sugar, jute, silk, wool, iron, smelting, paper, soap, brewing, meat packing, and mining industries grew substantially.²⁴ But this industrial development also eventually eliminated the middle class and caused others to live in abject poverty by taking their land. By 1910 many Mexicans had declined virtually to the position of slavery.²⁵ The concessions the foreign investors gained meant a loss to Mexico collectively and to individual Mexicans as well. During the Diaz regime foreigners acquired almost 54,000,000 acres of Mexican land by various methods, fair and foul.²⁶ Because of these acquisitions by foreigners and the expansion of properties held by Mexican supporters of Diaz and his government, a larger percentage of

the less fortunate classes of Mexicans suffered the loss of their land and were forced to become workers dependent upon others.²⁷

The first substantial increase of foreign investment in Mexico under President Diaz, occurred in the 1880s, although it had been occurring throughout his regime.²⁸ This build up of foreign investment was most strikingly obvious in northern Mexico, which until that time had been relatively unsettled.²⁹ The rapid modernization of the region accompanying investment caused immense change as well as animosity toward the newcomers and the Mexican government for encouraging such investment.³⁰

The foreign involvement in Mexico, which was at its peak from 1900 to 1910, was just part of the general investment that was occurring throughout Latin America. According to one source, by 1915 foreign investors had sent \$7,567,000,000 to the Latin American countries, and there appeared to be no end to this wave of investment. In the first decade of the twentieth century foreign interests tripled their investments in Mexico.³¹

The investments of foreigners in Mexico were made in many areas by members of various national groups. The largest proportion of investments in Mexico was held by Americans.³² By 1900 American interests in Mexico were considerable, especially in banking, for three of the largest Mexican banks were controlled, financially, by Americans. Americans invested in other areas as well. According to one study, by "1902 the United States held 70% of all of Mexico's railroad stock" and in one railroad Americans had made their most significant investment of nearly \$160,000,000.³³

But this tremendous movement of foreign capital into Mexico marked the beginning of Diaz's decline. He had allowed power to fall into the hands of a limited number of people who took advantage of their position.³⁴ The profits of foreign investment benefited only a small group of Mexican bureaucrats and politicians and provided little economic improvement for the general population.³⁵ The foreign investors themselves utilized the opportunities available in Mexico, but the country benefited little from this development. Wages were low and profits did not remain in Mexico except to develop industries necessary to those in which the investors already had an interest. Foreign capitalists did not attempt to improve the conditions of the people with whom they dealt unless it was to their benefit as well.³⁶ One of the worst forms of this abuse was that of the colonization companies which owned millions of acres of land previously owned by the Mexican people.³⁷

Americans and their financial involvement in Mexico increased until 1911 when their investment totalled over one billion dollars. This amounted to more than one-fourth of all the American investments in foreign countries and exceeded that invested by any single European country. Mark T. Gilderhus, in his book Diplomacy and Revolution: U.S.-Mexican Relations under Wilson and Carranza, concluded that, "Mexico was truly an economic satellite of the United States."³⁸

President Diaz encouraged other nations to invest in Mexico as well.³⁹ Often individual industries fell under the domination of various nations. Frank Brandenburg, in his work The Making of Modern Mexico, summarized the situation as follows:

Americans seized the cement industry. The French monopolized large department stores. The Germans controlled the hardware

business. The Spanish took over foodstores and, together with the French controlled the textile industry. The Canadians, aided by Americans and Englishmen, concentrated on electric power, trolley lines, and water companies. The Belgians, Americans, and English invested heavily in the railroads [and] the Americans and British [pursued the] exploitation of minerals, especially oil.⁴⁰

These additional foreign investments, therefore, resulted in even more domination of the Mexican economy by outside forces during the first decade of the twentieth century. They were a source of great change and industrial advancement for the nation, but they also caused considerable antipathy and resentment among the Mexican people, especially those who had been displaced.⁴¹ Thus, Mexico benefited through this modernization process but it also became a nation divided between those who benefited from the experience and those who lost through it.⁴² Actual material possession was not necessarily at stake, but rather the rights which the individual and the state had traditionally held were definitely endangered.⁴³

The threat of foreign economic domination, especially American, was not eased by the attitude of the United States government toward Latin America at the turn of the century. "Dollar Diplomacy" as pursued by the United States beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century and continuing into the 1900s, caused considerable concern among the nations of Latin America. Under this policy the United States' interests were the major concern.⁴⁴ In brief, "Dollar Diplomacy" held that industrialized nations had to either secure outlets overseas for their surplus goods and capital or succumb to stagnation and revolution at home and defeat and humiliation abroad. The application of this policy in some southern nations caused the region to be wary and suspicious of the

United States and the actions of its population and politicians. In short, "Dollar Diplomacy" was viewed as a major challenge to the sovereignty of many nations within that sector of the world.⁴⁵

Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft further alarmed the Latin Americans by their application of the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary to the doctrine. The United States' actions in Panama, in regard to the canal, during the presidency of Roosevelt was one of the most intense demonstrations of this form of activity and caused a great deal of concern in Latin America.⁴⁶ The American intervention and aid in the Panamanian revolt against the Colombian government in 1903 included the arrival of the United States' gunboat, the Nashville, in Colon within a few days of the rumored date of the revolution and before the arrival of the Colombian government's ships. When the Colombian military made its move, which unfortunately caused a threat to American lives, the United States responded by landing marines in Colon. This revolt, aided by the United States, resulted in the independence of Panama on November 4, 1903. The new nation swiftly received American recognition of its independence, and soon after the United States was granted a perpetual lease for the land where it later constructed the Panama Canal.⁴⁷ According to Frank Brandenburg, the intensity and proximity of the Panama situation to Mexico caused an increase in the Mexicans' antipathy toward the United States.⁴⁸

While Presidents Roosevelt and Taft alarmed some Latin Americans, they were on friendly and cooperative terms with the Diaz administration. Throughout their presidencies there was evidence of interaction between the two nations, which were beneficial to both.⁴⁹ They both

saw President Diaz as the stabilizing element for a temperamental Mexican nation and people.⁵⁰ Simultaneously, they ignored negative aspects of his rule. Theodore Roosevelt concluded that Diaz was the greatest statesman of his age, a leader who had done for his country what no other living man had done for any country.⁵¹ ✓

Relations between Mexico and the United States may never have been better than during the Diaz years.⁵² Throughout the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt his administration was able to work with the Diaz government in regard to Latin American affairs.⁵³ This relationship was at least partially due to the economic relations between the two nations and the Diaz regime's willingness and ability to protect American investments.⁵⁴ This confidence in the Diaz government's ability to protect American lives and property in Mexico continued under President Taft until instability began to overtake Mexico in 1910.⁵⁵

Theodore Roosevelt's proprietorial attitude toward Latin America and his use of the region, as exhibited through the Panama Canal conflict, were apparently acceptable to President Diaz.⁵⁶ The two leaders worked together toward the creation in Central America of an equitable arbitration system.⁵⁷ Also, both Presidents had very strong personalities and believed in the need of action and governmental control. Therefore, Diaz and Roosevelt were able to work together and understand each other. Their presidencies represented a time of Mexican-American cordiality and productivity.⁵⁸

In the case of President Taft and President Diaz, there was much the same cooperation and friendliness, but there was also an unwillingness to act precipitously.⁵⁹ The early cordiality between Taft and Diaz

was most evidently and publicly shown when the two Presidents met in 1909. They shook hands, conversed, and were generally on good terms with each other. A photograph of the two shaking hands was widely circulated throughout Mexico by the Diaz government.⁶⁰

Unfortunately, in the next year the Diaz dictatorship began to show signs of instability, and the Taft administration had little confidence in its survival.⁶¹ With the beginning of Diaz's fall from power, Taft became greatly concerned over the nation's stability and the safety of American lives and property in Mexico.⁶² Taft was also disturbed because the Mexican President had recently begun to favor the interests of other foreign investors.⁶³ President Taft acted quickly in a manner which was detrimental to the Diaz cause, by sending twenty thousand troops to the American side of the Mexican border, supposedly for the purpose of maneuvers. This action was ostensibly only for the purpose of protecting American lives and property, but it directly exhibited the United States' lack of faith toward the regime and illustrated President Taft's pro-business attitude.⁶⁴ This action and its timing were suspicious enough, but tensions increased even more when a large portion of the American Pacific fleet appeared off the Mexican coast.⁶⁵ This activity aroused a good deal of fear and suspicion on the part of Latin Americans and a good deal of antipathy toward Americans in Mexico.⁶⁶

There are several explanations for Taft's failure to intervene directly in Mexico. He definitely favored adhering to the traditional and constitutional limitations of the powers of the presidency. In addition, he did not want to cause further anti-American actions in Mexico.⁶⁷ Lastly, Taft was nearing the end of his term of office, he

was not as active a leader as his predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt, and he wished to avoid a war with its subsequent destruction of American lives and property.⁶⁸ Whatever Taft's motive or motives, there were some who questioned his Mexican policy.⁶⁹ There was an especially loud condemnation from many American newspapers.⁷⁰

Therefore, by 1910, the government of Mexico, although still under the dictatorial rule of Porfirio Diaz, was losing its omnipotent control over the nation and the populus. A primary reason for Diaz's decline in popularity had to be the claim by foreigners on an extensive portion of Mexico's economic opportunities and their failure to return benefits to the Mexican people. Also, the policies of the United States in regard to Latin America were the cause of a good deal of suspicion and fear within its southern neighbor. In short, unrest was stirring within Mexico and the internal and external circumstances surrounding the situation only served to intensify this sentiment. American newspapers such as The Omaha World-Herald monitored events in Mexico closely over the next few years and commented continually regarding the situation. Let us now examine the reaction of this mid-western newspaper to the crisis in Mexico 1910 to 1914.

Endnotes

¹For a survey of the events surrounding the early career of Porfirio Diaz see, Ronald Atkin, Revolution: Mexico 1910-1920 (New York: The John Day Co., 1970); "From Diaz To Carranza, The Story of Five Years' Misrule and Insurrection," The American Review of Reviews, February 1916; Carlos B. Gil, ed., The Age of Porfirio Diaz (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977); Virginia Prewet, Reportage On Mexico (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1941); and Stanley Robert Ross, Francisco I. Madero, Apostle of Mexican Democracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955).

²Gil, pp. 2, 3, 13 and 14; and Ross, p. 20.

³These political events are well chronicled in Ross, Francisco I. Madero, Apostle of Mexican Democracy; Gil, Age of Porfirio Diaz; Prewet, Reportage On Mexico; and Jules David, American Political and Economic Penetration of Mexico 1877-1920 (U.S.A.: Arno Press, 1976).

⁴Jose Bullejos, "The Reform, Diaz, and the Revolution," Americas, July, 1961, p. 13.

⁵"Mexico and Its Makers," The World's Work, June 1911, p. 14433; and Gil, pp. 13-14.

⁶"Mexico and Its Makers," p. 14433.

⁷Ibid.; and S. D. Myres, Jr., ed., Mexico and the United States, Institute of Public Affairs, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Fifth Conference, 1938 (The Arnold Foundation, 1938), p. 11.

⁸Bullejos, p. 14.

⁹Prewet, pp. 45-47.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 43-45.

¹²Frederich Katz, The Secret War In Mexico: Europe, The United States and the Mexican Revolution (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 15-16.

¹³Prewet, p. 45.

¹⁴Katz, pp. 5-10.

¹⁵Myres, p. 11.

¹⁶Katz, pp. 10-11.

- ¹⁷Prewet, pp. 43-44; and O'Brien, pp. 2-3.
- ¹⁸Clarence C. Clendenen, The United States and Pancho Villa: "A Study In Unconventional Diplomacy", American Historical Association, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1961), p. 8.
- ¹⁹O'Brien, pp. 2-3.
- ²⁰Mark T. Gilderhus, Diplomacy and Revolution: U.S.-Mexican Relations under Wilson and Carranza (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1977), p. 1.
- ²¹O'Brien, pp. 2-3; and Katz, p. 21.
- ²²Clendenen, p. 8; and O'Brien, pp. 2-3.
- ²³Prewet, pp. 44-45; and Myres, p. 11.
- ²⁴Prewet, pp. 43-44.
- ²⁵Clendenen, p. 8; Katz, pp. 14-15; and Prewet, p. 45.
- ²⁶Myres, p. 11.
- ²⁷Katz, pp. 14-15.
- ²⁸"Mexico and Its Makers," p. 14434.
- ²⁹Katz, p. 7.
- ³⁰Prewet, pp. 43-45.
- ³¹Katz, pp. 3 and 10.
- ³²Gilderhus, p. 1.
- ³³Davis, p. 173.
- ³⁴Katz, pp. 10-11.
- ³⁵Myres, p. 11.
- ³⁶Prewet, pp. 44-45.
- ³⁷Katz, p. 21; and Frank Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 39.
- ³⁸Gilderhus, p. 1.

³⁹Louis M. Teitalbaum, Woodrow Wilson and The Mexican Revolution (1913-1916), A History of United States-Mexican Relations, From the Murder of Madero Until Villa's Provocation Across the Border (New York: Exposition Press, 1967), p. 15.

⁴⁰Brandenberg, pp. 39-40.

⁴¹Katz, p. 21; and O'Brien, p. 4.

⁴²Myres, p. 11; and O'Brien, p. 4.

⁴³Katz, pp. 3-29.

⁴⁴Brandenberg, p. 42.

⁴⁵Haley, p. 1.

⁴⁶Brandenberg, p. 42.

⁴⁷Lewis Paul Todd and Merle Curti, Rise Of The American Nation, Vol. II, From 1865 to the Present (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968).

⁴⁸Brandenberg, p. 42.

⁴⁹William Weber Johnson, Heroic Mexico, The Violent Emergence Of A Modern Nation (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1968), p. 3; and Documents On The Mexican Revolution, Vol. II, ed., Gene Z. Hanrahan (Salisbury, North Carolina, 1976-82), p. ii.

⁵⁰Johnson, p. 3.

⁵¹Documents On The Mexican Revolution, Vol. II, p. ii.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Callahan, pp. 449-450.

⁵⁴Documents On The Mexican Revolution, Vol. II, p. ii.

⁵⁵Charles C. Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, The Constitutionalist Years (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), pp. 132-133.

⁵⁶Haley, p. 1.

⁵⁷Callahan, pp. 449-450.

⁵⁸Documents On The Mexican Revolution, Vol. II, p. ii.

⁵⁹Callahan, p. 452.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Cumberland, pp. 132-133; and Atkin, p. 57.

⁶²Atkin, p. 57.

⁶³Jules David, America and The World of Our Times (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 34.

⁶⁴Cumberland, pp. 123-133; and Atkin, p. 57 and 19.

⁶⁵Cumberland, pp. 132-133.

⁶⁶Atkin, p. 57.

⁶⁷Haley, p. 4.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 4 and 260; and Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), p. 555.

⁶⁹Bailey, p. 555.

⁷⁰Haley, p. 4.

CHAPTER 2
DIAZ'S FALL FROM POWER

In the fall of 1910 the American press began to chronicle and comment on events in Mexico with great frequency. The flight of Francisco I. Madero, Jr., one of President Diaz's political opponents, to the United States on October 7, 1910, to escape Diaz's persecution, stimulated immediate reaction by the editor of The Omaha World-Herald. An editorial at that time assessed the Mexican political situation and predicted an imminent change within that nation. The editor also discussed the political methods and absolute control of President Diaz and concluded that stability could come to Mexico only following an armed uprising.¹

As the political situation within Mexico deteriorated, tension also mounted between Mexico and the United States. In November the lynching of an accused murderer, Antonio Rodriguez, in Rock Springs, Texas, brought reaction from both the Mexican and American people as well as the editor of The Omaha World-Herald. Within Mexico the hanging caused an eruption of violence and hatred toward Americans. Attacks were made on American lives and property in Mexico City and later Guadalajara, but these were soon suppressed by the government, and the United States government expressed its confidence in the resolution of the problem

from within Mexico itself. The Mexican government instituted investigations and publicly condemned the guilty parties, while President Taft left it up to the governor of Texas to punish the mob which lynched Antonio Rodriguez. This situation bred paranoia among Americans who lived near the Mexican border. They feared attacks by bands of Mexicans seeking revenge, but such attacks never developed.² Quite possibly, this reaction by Americans reflected a more general uncertainty or anxiety on their part regarding affairs in Mexico.

The Omaha World-Herald responded in mid-November to the anti-American reaction within Mexico which followed the lynching of Antonio Rodriguez. The sentiments between Americans and Mexicans were assessed, the past American involvement in Mexico was mentioned, and the future of these relations was questioned. An editorial declared that the anti-American feeling and action in Mexico was caused by the Rock Springs lynching, and that this new tension might lead to economic losses by Americans in that nation as well as the end of good relations between the two nations. However, the editor was reassured by the Mexican government's actions in controlling "the passions of ignorant and impulsive masses," as he apparently viewed the majority of the Mexican people.³

Following the unrest caused by the lynching, the attention of American newspapers, including the World-Herald front page, focused once again on the revolutionary movement within Mexico which opposed the re-election of Diaz and favored instead, Francisco I. Madero, Jr. Violence resulted from President Diaz's attempts to dissolve the movement, especially once Diaz learned the Madero supporters were involved in anti-Diaz conspiratorial activities.⁴ This anti-Maderista activity

was shown by the fact that "Diaz's troops began to make wholesale arrests in Mexico of suspected Madero sympathizers." Also, the first shots of the rebellion resulted from a police attempt to search a Maderista's house.⁵ While Madero, who had taken refuge in San Antonio, Texas, was declaring that revolution within Mexico was inevitable, the Diaz government was arresting his supporters in Mexico and struggling to suppress the occasional outbreaks of fighting which continued to appear. Simultaneously, American troops were readied for any possible unrest along the border, partially because of the occasional incidents of violence against Americans in Mexico.⁶

By November 21, 1910, fierce fighting had broken out between the revolutionary forces and Mexican government troops. This caused further American concern and more United States troops to be sent to the border in case they were needed. Revolutionaries reportedly were increasing their numbers and strength in these battles. Conflicting reports of dominance by the two sides emerged, while Madero declared himself the President of the Mexican provisional government.⁷

This alteration in the situation was observed in and commented on by the editor of The Omaha World-Herald who realized the threat of revolution within Mexico. However, he was unsure as to whether the uprising was of any real significance due to the limited and censored communications coming out of the country. His editorial of November 23 stated that if it was a revolution, for which there was justification in the obvious inequity of the system under Diaz, the revolutionaries would be victorious only if the military turned against the regime. The editor concluded with the statement that the situation might hurt Americans and

their investments in Mexico and thereby cause a rift between the two nations.⁸ Thus, the press continued to exhibit concern over the revolutionary activities in Mexico, and the impact such events might have on American investments.

Due to reports by the Mexican government that its forces were winning and that Madero had returned to Mexico and been wounded, the fate of the revolutionaries appeared to be in jeopardy. The fighting continued and more deaths resulted on both sides, but the lack of affirmative action and victories on the revolutionaries part caused The Omaha World-Herald's editor to continue questioning whether Madero's movement was truly a revolution. This uncertainty of the political situation in Mexico was reiterated in an unsigned column carried in the World-Herald column entitled "Thought of the Day," in late November which attributed the uprising to the "wave of reform that seems to be sweeping the whole world."⁹

During this same time, President Diaz took the oath of office to begin yet another term as the leader of his nation. As he began his new term he offered the revolutionaries terms for peace, but the rebels continued to fight and, according to news reports, apparently began to turn the tide in their favor. President Diaz struck back in various ways, such as the arrest of a political opponent in the United States by the Justice Department on Diaz's behalf. He accomplished this deed under false pretenses, according to Gustavo Madero.¹⁰

In December the "Thought of the Day" column examined several financial aspects of the revolution. The column's author, known only as "a Rural Economist," quoting "Mr. Dooley" (Finley Peter Dunne,

cartoonist and political satirist), stated that the revolution would not succeed, due to a lack of arms, financial support, and men. The conclusion reached was that "the 'money power' is the greatest thing in the world."¹¹ The Diaz government was not in any sort of financial need for it had just received a loan from French, British, and German banks.¹² Throughout December, "a Rural Economist" discussed various aspects and implications of the revolt. He emphasized that the economic enslavement of the greater part of the Mexican population, through peonage, was a part of the Diaz republic's laws. Nor could one ignore the bleeding of the wealth and natural resources of Mexico by foreign capitalists, which was illustrated by the grabbing of sections of the country by foreigners for newly discovered rubber-bearing trees. By December 26 the "Thought of the Day" author acknowledged that Mexico was in the midst of a major uprising with the government suffering some losses and that American businessmen were fleeing that nation at a financial loss to avoid the results of the fall of Diaz.¹³

As the year 1911 opened, the editor of The Omaha World-Herald once again revealed his personal attitude toward Mexicans through his report of a battle between government forces and insurgents. He stated that the battle was sixteen hours long, an unusual period for Mexicans to stick to anything, and that a revolution therefore would be to the nation's benefit "because the [Mexicans] are so benighted and helpless and lazy."¹⁴

Meanwhile, the United States increased its military strength in Texas to enforce the neutrality laws, a move which showed the extent of American concern over the Mexican insurrection. The basic purpose in

increasing the number of American troops was to keep the revolutionaries of the southern nation from forming a base in the United States. The editor of The Omaha World-Herald, commenting in early February 1911, on the movement of additional American troops to the Mexican border, felt this maneuver was an expression of a new interest in the Mexican rebellion. According to "a Rural Economist," soon after this shipment of troops, the troop buildup indicated that the revolt was still serious and that if the "insurrectos" or rebels acquired enough funds there would be further trouble.¹⁵

A new issue which developed at this time was the use of airplanes by the United States to scout activities in Mexico and to carry messages between American military posts. At first The Omaha World-Herald questioned the advisability of using the airplanes, due to a heavy accidental loss of life from them. However, the newspaper's editor ultimately concluded that these experiments were necessary to keep America up-to-date militarily with other nations. In effect, this was an excellent opportunity for the United States to test this new weapon of war.¹⁶

In early 1911 Congressman James Luther Slayden of Texas introduced a joint resolution in Congress "to promote peace in the western hemisphere and immensely strengthen the moral position of the United States in preserving peace." If adopted, according to the editor of The Omaha World-Herald, this resolution could have caused more security and amiability among the American nations and promoted international peace. Unfortunately, this feeling of good will was not shared by the rebels within Mexico. They threatened to shoot down the American planes which were crossing the border, threatened the lives of Americans within

Mexico, and looted and menaced an American mine-owner. Meanwhile, the deaths, rejection, and imprisonment of Americans in Mexico were attributed to both sides of the Mexican conflict. Although the Mexican government claimed to be seeking an end to the revolt, the rebels were unwilling to cease hostilities unless the Diaz dictatorship ended.

"A Rural Economist" also noted that the Mexican finance minister, Yee Jose Limantour, requested that the United States establish and maintain a hundred mile wide neutral zone along the border to create a buffer zone between the United States and the Mexican conflict.¹⁷

While trying to encourage peace, the President also sent more troops to the border region in March 1911. By this time one-fourth of the American military was either there or on its way to the border. The column "Thought of the Day" in The Omaha World-Herald expressed concern over the number of American troops in Texas and the lack of information available about the Mexican situation. The military along the border seemed to have become more permanent by the stationing of clerks and aides there. Meanwhile there was a good deal of questioning and speculation as to the reason for and consequential results of the massive troop build-up at that location, especially because of the lack of official information available on the subject. This movement of American troops was reportedly for maneuvers, but according to the editor of The Omaha World-Herald, many believed the United States might be preparing for any possibility, partly because of apprehension felt about the instability of the Mexican political situation and the economic interests held by American investors.¹⁸

On March 9, 1911, newspapers, including the World-Herald in a front page story, reported that the Taft administration would soon give the reason for placing American troops along the border. However, The Omaha World-Herald writers continued to dwell on the question. The author of "Thought of the Day" on March 10 expressed further concern over the concentration of the American military on the border. This column questioned the authorization of the troop movement and financial support for it, since the taxpayers were to bear the brunt of the expenses. An editorial of the same day expressed sympathy with the fear among Americans that this military movement might have been for more than maneuvers because of the uneasy state within Mexico. The editor also stated that those who had Mexican investments were most concerned over the stability of the situation, but the Democratic Congress would not vote the funds to use the military to protect those interests at the expense of American pocketbooks and lives. In the coming months this theme would appear time and time again in The Omaha World-Herald. A cartoon in this issue of the newspaper portrayed American financial interests with Mexican investments crying for help from south of the border to the United States.¹⁹

On March 11 "Thought of the Day" reported that according to one source, President Taft had ordered troops to the border "to stop the source of supply to the revolutionaries and to be in a position to invade Mexico at a moment's notice in the event of the death of President Diaz." "A Rural Economist" then questioned the authority of the President and Wall Street financial interests to invade Mexico if the dictator did die, since an invasion would result in war, and only the

Congress, which happened to be Democratically controlled, could make that decision. He felt Congress would object to the action, as would "the civilized nations of the world."²⁰

On March 12, 1911, The Omaha World-Herald editor proposed another possible reason for the southern concentration of American troops. Theodore Roosevelt was then on a trans-continental speaking tour and the military activity directed by Taft might detract attention from the former President and spoil any of his possible political aspirations. Undoubtedly this American military activity did draw a good deal of attention away from the game-hunting and heroic former leader of the United States.²¹

Basically, the writers in The Omaha World-Herald continued to criticize Taft's handling of the situation. "Thought of the Day" on March 13 reiterated the nation's confusion over the reason for the military presence on the Mexican border. The writer also stated that other nations had threatened to intervene if their interests were in danger and that if Wall Street had its way the United States military "would invade Mexico tomorrow." Taking a Democratic Party perspective, which was typical of the World-Herald, the columnist felt that if a progressive Democrat were in the White House, funds would not have been wasted on troops movements and our neutrality laws would not have been compromised. The "Thought of the Day" writer declared that the Mexican people had the right to alter their country politically any way they wished. "A Rural Economist" stated that if Madero won he would not form a better government, but whatever his reforms might be, they could be no worse than rule by Diaz. "A Rural Economist" added that the American

people sympathized with those "who strive for liberty and better economic conditions." The World-Herald editorial for the same day commented on this column and agreed that the American people had not been given an acceptable explanation as to why the American military had been encamped in the southwest. It also stated that since this action was not typical of President Taft, it had caused greater interest than if it had been carried out by former President Roosevelt. The editor ended with the statement that conclusions should not be drawn prematurely, and he hoped that the President would explain the situation soon.²²

Directly after these inquisitorial articles there appeared on the World-Herald front page announcements by the Taft administration in mid-March seeking to reassure the public concerning the United States' intentions in Mexico. The Secretary of War for the United States, in a published interview, denied any plan for American intervention, and the Mexican ambassador and minister of finance also stressed there were no plans for such intervention. Yet, Taft continued to increase the number of American troops on the border, partially in order to stop any transportation of ammunition into the war-torn southern nation.²³

"A Rural Economist," in another Democratically-slanted statement compared Diaz's turning over of Mexican natural resources to foreign investors to Secretary of Interior Ballinger's attempt to give control of American natural resources to his country's business leaders. In this same issue the World-Herald editorial stated that although the maintenance of troops along the Mexican border to keep rebels from gaining supplies from the United States was acceptable and permissible under neutrality, any plan to send American troops south on the death of Diaz

was not acceptable. The editor also reported that American popular sympathies were with the rebels, not the Diaz regime, and that the American people "would resent the invasion of Mexico on the pretext that it is necessary, under the Monroe Doctrine, to protect the property rights of foreign investors." He added that any losses investors suffered through foreign policy changes, that is, revolution, should be part of the calculated risk taken. Therefore, the government and financial interests should not expect the nation to fight for those investments.²⁴

Speculation on the Mexican situation and American involvement in that nation continued to appear in the "Thought of the Day." On March 15, 1911, that column pointed out that Mexico had almost no navy and only a small army and that the invasion of such a nation would not be very glorious. "A Rural Economist" stated that the Monroe Doctrine was not a satisfactory precedent for American intervention in the internal affairs of Latin American nations. Rather, that Doctrine was designed to prevent European intervention in Latin America. This column also expressed the attitude that the situation in Mexico had been caused by the rule of Diaz, the man, rather than by the law, and therefore his regime would probably come to the usual end of such governments.²⁵

On the following day the editor of The Omaha World-Herald again surveyed the reasons for the presence of the American military force along the Mexican border. First, he looked at the Monroe Doctrine argument, that is, since it keeps "European countries from protecting their interests in the western hemisphere . . . we are therefore obliged to do for them what we deny them the right to do for themselves." Second, he examined the theory that the military was needed to keep arms from

crossing the border and that "the army may be needed to protect American property in Mexico." Questioning the validity of these ideas, the editor concluded by stating that there had to be an explanation for the situation and the public's ignorance of it and hoped that soon the Taft administration would announce exactly what was behind American policy.²⁶

Opposition to American use of the military to threaten and possibly intervene in the Mexican situation appeared in another forum of the newspaper on March 19, 1911. A writer to the "Public Pulse" agreed with the sentiments of The Omaha World-Herald's editor and columnist. This Nebraska citizen stated that foreign investments were not the responsibility of the American government and that intervention to protect foreigners and their properties would be a dangerous precedent to establish.²⁷ Perhaps readers of the World-Herald were absorbing the editorial opinion of the newspaper.

On the following day, March 20, the World-Herald reported that peace within Mexico was supposed to occur within the week and that reorganization of the Mexican cabinet and certain reforms were to occur to appease the revolutionaries and thereby bring about a resulting peace. Along these lines, the "Thought of the Day" column of the following issue reported that Yee Jose Limantour, the Mexican minister of finance, wished to institute a Mexican land tax. It would supposedly force large owners to dispose of their land and enable the common people to own their own property. He stated that the taxing of land, not personal property, seemed to be an international trend. Senor Limantour continued his quest for peace within his homeland, and an Omaha woman

returning from Mexico stated that she felt that he would be able to bring peace to the southern nation.²⁸

This hopefulness was not apparent in a letter on March 22, 1911, to the "Public Pulse" which reviewed the past activities of military observation missions, which the writer felt were usually war-like, and questioned if the one on the Mexican border at that time would not possibly follow the same path. Meanwhile, violence continued to befall both Americans and Mexicans in Mexico and the masses did not apparently receive the peace solution of Limantour with cheers.²⁹

On a more positive note, the "Thought of the Day" on March 23, 1911, stated that people should not worry about war because no serious altercation could result without the backing of financial institutions, and these bodies, he said, were not upset by the political situation nor selling their Mexican securities. At this same time, The Omaha World-Herald reported that President Taft was expecting peace within Mexico by May and that additional troops had been recruited, thus causing speculation as to possible American intervention.³⁰

Simultaneously, the situation appeared to improve within Mexico. "A Rural Economist" wrote in the next issue that "Limantour who seems to be the government just at present in Mexico," was altering the Diaz policy very little, only enough to quiet the revolutionaries with promises of reform. The reorganization of the cabinet and attempts at peace continued, but the revolutionaries did not find the altercations acceptable. However, by the end of March rumors continued to circulate that President Diaz was planning to resign since there had been a good deal of change within his cabinet.³¹

In early April the situation looked even more promising because President Diaz promised to divide estates and correct some of the abuses in Mexico, although he did not promise any reform of the election process or a new presidential election. On the other hand, one of the revolutionaries, whose demands were endorsed by the Mexican Congress, stated that only if President Diaz worked with the revolutionaries and instituted the reforms they demanded would peace evolve in the southern nation, either under Diaz or the revolutionaries.³² One reason for the attitude of Diaz and that of the rebels might have been the fact that "by early April a large part of the northern states was in the hands of rebels of varying shades of greed and ambition."³³

The "Thought of the Day" column of The Omaha World-Herald for April 1, 1911, continued to use the Mexican situation and the administration's actions toward it as a weapon against the Republicans. In fact, the column stated that since the Republican Party had been in power, it had attempted to alter the Constitution so that the Republicans might protect American property in Mexico. "A Rural Economist" expressed the attitude that such action was against international law and that it was well there was a Democratic Congress to protect the people and their money.³⁴

An editorial two days later entitled "Well Founded Rumors" furthered this opposition to the idea that an American invasion of Mexico might be sanctioned by international law and stated that this train of thought should have been derailed. The editor compared the situation with the 1910 overthrow of the Portuguese government and the French investments in that country and declared that since there was no recourse for the

French there was none now for the United States. The foreign investor knew the risk and it was therefore not the responsibility of his government to protect him. Thus, the writer concluded, "President Taft's action has no foundation in international law and the rumors that he will be called to account for them by Congress are probably well founded."³⁵

"A Rural Economist" on April 10, 1911, continued the negative analysis of events by claiming that none of the troops in Texas knew the purpose of their expedition and that some people believed that J. P. Morgan, Wall Street financier, and not Taft was directing American policy. Another section of this same column stated that the troop movement, at the financiers' bidding, may have actually been detrimental to American interests in the southern regions. The nations of Latin America just might become wary of America because of its bellicose attitude and possibly close their doors to financial opportunities. If this were true, according to "a Rural Economist," President Taft and not the financiers would bear the brunt of the blame. Finally, "a Rural Economist" stated that the policy of intimidation being carried out by the United States and the threat of an American invasion were no longer topics of discussion merely of the newspapers but also of "different foreign legations in Washington."³⁶

In the spring of 1911 the World-Herald gave front page coverage to an incident which drew the United States dangerously close to actual involvement militarily. With the rebels' capture of the Mexican town of Agua Prieta, shots from the battle crossed over into the United States at Douglas, Arizona. American soldiers then crossed over the border to

stop the fighting since some Americans had been killed. This activity was followed by a warning from President Taft to both Madero and Diaz to keep the fighting on their own side of the border. A smaller scale of fighting took place in San Francisco where an unsuccessful attempt was made upon the life of an agent of President Diaz, and more Americans continued to lose their lives in Mexico. The "Thought of the Day" column in mid-April foresaw the possibility of conflict between the border-patrolling American soldiers and Mexicans. This particular comment was at least partially due to an incident in which Mexican soldiers shot across the border, although the American officer in charge showed restraint and forestalled a possible international incident.³⁷

Meanwhile, additional troops, including cavalry, were rushed to Douglas, Arizona, along the Mexican border, where they might be used for forays into Mexico if the President deemed such action necessary. Further fighting continued in Agua Prieta and more shots were fired across the border into the United States, but since only the federal government could order retaliation, there was less chance of any American reaction.³⁸ As a result of fighting in the region there was "a warning from Washington that a recurrence would 'compel action by this country,' and the eight hundred strong 6th cavalry was ordered to Douglas."³⁹ The World-Herald once again focused the attention of its front page and assumedly readers on Mexico with a report that the increasing troop build-up along the border may have helped encourage the rebels to ask for an armistice at this time in order to formulate a peace solution without American intervention. The rebels were still demanding the resignation of President Diaz as part of any settlement. In Washington,

the status along the border, in regard to the troops and their activities, seemed to be acceptable to the leaders of Congress as well as President Taft.⁴⁰

On April 19, 1911, The Omaha World-Herald editorially commented on the shooting of Americans by rebels across the border at Agua Prieta, which Mexico assured the United States would not occur again. This and other incidents caused the proposal of a neutral zone along the border, according to the editor. This apparently was a good plan and one not expected to cause opposition by the rebels who had had supplies confiscated in the United States. Also, the Taft administration chose to give jurisdiction over border incidents to regional police, apparently in an attempt to avoid a broadening of the fighting.⁴¹

The "Thought of the Day" author for the same issue stated that with Diaz building up Mexican military forces it was difficult to put a great deal of belief in his desire for peace. "A Rural Economist" also emphasized that Diaz had not moved significantly toward the carrying out of any reforms and that he continued his political manipulations of the law in regard to elections. This negative view of Diaz by The Omaha World-Herald continued to coincide with the newspaper's claim that the only reason the United States government was interested in the Mexican rebellion was because of a potential threat to investments by Americans. On April 21 the editor of The Omaha World-Herald stated that the men who had interests in Mexico, that is, Morgan and the gentlemen of Mexico, should have been the ones fighting for their protection and the continuation of an exploitative government. This demand for millionaires to "do

their own fighting," according to the editor, was the majority sentiment of the American nation.⁴²

At this point the situation within Mexico finally headed toward a definite conclusion. Pleas for the end of the fighting caused Madero to alter his demands slightly. Instead of demanding the immediate resignation of President Diaz, Madero called for a fair election to choose a new ruler who could bring peace to Mexico. Most important, a five day armistice was being arranged which stimulated a skeptical comment in The Omaha World-Herald on April 25 in the form of a cartoon. (See Illustration 1.)⁴³

Meanwhile, President Diaz issued a statement to the Associated Press in which he stated that he felt Mexico would once again unite for peace and progress. At the same time the rebels began to prepare for peace negotiations. The Omaha World-Herald applauded these developments. "Thought of the Day" reiterated the lack of enthusiasm by the American populus toward the war with Mexico. They did not want to fight for American financial interests and against the Mexican nation's evolution, "a Rural Economist" stated. He also reported that the Honorable John W. Foster, former ambassador to Mexico, had been advising American interests in Mexico not to initiate intervention for that would only cause the Mexicans to unite to oppose them and this would endanger their investments throughout Latin America.⁴⁴

Fighting continued within Mexico even after the armistice was declared on April 24, 1911, but the revolutionaries were still making plans for peace. Madero once again requested President Diaz to announce his resignation for this end. This appeared to be the only solution for

"Here's Where 'I Come Back,' or I'm a Squab!"

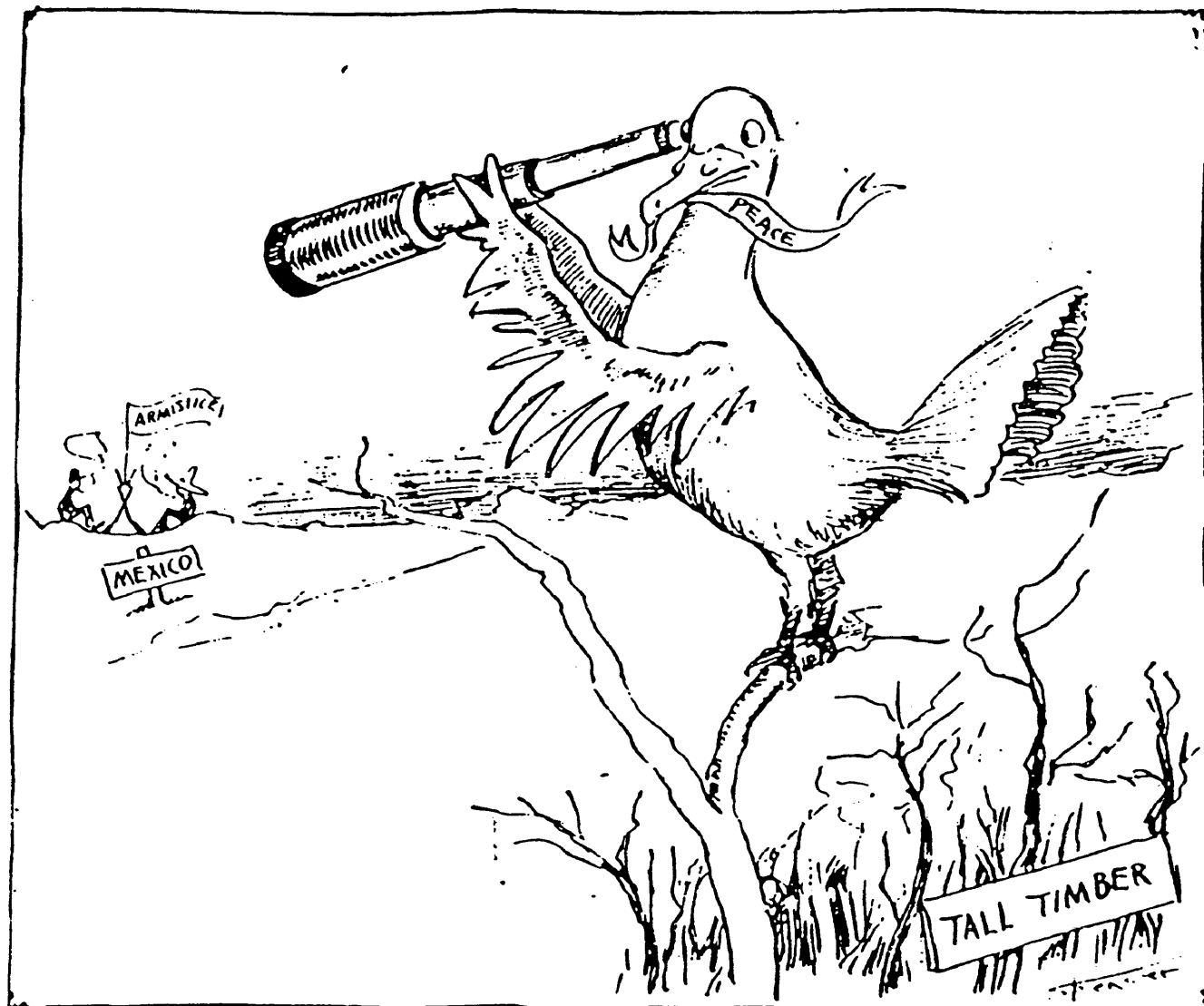


Illustration 1.

peace. Warfare seemed to be the future for Mexico until Diaz consented, which in early May he said he would do after Mexico was at peace.

Madero now apparently believed Diaz would soon resign and thus ordered his troops not to advance any further.⁴⁵

"The Mexican Crisis" of May 8, 1911, editorially portrayed an alteration in the American understanding of the Mexican political situation by The Omaha World-Herald. The eventual overthrow of the Diaz government was now an accepted fact and intervention by the United States would be acceptable to Americans only if the Mexican government did not protect American interests and lives. Only if the Mexicans began persecuting Americans would the editor of The Omaha World-Herald support American military interference.⁴⁶

Unfortunately, President Diaz was not yet ready to resign, apparently because he felt anarchy would take over the nation if he did so. Meanwhile, Madero attacked Juarez and took control of that city as his headquarters, with the explanation that President Diaz was not moving convincingly toward a resignation. General Madero proceeded to set up a provisional government in Juarez, and the peace negotiations of April appeared to be near total collapse.⁴⁷

While these two events were transpiring, The Omaha World-Herald returned to its arguments that intervention in Mexico would be incorrect and unwise. The "Thought of the Day" on May 11, 1911, reiterated the opinion that American intervention would cause the unification of the Mexican people in opposition to American interests. Also, intervention would cause resentment throughout Latin America and obliterate the need on the part of Europe to respect the Monroe Doctrine. On May 13 "Thought of the Day" stated that the American nation did not have any precedent for intervening in the internal affairs of Mexico to protect American investments and that it would make the United States appear badly. The use of the Hague court was suggested as an avenue which

was acceptable and open for the resolution of the differences between America and Mexico.⁴⁸

By this same date page one of the newspaper reported that President Diaz was ready to expand on his conditions for retirement and to be awaiting word from Madero. Two days later unofficial peace negotiations resumed between the two factions, although General Madero continued to prepare for any possible fighting. Still, it was reported that peace seemed immediately imminent by members of both sides of the struggle.⁴⁹

Just as these events were drawing to a conclusion, the "Thought of the Day" surveyed reports of a high desertion rate among American soldiers on the Mexican border, approximately six percent. Many of these deserters were said to have joined the rebels. Another problem reported was the low number of re-enlistments and new recruits for the army. Only the war correspondents apparently were happy. The Omaha World-Herald also reported that it was obvious to some that Diaz had been defeated and that it was only a matter of how he would acknowledge the end that was delaying the peace. The newspaper also stated that Diaz was still on friendly terms with Americans.⁵⁰

Finally, on May 18 an armistice was declared, during which arrangements were made for the resignation of President Diaz. Following these arrangements Madero was to travel to Mexico City, but his journey was delayed due to rumors of a possible assassination attempt on his life. On May 21, 1911, peace was officially declared in Mexico. By agreement between Diaz and Madero forces, the Diaz administration was to resign and the nation was to have a reform-oriented government. This same day, The Omaha World-Herald editorial titled "How Is Diaz!" reported that due

to his poor health the President of Mexico had announced that he would retire as of June 1. Once peace was apparent, according to the editor, the nation was now concerned over the state of President Diaz's health and no wrath had been meted upon him. On May 23 a World-Herald cartoon summarized the state of affairs within Mexico, showing an insurgent and a regular soldier sharing a smoke in peace.⁵¹ (See Illustration 2.)

Although some of the proponents of Diaz were not willing peacefully to accept the new leader of the nation, Madero named a reform cabinet while awaiting the resignation of President Diaz. On the other side, a pro-Madero mob in Mexico City had to be broken up when it protested the failure of the ailing Diaz to quickly resign.⁵² Diaz had been in bed due to the pain caused by an infection of the jaw.⁵³ On May 25, 1911, the resignation of President Diaz from the presidency of Mexico amid cheering but peaceful crowds warranted page one coverage in the World-Herald. Following his resignation Francisco de la Barra became acting President of Mexico, and President Diaz slipped away to board a ship. Some opposition to the new government and to Madero remained apparent within Mexico, but it was decidedly limited and easily dispersed.⁵⁴

With the end of military activity in Mexico The Omaha World-Herald considered both the past and future of that country. On the day of Diaz's resignation the editor spoke of the funding of the Mexican Revolution. He stated that money was raised by the sale of insurrecto bonds in New York at half their original value. Standard Oil Company and another trust, probably tobacco, were thought to be the buyers of these bonds. Supposedly these corporations hoped for more favorable concessions under the new regime. These views gained support in the "Thought

of the Day" column. "A Rural Economist" stated that some Wall Street interests backed Madero and the revolutionaries and helped cause the change of leadership in Mexico. This power of money, according to "a Rural Economist," was awesome and should have been curtailed or

THE PEACE PIPE.



Illustration 2.

destroyed in order to let the people, instead of money, rule.⁵⁵ The Omaha World-Herald distrusted Wall Street, whichever side it was on.

On May 26 The Omaha World-Herald's editorial turned its attention to an inspection of the future leader of Mexico and found he and his family of much the same type as had favored the Diaz system. It stated that although George Washington, an aristocrat, was able to introduce democracy to the United States, it was highly unlikely that Madero would do the same for Mexico. The editorial concluded with the remark that without economic equality Mexico could experience little change and that Mexico needed education and a more equitable land distribution. The Omaha World-Herald was pleased that peace had returned to Mexico. An editorial a few days later proclaimed that, "It gives one a new opinion of the stability of Mexico and of the intelligence and patriotism that are able to dominate the direction of its affairs."⁵⁶

On the last day of May The Omaha World-Herald editorial stated that General Madero would probably become the next President of Mexico. This was apparent since the acting President did not become a candidate, for which Madero commended him. Meanwhile, former President Diaz was reported to have sailed from Vera Cruz aboard a French vessel to his new home in Spain amid a friendly atmosphere.⁵⁷

In early June Madero began his journey to Mexico City following an attempt on his life in Juarez. All along the way south his train was cheered. Although there were attempts by the cientificos, or supporters of Diaz, to keep Madero out of Mexico City by placing a large price on his head, he succeeded in entering the capital amid a positive and cheering crowd. The "Thought of the Day" column of June 9 discussed

Madero's entrance into Mexico City, where American financial interests were already present, which "a Rural Economist" saw as a more potent force than Diaz. The economic freedom of Mexico was still in danger of being further used by foreigners.⁵⁸

Throughout the previous year The Omaha World-Herald had warned that American economic forces had been involved in Mexico, perhaps to the point of seeking actual intervention by the United States government in the Mexican Revolution to protect their interests. In Mexico, foreigners were now warned that their exploitation of the nation had to cease and that reform was the code of the day. The nation wished to regain its natural resources, largely given to foreigners by Diaz. Many Mexicans wished to exile some of these foreigners in order to regain control of the nation's resources. The editor of The Omaha World-Herald concluded in an editorial of June 24, 1911, with the statement that the industrialists would have to abide by the law.⁵⁹

But distrust of the power of American corporations remained a theme of The Omaha World-Herald. The "Thought of the Day" on July 20, 1911, stated that in New York it was then an accepted idea that Standard Oil Corporation financed the Mexican Revolution to defeat a competitor, the English Oil Company. Standard Oil won and the latter was then trying to sell its interests to Standard as had many other trusts, according to "a Rural Economist." The Omaha World-Herald was even willing to conclude that Standard Oil might have backed Madero to gain more control of Mexico rather than attempt to exercise influence in that country through the Republican Party. "Thought of the Day" reiterated this feeling in early August by declaring that Wall Street was the manager of the

Mexican Revolution. American financial interests gave up Diaz when he was no longer useful but continued to run the nation as they governed other countries including the United States, by means of the banking system.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, events in Mexico moved toward a new presidential election. The field of candidates for the presidency was narrowed by an agreement worked out between Madero and General Bernardo Reyes, who instead of remaining a candidate became a part of Madero's cabinet. Meanwhile, opposition to Madero by the cientificos, the supporters of Diaz, continued. They called for the former President to return to his homeland and restore order. However, despite such attempts by the cientificos, the Progressives unanimously nominated Madero for the presidency of Mexico and Jose Maria Pino Suarez for vice-president. The editor of The Omaha World-Herald hoped that with Madero the Mexican government would gain a new stability, but this was not to be.⁶¹

Endnotes

¹The Omaha World Herald, October 8, 1910, p. 1, and October 9, 1910, p. 6E.

²Ibid., November 4, 1910, p. 1; November 20, 1910, p. 3; November 11, 1910, pp. 1 and 3; November 12, 1910, p. 1; November 13, 1910, p. 1; November 15, 1910, pp. 1 and 2; and November 19, 1910, p. 4.

³Ibid., November 14, 1910, p. 4.

⁴Ibid., November 19, 1910, p. 1.

⁵Atkin, p. 50.

⁶The Omaha World-Herald, November 19, 1910, p. 1; November 20, 1910, p. 1; November 21, 1910, pp. 1 and 2; and November 22, 1910, pp. 1 and 3.

⁷Ibid., November 22, 1910, pp. 1 and 3; November 23, 1910, pp. 1 and 10; and November 24, 1910, pp. 1 and 3.

⁸Ibid., November 23, 1910, p. 8.

⁹Ibid., November 24, 1910, pp. 1 and 3; November 25, 1910, pp. 1 and 3; November 27, 1910, p. 2W; and November 29, 1910, p. 6.

¹⁰Ibid., December 1, 1910, p. 1; December 3, 1910, p. 1; and December 7, 1910, p. 3.

¹¹Ibid., December 6, 1910, p. 6.

¹²Atkin, p. 57.

¹³The Omaha World-Herald, December 10, 1910, p. 20; December 22, 1910, p. 5; December 23, 1910, p. 14; December 24, 1910, p. 7; December 20, 1910, p. 6; and December 26, 1910, p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., January 23, 1911, p. 4.

¹⁵Ibid., January 26, 1911, p. 7; January 29, 1911, p. 6; February 6, 1911, p. 4; and January 27, 1911, p. 6.

¹⁶Ibid., February 4, 1911, p. 12; February 5, 1911, p. 1; February 8, 1911, pp. 1 and 5; and February 12, 1911, p. 2E.

¹⁷Ibid., February 15, 1911, p. 6; February 16, 1911, p. 1; February 18, 1911, p. 1; February 20, 1911, p. 2; February 21, 1911, p. 1; February 22, 1911, p. 1; February 23, 1911, p. 1; February 24, 1911, p. 3; and February 27, 1911, pp. 1, 4, and 7.

¹⁸Ibid., February 27, 1911, p. 8; March 27, 1911, p. 3; March 8, 1911, pp. 1 and 5; and March 9, 1911, p. 1, 3, 6, and 7.

¹⁹Ibid., March 10, 1911, pp. 1, 3, and 6.

²⁰Ibid., March 11, 1911, p. 10.

²¹Ibid., March 12, 1911, p. 4E.

²²Ibid., March 13, 1911, p. 4.

²³Ibid., March 14, 1911, pp. 1 and 7; and March 15, 1911, p. 1.

²⁴March 14, 1911, p. 6.

²⁵Ibid., March 15, 1911, p. 6.

²⁶Ibid., March 16, 1911, p. 6.

²⁷Ibid., March 19, 1911, p. 4E.

²⁸Ibid., March 20, 1911, pp. 1 and 2; March 21, 1911, p. 6; and March 22, 1911, p. 4.

²⁹Ibid., March 22, 1911, p. 6; March 23, 1911, p. 1; and March 24, 1911, p. 1.

³⁰Ibid., March 23, 1911, p. 6; and March 27, 1911, p. 1.

³¹Ibid., March 24, 1911, pp. 1 and 6; March 27, 1911, p. 1; March 28, 1911, p. 1; March 29, 1911, p. 1; and March 25, 1911, p. 1.

³²Ibid., April 2, 1911, pp. 1 and 9N; and April 3, 1911, pp. 1 and 9.

³³Atkin, p. 61.

³⁴The Omaha World-Herald, April 1, 1911, p. 12.

³⁵Ibid., April 3, 1911, p. 4.

³⁶Ibid., April 10, 1911, p. 4.

³⁷Ibid., April 14, 1911, pp. 1 and 8; and April 15, 1911, pp. 1, 7, and 12.

³⁸Ibid., April 16, 1911, pp. 1 and 8N; and April 18, 1911, p. 6.

³⁹Atkin, p. 64.

⁴⁰The Omaha World-Herald, April 18, 1911, p. 12; April 19, 1911, pp. 1 and 3; April 21, 1911, pp. 1 and 9.

⁴¹Ibid., April 19, 1911, pp. 1, 3, and 6.

⁴²Ibid., April 19, 1911, p. 6; and April 21, 1911, p. 6.

⁴³Ibid., April 23, 1911, p. 1; and April 25, 1911, p. 1.

⁴⁴Ibid., April 26, 1911, pp. 4 and 6.

⁴⁵Ibid., April 28, 1911, p. 1; May 1, 1911, p. 1; May 5, 1911, pp. 1 and 7; and May 8, 1911, pp. 1 and 2.

⁴⁶Ibid., May 8, 1911, p. 4.

⁴⁷Ibid., May 8, 1911, pp. 1 and 2; May 9, 1911, pp. 1 and 3; May 11, 1911, pp. 1 and 3.

⁴⁸Ibid., May 11, 1911, p. 8; and May 13, 1911, p. 14.

⁴⁹Ibid., May 13, 1911, pp. 1 and 3; and May 15, 1911, pp. 1 and 2.

⁵⁰Ibid., May 17, 1911, p. 8; and May 18, 1911, pp. 1, 3, and 5.

⁵¹Ibid., May 19, 1911, p. 1; May 20, 1911, p. 1; May 22, 1911, pp. 1 and 2; May 21, 1911, p. 2E; and May 23, 1911, p. 10.

⁵²Ibid., May 23, 1911, pp. 1 and 3; and May 24, 1911, pp. 1 and 6.

⁵³Atkin, pp. 74 and 75.

⁵⁴The Omaha World-Herald, May 26, 1911, pp. 1 and 3; May 27, 1911, p. 1; and June 3, 1911, pp. 1 and 9.

⁵⁵Ibid., May 25, 1911, p. 8; and June 2, 1911, p. 6.

⁵⁶Ibid., May 26, 1911, p. 6; and May 29, 1911, p. 4.

⁵⁷Ibid., May 31, 1911, p. 6; June 11, 1911, p. 5N; and June 1, 1911, pp. 1 and 3.

⁵⁸Ibid., June 5, 1911, p. 2; June 8, 1911, p. 6; and June 9, 1911, p. 6.

⁵⁹Ibid., June 16, 1911, p. 1; and June 24, 1911, p. 14.

⁶⁰Ibid., July 20, 1911, p. 6; July 24, 1911, p. 4; and August 2, 1911, p. 6.

⁶¹Ibid., June 11, 1911, p. 5N; August 12, 1911, p. 5; August 30, 1911, p. 1; September 1, 1911, pp. 1 and 6; September 3, 1911, p. 9N; and September 4, 1911, p. 4.

CHAPTER 3
THE MADERO RULE OF MEXICO

The Omaha World-Herald's attitude toward the Madero government began on a positive note, for in October of 1911 Mexico was apparently heading into a peaceful era. The presidency of Francisco I. Madero, Jr. was significant in Mexican history because it marked an attempt, even if only theoretical, to establish a democratic government. Upon his election Madero stated his gratitude as well as happiness that the Mexican people had proved him correct in his assertions that an orderly election was possible within his homeland.¹ In theory, the Madero government might have revolutionized Mexico and its politics. In fact, it was run in such an unorganized manner as to render it relatively ineffective. Madero's lack of political experience was one of the major causes of this; another was the general mood of the nation and its people who had been aroused by the revolution and were unable to stabilize completely.

Unfortunately, disorder and violence continued within Mexico and anti-Madero forces planned his overthrow. Outlaws, such as Emiliano Zapata, were abundant in the more rural portions of the nation.² The Omaha World-Herald began as early as October 14, 1911, to discuss the opposition to the President within Mexico, although the era of Madero rule did not attract the same degree of American press coverage as had


previous events. The column "Thought of the Day" stated that General Bernardo Reyes, the Mexican revolutionary, felt that Mexico, although under a new President, had changed little.³ This was followed by Reyes attempting to organize a revolt against the new Mexican administration from a base within Texas.⁴ Concern and activity over these occurrences was evident in the World-Herald front page coverage. The newspaper reported that due to this possible new insurrection within Mexico, the United States had halted all plans to withdraw troops from the border area.⁵ The arrests and the seizure of ammunition in Texas which followed the new preparedness on the American military's part were also deemed page one news by the World-Herald. Among those arrested was General Reyes himself on charges of violating United States neutrality laws. A World-Herald article indicated the sentiment in Texas at this time in an article which reported an order from the Governor that "all revolutionarists in the vicinity of Laredo must leave Texas within forty-eight hours."⁶

Meanwhile, the threatening atmosphere increased within Mexico. Following the spurt of activity by the American military along the border the Mexican government also added to its border forces in hope of forestalling any revolutionary activity.⁷ The situation which Madero had hoped to alleviate through this action did not seem to be improving for within days it was reported that he was facing not one but rather two revolutions, one headed by General Reyes and the other by Emilio Vasquez Gomez, a former minister of the government.⁸ Unfortunately for Madero the Reyes and Gomez forces then combined with the outlaw Zapata.⁹

During this time of turmoil, the World-Herald gave front page attention to the fate of another member of the press with an article which stated that Madero was also accused of persecution by a publisher of a Mexico City newspaper, El Diario. Ernest T. Simondetti and his American wife both claimed that due to political differences they were persecuted by the Maderistas and ultimately forced to take refuge in the United States.¹⁰

The Madero government did improve its situation in December 1911 by imprisoning General Reyes, after foiling an assassination plot by the General.¹¹ Also, on January 2, 1912, the "Thought of the Day" informed its readers that the Madero government had implemented actions which would alleviate some of the threat of revolt in Mexico by purchasing land which would then be sold to poorer citizens. Such a plan would enable many to improve their life and thus reduce their hostility.¹²

On February 29, 1912, The Omaha World-Herald published an editorial entitled "Mobs In Mexico" which stated that the situation in Mexico was anything but stable, as was shown by the "Attacks on ranches and villages and the movement of United States troops to the Rio Grande to safeguard American interests along the border." The editor declared that he did not see any justification in the revolt occurring at that time as he had in the revolution of the previous year. Reviving the racial stereotype used previously, the editor declared this insurrection was due to the "lazy and shiftless" portion of the Mexican population seeking an easy way of life. They were supposedly an element to be found throughout the population of Latin America. The editor concluded that the situation within Mexico and the lack of action taken by the



Madero government was causing concern and possibly indicated that the new regime was unable to cope with the situation.¹³

Moving from February to March 1912 the World-Herald continued its front page coverage of the Mexican situation. In early March the newspaper reported that the rebel forces were growing in size and popularity. This development stimulated Madero to pacify the nation by making changes within his cabinet. Members of the Mexican Congress even expected their President and Vice-President to possibly tender their resignations.¹⁴ Also, the rebel troops, now under the leadership of General Pascual Orozco, began their ascent on the capital of Mexico and Orozco proclaimed that only President Madero's resignation would placate the rebels.¹⁵

As the rebel forces continued their advancement on Mexico City, the World-Herald reported on the strengthening of the American military's position along the border.¹⁶ Soon afterwards the World-Herald stated that the United States Senate, at the President's insistence, proposed a resolution by which the President would be able to deny the exportation of arms to Mexico.¹⁷ This action was soon followed by threats against American citizens in Mexico. As a result President Taft once again sent a message stating that the Mexican government would be held responsible for any injury to Americans.¹⁸ When it was learned that the arms embargo would include food, a mob in Juarez protested to some Americans. The Americans guiltily fled across the border.¹⁹

Within a week of these hostilities, it appeared to outside observers that the federals or federal government troops had been defeated and would soon depart completely.²⁰ However, this defeat, according to one

report was a planned subterfuge to keep the rebel forces occupied and allow the federals time to secure the city of Torreon against attack.²¹ At the same time the United States replenished Madero's troops with arms so that a new offensive could be launched against the revolutionaries.²² At this same time the Omaha newspaper also gave page one coverage to the uniting of Orozco's forces with those of Emiliano Zapata, leader of a rebellion in southern Mexico against Madero for over a year.²³ ✓

In mid-April through a series of front page reports the World-Herald expressed great concern for Americans in Mexico. In fact, the activities of the Mexican rebels against Americans rose to such a state of brutality that President Taft decided to place the situation, and consideration of future action, before the Congress.²⁴ The American government then notified the Mexican government, as well as the rebels, that the Mexican people would be held responsible for the lives and property of the American citizens present in that nation.²⁵ While the Madero government failed to respond to the President's decisive message, General Orozco did decide to recognize the American consul within his homeland.²⁶ After the rebel reply the Madero government stated that it would not assume responsibility for the actions of Orozco.²⁷ Thus, American fears continued to be unallayed.

The issue of the treatment of Americans in Mexico, including a former Omahan, was taken up once more a few days later by the World-Herald. Articles reported a continued deterioration in the situation. There was a report that two Americans had been held as prisoners for over a month and no official action had been taken to alter the situation.²⁸ In response to the position of American citizens within Mexico President

Taft was considering sending a ship to Mexico to remove American nationals.²⁹ The lack of protection of American lives and property was reported by a group of refugees who were led to the safety of the United States by Madison H. Ish, a former resident of Omaha.³⁰ These reports of increased danger to Americans in Mexico caused a steamer to be chartered and sent to the Mexican coast to aid all those who could gain access to it.³¹ On April 29, 1912, the "Thought of the Day" column in The Omaha World-Herald related to its readers reports of the seriousness of the situation within Mexico, which according to the author many people underestimated. Atrocities were perpetrated against both the natives of that nation and Americans residing there. According to an American who escaped, the only recourse for Americans in Mexico was to flee and abandon their belongings to the numerous bandits then present there.³² Understandably, these articles in the World-Herald would have produced little sympathy among the newspaper's readers for the Mexican people.

General Orozco sent proclamations via his representatives to the United States condemning the destruction occurring within his homeland and announcing his intention to restore law and order to Mexico, which the Madero government had been unable to do. Madero denounced Orozco calling him an "ingrate and a traitor" and declared that he did not believe the people of Mexico would betray his government for the leadership of such a man.³³

Amid reports of victories for the rebel cause, the battle for the city of Torreon appeared to be fast coming to a head. The federal troops of equal strength to the rebels were ensconced in the town while

the rebels were approaching with forces from three different directions.³⁴ Orozco alone was reported to have 7,000 men with him.³⁵ According to reports this could be the battle to decide the fate of the Madero government and the rebel cause.³⁶ The battle was under way by mid-May with continued assertions that this could be the beginning of the end of the Madero regime.³⁷ By May 12, though, the federal troops had taken the advantage in the battle and forced the rebels to retreat, an action which by no means signaled the end of the fighting.³⁸

During the summer of 1912 the World-Herald continued to inform its readers concerning the plight of American citizens in Mexico and of the continued efforts of the United States government to guarantee their safety. Rioting rebels in Dolores, Chihuahua, robbed and threatened Americans, and there were anti-American demonstrations in Chihuahua of such severity that the American women and children were sent across the border. General Orozco did attempt to enter Chihuahua to protect the Americans who were unable to escape. Secretary of State Knox told General Orozco that if this mistreatment of American lives and property did not cease the United States would have to take action.³⁹ President Madero sent troops to the problem area even before the United States requested it. Within Texas relief efforts were being made for the refugees fleeing Mexico.⁴⁰ Along the Mexican border messages were sent to Washington which called for intervention in Mexico to take place on behalf of the United States citizens located there.⁴¹

Unfortunately, attacks on Americans in Mexico continued. According to Revolution! Mexico 1910-20 by Atkin,

The Mormon colonies were early victims of Orozco's red flag. All the promises of neutrality were violated. Their homes were plundered, cattle and crops confiscated and most of their guns taken away. When the settlers complained and produced written promises of non-interference, they were told by the Orozco general, Ynes Salazar, 'Those are mere words, and the wind blows words away.' Mormon women and children were sent to the safety of El Paso and many of the men followed soon afterwards.⁴²

A settler in Chihuahua, who chose not to join his fellow Mormons in their flight to the United States, was killed while protecting his family and home against looters. There was concern over the whereabouts of two hundred colonists from Sonora, women and children, who were missing.⁴³ Further front page reports of the bad conditions in Sonora also appeared in The Omaha World-Herald, especially reports of attacks on American-owned and run mining sites.⁴⁴ President Taft continued to warn Mexico in effect that if the Mexican government did not take action to defend the citizens of the United States the American government would.⁴⁵ The rumor again arose that the President would call a special session of the Congress for the express purpose of deciding whether or not to intervene in Mexico. Although, the military did not appear to be in favor of unnecessary action they were prepared to move against Mexico at any time. In fact, the plans had already been drawn up and were being held in readiness.⁴⁶

On September 15, 1912, in an editorial titled "Shall We Have War?" the editor of The Omaha World-Herald responded to the rumors that President Taft was going to call a special session of Congress to consider the invasion of Mexico to protect Americans. Critical of any such action, the editor stated that, due to our involvement in other southern nations the United States was already on less than congenial terms with

Latin Americans and to undertake action against Mexico would only involve us in more controversy. According to the author, the Democratic policy had always been one of non-intervention and since the millionaires of Wall Street had seen fit to invest in other nations rather than improve their homeland they should be prepared to suffer the consequences alone. The conclusion reached was that although "Not a Wall Street millionaire would go to Mexico to fight to protect his property, they would expect the sons of the common people to do that for them."⁴⁷ Thus, The Omaha World-Herald continued to express its suspicion that American financial interests probably constituted the primary instigator suggesting United States intervention in Mexico, a move the Omaha newspaper refused to support even if American citizens were being harassed in Mexico. Rather, the World-Herald preferred to follow the Democratic Party policy of non-intervention.

The possibility of American intervention brought a very strong response from Emiliano Zapata who in a declaration stated that "If intervention comes I will kill every American in Mexico. Then I will enter Mexico [City], but it will be to join the federal army to fight the northern invader."⁴⁸ In the meantime, the rebels in Mexico continued to abuse Americans. There was a report that they had captured one American and were holding him for ransom.⁴⁹ The individual was released, but according to a World-Herald front page story in late September 1912, there was also fear for thirteen boys who were missing in Chihuahua.⁵⁰ On October 5, 1912, The Omaha World-Herald published an editorial titled "Savage Or Civilized?" which stated that the American people felt only kindness toward the citizens of Mexico and had no wish to interfere in

their affairs. The editor continued on a rather different note though when he wrote that, due to the threats against Americans in Mexico, Americans were questioning the level of civilization of the Mexican people. The writer concluded that the United States would not interfere because the proposal of such action would cause "an almost universal protest against it."⁵¹ In its efforts to argue the Democratic policy of non-intervention, the World-Herald possibly tried to strengthen its position by demeaning the "inferior" peoples of Latin America.

On October 9, 1912, "The Public Pulse" printed a letter from Ithaca, Nebraska, by a W. H. Dech in which the author criticized the editorial "Savage Or Civilized?" of The Omaha World-Herald. The writer pointed out that warfare in itself cannot be described as civilized. More important, Dech reiterated the theme The Omaha World-Herald had been expounding for months, that is, Americans and their businesses which resided outside the United States should not be the responsibility of the American government.⁵² For as Mr. Dech stated, "Let us be civilized and call our people out of there, and let us have every American know that if he goes to another country, that he has no right to call on us, if he gets into trouble." At least some readers agreed with the ideas of the World-Herald. The next day the "Thought of the Day" column reported that there was concern also among the wealthier Mexicans over the destruction of foreigners' property within their homeland. "A Rural Economist" stated that over \$50,000,000 of claims had already been made by Americans for such damages. The wealthy of the southern nation, according to this report, felt that they would have to be the source of repayment due to the lack of public-domain, because of Diaz. They also

felt that if Madero had acted more forcefully with a stronger military Mexico would not be in its present condition.⁵³

In mid-October 1912 another faction joined the struggle in Mexico. General Felix Diaz, nephew of the former dictator, and five hundred men entered Vera Cruz where they began an assault on Madero and his government by taking over two of the ships in the harbor. Madero reportedly sent eight thousand additional troops to fight this new revolutionary, but by the next day it was reported that Diaz was in control of Vera Cruz.⁵⁴ Diaz proclaimed himself provisional president and claimed that once peace was established elections would take place.⁵⁵

Within days there was a report that federal troops were approaching Vera Cruz in preparation for a major battle to regain control of the city.⁵⁶ General Diaz's ranks swelled to approximately two thousand and he requested that the United States recognize his government because of his force and because he held possession of two seaports. Meanwhile, federal troops laid seige to the city and cut off lines of communication between Vera Cruz and the interior. Most Americans in the city withdrew to boats in the harbor within a neutral zone even though the American government contended it was the responsibility of the Mexican government to protect American citizens.⁵⁷ On October 23 the World-Herald reported on page one that, the federal troops had attacked Vera Cruz and defeated Diaz that very day.⁵⁸ For, according to Atkin,

there was still enough goodwill towards Madero among the army commanders to guarantee that the Diaz rebellion would be a failure. No other group outside Veracruz went over to him and soon the town was surrounded by government forces under General Joaquin Beltran and blockaded by the Mexican navy, which had also remained loyal. The officers and men who had followed Diaz lost heart when they saw the overwhelming odds against them and Veracruz was easily recaptured on 23 October.⁵⁹

Hopes must have risen when, the next day the United Press received a telegram from President Madero of Mexico in which he stated that with the end of the Diaz rebellion the entire of Mexico should soon settle into a peaceful state and that the trouble in that nation was over. Thus the foreigners and their property there were assured their safety. In that same issue of The Omaha World-Herald, though, it was reported that Mexico was by no means entering into a peaceful period for there were still revolutions occurring in Mexico in the south and the east led by Aguilar, Zapata, and Orozco.⁶⁰

In late November 1912 a World-Herald article reported that the Madero government was apparently attempting to pacify the people of Mexico by distributing land to farmers, two million acres to be exact. It was reported that Madero was adopting this tactic in an effort "to refute the charge that he has failed to carry out the pledges he gave when he assumed office to break up the concentration of land."⁶¹ However, the rebel strength in Mexico appeared to be rising and the people of that nation were growing more and more concerned.⁶² Once again Mexico was the topic of page one World-Herald coverage when, in December of 1912 the rebels captured a dynamite factory at Dynamita, tried to persuade the peons to revolt in Durango, and promoted a dock workers strike in Vera Cruz.⁶³

The World-Herald also gave front page coverage to a story in December which told the concern of Pope Pius X over the Mexican situation. He decreed at the time that all Roman Catholic churches in Mexico should hold masses asking for divine intervention. A December 10, 1912 Omaha World-Herald editorial entitled "Praying For Mexico" further reported

that Catholic services were to be held simultaneously around the world and that they were bound to cause some reaction. The editor then went on to speculate upon the type of response this action would illicit, which varied from religious reactions to the effect upon the psyche. The editor concluded that "if a majority of the people of Mexico began earnestly to pray for peace and order, that peace and order would soon be established," in that country.⁶⁴

The financial aspect within Mexico once again commanded the newspaper's concern when in late December 1912 The Omaha World-Herald referred indirectly to the Mexican situation and directly to the Wall Street thesis with an editorial entitled "Dislike Of Wall Street." This editorial stated that there was tremendous resentment of Wall Street among the people of the United States. This antipathy, according to the editor, was caused by the propensity of the New York millionaires to take their money outside the United States and thus develop the natural resources of nations other than their own. The author spoke of this financial power as the "money trust" and stated that only its demise would diminish the resentment among the American people toward Wall Street.⁶⁵ This viewpoint was reinforced in early January 1913 when the author of "Thought of the Day" stated that Latin America and its people should feel secure in the knowledge that no matter how American property and people had been treated in Mexico, the United States did not take any form of aggression against that nation, its government, or its people and that they must assuredly see that the "Dollar Diplomacy" of the Republicans was over and done with.⁶⁶

In early 1913 the World-Herald once again devoted front page coverage to the American government's continued concern for Americans in Mexico. In January the United States cruiser Denver was sent to the port city of Acapulco where Americans could board her and be protected if they desired. Also, although the situation in Vera Cruz was at the time peaceful, the United States government ordered the gunboat Wheeling to that port city.⁶⁷ In February the World-Herald carried a report that the United States military was still preparing for the possibility of intervention in Mexico. Thirty-five thousand soldiers were ready to cross the border if the need arose. Three more battleships were being sent south as well as troop transports.⁶⁸ ✓

The Mexican situation was brought closer to home when The Omaha World-Herald reported that a telegram had been received from Mr. S. Allan Dyer, a Nebraskan, from Mexico which assured his family that he was well and not to believe the newspapers.⁶⁹ This individual, according to the newspaper, was not alone in his plight for several Omahans were watching the Mexican situation with special interest since they had relatives there.⁷⁰

Also, in February the World-Herald revived the racist overtone of the Mexican situation by speculating on the effect of the "brown peril," that is, the immense Mexican immigration into the United States since 1910. The author stressed that this immigration tide would affect primarily the southwestern United States, but also raised a local flag of warning by pointing out that Mexicans had already extended their movement. Obviously, there was concern in Omaha over both a potential ✓

economic impact on Nebraska and because these people were not Anglo-Saxon caucasians.⁷¹

Almost simultaneously the World-Herald recognized that Woodrow Wilson was going to inherit the present relationship with Mexico. A front page cartoon of February 13, 1913, entitled "Bright Prospect for a Lively Time for the New Tenant," pictured the new Wilson administration carrying its various burdens. These problems included the tariff, trusts, the need for currency reform, canal tolls, and lastly the Mexican tangle.⁷² The next day the newspaper published another cartoon which portrayed the struggle taking place between two individuals in Mexico with two large dogs looking on. The United States Army was one dog while the other was the United States Navy.⁷³ The specter of American intervention still loomed, at least in the Democratic World-Herald. (See Illustration 3.)

Meanwhile, in early February, 1912, the revolution took a significant turn for the worse for the Madero government when insurgents in Mexico City revolted, released Felix Diaz from prison, and took over the federal buildings. This was a bloody takeover and one which forced the President and his advisors to ensconce themselves in the national palace with a military guard.⁷⁴ The next day it was reported that the Mexican nation was dividing its loyalties between the Madero government and the rebels led by Diaz. The two factions were preparing that very day to do battle once more in Mexico City. The President remained under heavy guard in the national palace.⁷⁵ According to Atkin,

Huerta issued daily assurances that the rebels would soon be defeated, but the bombardment worsened on 14 and 15 February. Dead and wounded civilians could be seen lying in the streets

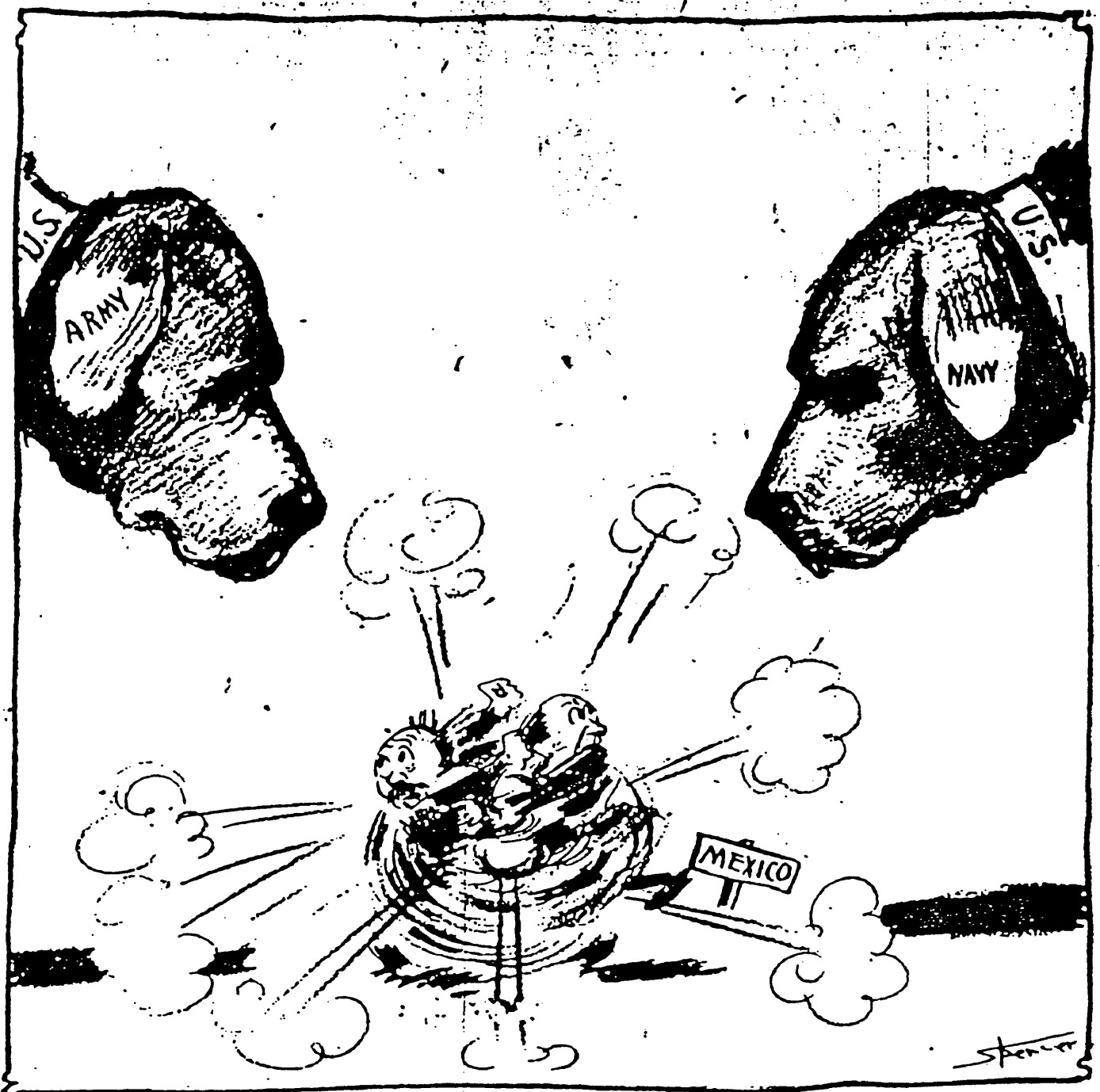


Illustration 3.

from the windows of the American Embassy. Cars flying British, American and German flags braved the bullets and shells to collect more members of the foreign colony and bring them to the comparative safety of the Embassy and the neutral zone where more than 1800 people were already herded.⁷⁶

On February 18 one of President Madero's own Generals, Blanquet, captured the ruler and forced him to sign his resignation, and General Huerta of the federal forces was proclaimed provisional governor to replace Madero. Yet the horrors of fighting continued to be reported by correspondents.⁷⁷ Immediately, Madero and Vice-President Suarez prepared to depart from Mexico. The need for such an action was eminently obvious following the execution of Gustavo Madero, the ex-President's brother, but these actions did not prevent the assassination of Madero and Suarez at a later date. In the meantime, the United States Navy remained prepared for action in Mexico if the need arose.⁷⁸ Therefore, The Omaha World-Herald awarded Mexico considerable coverage and interest during this period. As the fighting was ending in Mexico on February 22, The Omaha World-Herald printed a cartoon titled "If I Only Had A Washington!" which pictured Mexico as being in deep distress and in need of direction.⁷⁹ (See Illustration 4.) ✓

More reflective of continuing American feelings and suspicions, though, was the column "Thought of the Day" of the same issue. "A Rural Economist" questioned the source of the ammunition used by both sides in the Mexican revolution and stated that if the United States would put tighter control on exports it might be able to stop the fighting altogether. The author then further queried whether, in fact, the American and British investors were not in favor of the continuation of the

“If I Only Had a Washington!”



Illustration 4.

fighting for they would then be reimbursed for their losses at the end of the insurrection and possibly turn bad into good.⁸⁰

Therefore, throughout the Madero presidency The Omaha World-Herald continued to air its disapproval and suspicion of foreign and American investors in Mexico, especially Wall Street, as well as to identify Mexico as a source of American concern and possibly future military intervention. Its editors also continued to express concern over American lives and property in the southern nation, probably because the Taft administration could have used attacks upon Americans to justify American intervention in Mexico. In general, the World-Herald did not stray from the Democratic line of non-intervention, especially because that intervention would have been primarily for the benefit of Wall Street moguls, at least in the eyes of the World-Herald.

Endnotes

- ¹The Omaha World-Herald, October 2, 1911, p. 5.
- ²Ibid., October 10, 1911, p. 2.
- ³Ibid., October 14, 1911, p. 14.
- ⁴Ibid., November 15, 1911, p. 10.
- ⁵Ibid., November 17, 1911, p. 12; October 24, 1911, p. 3; November 2, 1911, p. 1; and November 18, 1911, p. 8.
- ⁶Ibid., November 20, 1911, pp. 1 and 2.
- ⁷Ibid., November 21, 1911, p. 3; and November 20, 1911, pp. 1 and 2.
- ⁸Ibid., November 22, 1911, p. 3.
- ⁹Ibid., November 23, 1911, p. 3.
- ¹⁰Ibid., November 30, 1911, p. 3.
- ¹¹Ibid., December 18, 1911, p. 5; December 26, 1911, p. 1; and December 27, 1911, p. 9.
- ¹²Ibid., January 2, 1912, p. 8.
- ¹³Ibid., February 29, 1912, p. 6.
- ¹⁴Ibid., March 7, 1912, pp. 1 and 3; March 8, 1912, p. 3; and March 9, 1912, p. 1.
- ¹⁵Ibid., March 7, 1912, pp. 1 and 2; March 8, 1912, p. 3; and March 9, 1912, p. 1.
- ¹⁶Ibid., March 11, 1912, p. 2.
- ¹⁷Ibid., March 14, 1912, p. 2.
- ¹⁸Ibid., March 18, 1912, p. 5.
- ¹⁹Ibid., March 21, 1912, p. 7.
- ²⁰Ibid., March 27, 1912, p. 3.
- ²¹Ibid., March 29, 1912, p. 9.
- ²²Ibid., March 31, 1912, p. 8N.

- ²³ Ibid., April 2, 1912, p. 1.
- ²⁴ Ibid., April 14, 1912, p. 1.
- ²⁵ Ibid., April 15, 1912, p. 1.
- ²⁶ Ibid., April 17, 1912, p. 1.
- ²⁷ Ibid., April 18, 1912, p. 1.
- ²⁸ Ibid., April 21, 1912, p. 5N.
- ²⁹ Ibid., April 21, 1912, p. 11.
- ³⁰ Ibid., April 24, 1912, p. 1.
- ³¹ Ibid., April 25, 1912, p. 1.
- ³² Ibid., April 29, 1912, p. 4.
- ³³ Ibid., April 28, 1912, pp. 6 and 8.
- ³⁴ Ibid., May 8, 1912, p. 6.
- ³⁵ Atkin, p. 96.
- ³⁶ The Omaha World-Herald, May 8, 1912, p. 6.
- ³⁷ Ibid., May 11, 1912, p. 2.
- ³⁸ Ibid., May 13, 1912, p. 1.
- ³⁹ Ibid., July 18, 1912, p. 2; and July 25, 1912, p. 7.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., July 31, 1912, p. 3.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., August 2, 1912, p. 3.
- ⁴² Atkin, p. 96.
- ⁴³ The Omaha World-Herald, August 29, 1912, p. 2.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., August 30, 1912, p. 1.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., September 8, 1912, pp. 1 and 11.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., September 9, 1912, p. 1.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., September 15, 1912, p. 2E.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., September 19, 1912, p. 5.

- ⁴⁹Ibid., September 27, 1912, p. 2.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., September 28, 1912, p. 1.
- ⁵¹Ibid., October 5, 1912, p. 14.
- ⁵²Ibid., October 9, 1912, p. 6.
- ⁵³Ibid., October 10, 1912, p. 6.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., October 17, 1912, p. 3; and October 18, 1912, p. 5.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., October 18, 1912, p. 5.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., October 20, 1912, p. 10N.
- ⁵⁷Ibid., October 21, 1912, p. 2.
- ⁵⁸Ibid., October 24, 1912, p. 1.
- ⁵⁹Atkin, p. 100.
- ⁶⁰The Omaha World-Herald, October 25, 1912, p. 10.
- ⁶¹Ibid., November 27, 1912, p. 2.
- ⁶²Ibid., December 4, 1912, p. 11.
- ⁶³Ibid., December 7, 1912, p. 1.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., December 9, 1912, p. 1; and December 10, 1912, p. 6.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., December 26, 1912, p. 4.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., January 7, 1913, p. 6.
- ⁶⁷Ibid., January 16, 1913, p. 8; and January 27, 1913, p. 1.
- ⁶⁸Ibid., February 12, 1913, p. 1; and February 13, 1913, pp. 1
and 3.
- ⁶⁹Ibid., February 11, 1913, p. 7.
- ⁷⁰Ibid., February 13, 1913, p. 15.
- ⁷¹Ibid., February 9, 1913, p. 6.
- ⁷²Ibid., February 13, 1913, pp. 1 and 15.
- ⁷³Ibid., February 14, 1913, p. 1.

⁷⁴Ibid., February 10, 1913, pp. 1 and 10.

⁷⁵Ibid., February 11, 1913, pp. 1 and 5.

⁷⁶Atkin, p. 114.

⁷⁷The Omaha World-Herald, February 19, 1913, pp. 1 and 12.

⁷⁸Ibid., February 20, 1913, pp. 1 and 9.

⁷⁹Ibid., February 22, 1913, p. 1.

⁸⁰Ibid., February 22, 1913, p. 10.

CHAPTER 4
THE HUERTA YEARS

The Huerta presidency began on a violent note. Although Huerta used very different methods from those of Madero in an attempt to establish his position and power, he was unable to establish the peace, justice, and stability that Mexico had long sought. In the early days of Huerta's presidency, violence continued throughout Mexico. In northern Mexico government representatives were unable to increase their following. In the south rebels continued to cause havoc by looting and robbing trains as well as public buildings. While the city of Vera Cruz altered its stand and began to support Huerta, Sonora remained firm in its support of Madero. Simultaneous to these developments, more American troops were being moved south, to Galveston, Texas, this time from Omaha.¹

The Omaha World-Herald continued to register its concern over the activities in Mexico and the American response to them. On February 24, 1913, an article appeared which stated that the movement of troops to Galveston was a precautionary action and that another three to four thousand troops would soon follow. Transports and battleships were also prepared for any necessary action. These actions all occurred at the same time as the assassination of the former President and Vice-President

of Mexico, Madero and Suarez.² Huerta's complicity in these murders was never proved; he denied all connection, and no evidence was ever produced to implicate him. However, Madero's supporters were in no doubt about whom to hold responsible and even if Huerta was innocent, he was certainly guilty of a serious political error in not protecting Madero's life.³ The official explanation was that they were killed during an attempted escape while enroute from the national palace to the penitentiary, although reportedly many citizens doubted this explanation. However, since most of Mexico was supposedly supporting General Huerta and his government, President Taft decided the murders in Mexico were not sufficient cause for intervention by the United States.⁴

The Omaha World-Herald also continued to support non-intervention. An editorial entitled "The Mexican Situation" reported that the events preceding and surrounding the deaths of the Mexican President and Vice-President were unclear. Then, in a discussion of the political past and future of Mexico, the editor concluded that the United States should not intervene. Rather, the American citizens should hope that the Mexican people would be able to find a solution to their problems.⁵

A few days later "Thought of the Day" expanded upon this sentiment of non-intervention by stating that the loss of social advancement in the United States would be the real cost of American intervention in Mexico, not the financial or military bill. According to the columnist, American reform would be set back twenty years by the diversion of energy which would be necessary for such an action.⁶

Meanwhile, soldiers in Mexico continued to clash. The forces of the revolutionary leader General Venustiano Carranza, who were known as

the constitutionalistas, were strong in Coahuila and throughout the Mexican state of Chihuahua. President Huerta tried to end the hostilities by drafting a bill to grant amnesty to all rebels who surrendered to authorities within fifteen days. Huerta stated that he would go to any lengths to bring peace to Mexico.⁷ There appeared to be a good possibility that the Zapatistas would be willing to accept this offer, but the Maderistas continued their attacks which caused excessive damage in Chihuahua. The United States kept a watchful eye on the southern situation and increased its precautionary forces around the war-torn nation.⁸

While an unsuccessful bid for Mexican peace was being made, The Omaha World-Herald columns were more interested in American involvement in the Mexican economy.⁹ On March 5, 1913, the author of "Mexico and Its Troubles" stated that Americans and other foreigners as early as 1910 were incredibly active in Mexican business and would have continued to increase their involvement and wealth if revolution had not occurred. The author also stated that foreign investors had been required to abide by rules in Mexico which were very dissimilar from those to which they were accustomed in the United States. He concluded that Mexico had benefited from the American industrial influence.¹⁰ On the other hand, the "Thought of the Day" column declared that those who held property in Mexico would be subjected to heavy taxes in the future due to the recent events in that nation.¹¹

On March 6, 1913, a new writer appeared in The Omaha World-Herald with an article entitled "What's the Matter With Mexico." "Dr. Frank Crane, a syndicated writer of daily inspirational columns for newspapers

(1909-1928)," considered the popular reasons given for the Mexican situation, that is, the lack of strong leadership and the contentious nature of the Mexican people. Crane felt neither of these factors really played a role in Mexico. Rather, the cause of the situation he felt was injustice, the injustice to which the people of Mexico had been subjected for centuries. His solution for Mexico was democracy, which he said would bring justice and peace.¹²

Meanwhile, constitutionalistas began to take control of Sonora where they destroyed railroad lines and cut telegraph wires, and the rebels of Sonora also continued in their defiance of the Huerta government.¹³ Carranza, the rebel leader of Coahuila, was reported to have invited the provisional Governor of Nueva Leon to join in his defiance of the Huerta government, an offer which was refused with indignation.¹⁴ Just seventy miles south of Douglas, Arizona, it was reported on the front page of the World-Herald, that federal and rebel forces of Mexico were battling one another. Few people were killed in the fighting but according to the article the Maderistas were now in control of the northwestern portion of Mexico. As a result, the government in Washington stated that because of the present uncertain situation in Mexico American military along the coast and warships in the region would not be withdrawn.¹⁵

On March 11, 1913, the "Thought of the Day" column commented along the same lines as Dr. Crane had earlier. According to this column Mexico needed not an iron hand but rather justice for the people, and the author added that there would be no stable government established there until conditions improved for the people of the nation.¹⁶ The

next day The Omaha World-Herald reported that President Wilson held similar views toward Latin America. Wilson was now urging friendship and cooperation among those nations. He also stated that peace and democracy were influences which he thought should abound throughout the region.¹⁷

During the next few weeks the situation in Mexico continued in a confused and unstable state. On March 12, 1913, another new column "Mexico and Its Troubles," appeared in the World-Herald. The author was Frank I. Bell, an American who was editor of two Mexico City newspapers. Bell reported that a new candidate had entered the race for the presidency of Mexico. His name was Senor Calero and he supposedly had connections with American Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson and the American colony in Mexico City.¹⁸ Then, Don Jose Yves Limantour, former Vice-President under Diaz joined the race. Bell declared that Limantour ranked high in his ability to plan and execute schemes which were financially beneficial to Mexico. However, Bell concluded that no matter how qualified the contenders, President Huerta appeared to be unlikely to surrender his position.¹⁹

Rebel activities of course continued. By mid-March Carranza had gained immense support throughout Mexico. In fact, it was reported that Coahuila, Sonora, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosi, Tamaulipas, Campeche, Yucatan, Aguas Calientes, Chihuahua and Durango had flocked to the Carranza standard and that organized opposition to the government was progressing in other states. Other rebel victories were also occurring at this same time. Sonora was virtually in the hands of the revolutionaries and Chihuahua was facing rebel attacks. The United States

continued to operate in a cautious manner. The troops along the Mexican border were ordered not to return fire of Mexicans unless they had specific orders from the War Department to do so.²⁰ However, due to the increased concern over the situation in Mexico the United States decided to send two navy cruisers, the California and the Maryland, to the Mexican west coast.²¹

The Omaha World-Herald responded to these developments in an editorial, "Peace in Mexico," in which the newspaper pointed out that the Mexican government was seeking a large loan from foreign bankers. The editorial proclaimed that if the money and supplies were cut off from all factions in Mexico, peace would soon follow and that a revolution-free Mexico was one which should be created "for the betterment of mankind."²² The editorial neglected to mention that such peace would also enable the United States to avoid involvement in Mexico, which was the World-Herald supported course of action.

This attitude of concern over the warfare in Mexico was reflected by the "Thought of the Day" column of April 2, 1913, which reported that although some people thought that the situation in Mexico was improving, public officials there still had a very short life expectancy.²³ This comment followed the apparent execution of Colonel Pascual Orozco, Sr., father of the former revolutionary leader, by the bandit Zapata while Orozco was visiting him as a peace emissary for the Huerta government.²⁴ The World-Herald gave its non-intervention attitude further support the next day when a "Rural Economist" commented that there had been a long standing belief that Mexicans hated Americans and that any United States intervention would result in the murder of American citizens in Mexico.

The author concluded that "most people will think that they should work out their own salvation."²⁵

The Huerta government did receive a loan of \$7.5 million from London bankers, a development which improved its financial position. Now Huerta chose to postpone scheduled elections, much to the dissatisfaction of members of the cabinet. Carranza requested of the United States government that the constitutionalistas not be denied munitions from the United States since the Huerta government continued to receive them.

Soon after these actions one Nebraska citizen expressed an interesting opinion in a letter published in "The Public Pulse." The writer contended that the American press was not being fair in its coverage of the Huerta regime and that the United States government was being equally unfair by not recognizing the Huerta government. Thus, the writer concluded, the United States was partially responsible for the instability in Mexico.²⁶ This lack of American recognition was indeed a topic for consideration since Britain on May 3 recognized the Mexican provisional government on the understanding that free elections would soon be held and that Huerta would not be a candidate for the presidency. Germany, France, Spain and Japan followed Britain's lead, opening way for Huerta to purchase valuable supplies and arms.²⁷ In fact, on May 23, 1913, the World-Herald gave front page coverage to a report that the Wilson administration still had not decided to recognize the Huerta government. Speculation was that the decision would not be made until after the elections were held in Mexico.²⁸

American business interests definitely desired stability in Mexico, even if that meant recognizing Huerta. The representative of one American (primarily Omaha) owned company met with Secretary of State William J. Bryan and urged that the United States government recognize Huerta for peace and prosperity. The Secretary chose to neither endorse nor repudiate the suggestion. American owners of ranches and mines in Mexico also met with Secretary Bryan and complained concerning the conditions confronting Americans there.²⁹

Once again Mexico appeared on the World-Herald's front page in a report stating that many Americans were preparing to leave Mexico unless the United States protected them. Three hundred Americans in Tamaulipas, Mexico, supposedly requested that the Wilson administration notify them once and for all if they were to be protected by the government or whether they should take means to defend themselves. These Americans stated that they had suffered financial losses and that their losses would only increase if they tried to leave Mexico.³⁰ In fact, the newspaper related on June 18, 1913, that over three hundred Americans did flee Mexico on a steamer from Vera Cruz and Tampico, most of whom were in poor financial straits and in need of Red Cross aid to get home. A refugee in Omaha reportedly gave as her reason for leaving Mexico the poor conditions and lack of provisions there, not the fighting. Many of her fellow refugees stated that they would not return.³¹

On July 12, 1913, the status of Americans in Mexico and the World-Herald's concern over the issue was clearly illustrated by an article which stated that the military, at the request of Secretary of State Bryan, demanded "the release of five Americans together with 350 cattle

and thirty horses held by Mexican revolutionists at Pidal Gomoo, Mexico."³² The next day The Omaha World-Herald reported that anti-American sentiment was running high in Mexico. A bomb threat occurred at the American embassy, Americans were fleeing, and anti-American editorials appeared in newspapers. The Mexicans were also reported to have become increasingly friendly with the Japanese at this time. Many were considering Japan their ally and a pro-Japanese demonstration of school children in Mexico City was planned. In Guaymas, General Ojeda was arresting Americans. He was quoted as saying that until Huerta was recognized by the American government Americans would receive no special consideration.³³

Within days of these reports, the Wilson administration admitted that the situation in Mexico was the most serious problem facing the United States at the time, but its position remained unstated. Soon Americans expected the United States to protect their interests in Mexico, but it was unlikely President Wilson would recognize the Huerta government until an election was held there. Senator Albert Bacon Fall of New Mexico attempted to persuade the Wilson government to issue an announcement of a "strong policy of protection for American citizens in foreign countries." On the other hand, on July 18, 1913, the World-Herald continued its call for a policy of non-intervention in Mexico. Now, news accounts related that the Wilson administration would take no action and make no statements about the Mexican policy until government officials had an opportunity to confer with Ambassador H. L. Wilson who was due in Washington soon.³⁴ The next day the "Thought of the Day" column stated that "other powers" were in favor of the United States

stepping in and becoming involved in Mexico, but "a Rural Economist" countered by declaring that America would not be opposed to a European nation taking the initiative and bearing the resulting burden.³⁵

On July 27, 1913, The Omaha World-Herald related that President Wilson finally had the report on revolutionary Mexico by Ambassador Wilson. Meanwhile, Secretary Bryan was receiving information from many sources. In fact, the next day the World-Herald reported that Secretary of State Bryan received a report from F. L. Delvalle, a State Department representative, on the Mexican situation. This new information supposedly stated that foreign powers were demanding that the United States take action in regard to Mexico and that if it did not foreign interests would intercede and force the issue. According to Delvalle, the only legitimate rebellion was in Sonora under Maytorena. Delvalle also claimed that Huerta would not settle the reorganization question following his election or easily control Zapata, although Mexico City was held by Huerta with only Zapatistas causing disorder. Delvalle also contended that Huerta needed moral support from the United States to win or havoc would result since the Mexican people were largely childish and should be treated as such.³⁶

The editorial for the next day entitled "No Minority As To Mexico" stated that President Wilson had been assured support of the Republicans in his Mexican policy if it remained non-partisan. According to the author, the Democratic President was proceeding with deliberation in regard to the Mexican situation. It also stated that Wilson's unwillingness to recognize the Huerta government, due to its manner of accession, was an example of sticking to civilized ideals of which "the whole world

must approve." Since Ambassador H. L. Wilson supported the Huerta government, the editorial writer expected his resignation. The author also speculated that John Lind, "the personal representative of the president and adviser to the American embassy," would soon depart for Mexico as a special agent. Lind's mission was to help restore peace in Mexico, primarily by securing a pledge by Huerta that he would not be a candidate in a free election. Such a policy would enable the United States to avoid intervention.³⁷

On August 5, 1913, the first of President Wilson's Mexican policy began to emerge with the acceptance of Ambassador Wilson's resignation and the sending of John Lind to Mexico.³⁸ According to Atkin,

The American Ambassador had fought bitterly for recognition of Huerta and openly labelled his government's policy towards Mexico 'disastrous.' He was also indiscreet enough to invite Huerta to dinner at the Embassy. When President Wilson learned of this he wrote to Secretary of State Bryan, 'I think Wilson should be recalled.'

The Ambassador was brought back to Washington for 'consultations.' He met the president 28 July, and a week later he was informed by Bryan that President Wilson had decided to accept his resignation because of a wide divergence in their views about Mexico.³⁹

The mission of John Lind caused speculation among Mexicans and Americans, government officials, and the public alike. Within days a telegram from Secretary Bryan stated that the purpose behind Lind's trip was peace.⁴⁰

The editorial for August 13, 1913, entitled "The Mission of John Lind," stated that the attempts of President Wilson and Secretary of State Bryan to bring peace to Mexico were of the highest ideal and conducted in the most proper manner for honorable reasons. Once again the World-Herald not only supported but also praised the Democrats. The President had stipulated, according to the author, that prior to United

States recognition the Huerta government should conform with the Mexican constitution with an election which the United States would willingly "assist in bringing about." John Lind was in Mexico for this purpose, and the editor of the World-Herald declared that Lind's deliberate and balanced approach suited him for this job. Lind's success, concluded the editorial, was hoped for by the entire United States. This same day, the newspaper reported that John Lind had set up unofficial relations with the Mexican government. On August 17, it was reported that Lind had made progress in breaking down the obstacles in the path of Mexican negotiations.⁴¹

The World-Herald reported that foreign governments were unwilling to interfere in Mexico and threaten America's peaceful policy. Ambassador Wilson, who was soon to leave his position, was rebuked by the President for comments he made about the British foreign office and actions concerning Mexico.⁴² The American role as negotiator in Mexico was portrayed on The Omaha World-Herald front page on August 24, 1913 in a cartoon entitled "Moderatin'," which portrayed Uncle Sam as being pleased by the cooling of the situation in Mexico.⁴³

An editorial on August 27, entitled "Huerta's Request," stated that the Huerta government of Mexico requested that the President delay a speech to Congress in which they expected the President would announce a policy of "hands off, no arms to either side, and the succor and protection of Americans in Mexico." This would take place if President Huerta refused to step down for an election.⁴⁴ The editorial of the following day, entitled "New Mexican Policy," declared that President Wilson's policy as revealed to Congress, was not a radical policy but

different in that it strictly enforced "neutrality as to both the contending parties in Mexico." This equalized the rebels a bit with the Huerta government for now neither could attain munitions from the United States. Also, the Americans in Mexico were to be aided by the United States government, which some feared might necessitate the use of the military. The World-Herald felt that the support the United States received for this policy might indicate an expectation by other countries that the United States would protect their citizens as well. The author also stated that he felt the policy of non-intervention was still that which had public support, but that if Americans were attacked in Mexico it might still be necessary to intervene. In conclusion, the editorial supported the President and felt that his message should be heeded in the United States and Mexico.

A letter in the "Public Pulse" August 31, 1913, entitled "Mexican Troubles" commented on President Wilson's policy. This letter stated that although President Wilson's speech to Congress was an attempt to be fair it would not work because the Mexican people would take advantage of it. This the author said he knew from living among the Mexican people. The writer also declared that military intervention was the only solution. Finally, the author stated that he did not want the United States in a war with Mexico but that it was necessary to end the fighting among these "degenerate peons" and that missionaries were needed in Mexico.⁴⁵

On September 4, 1913, The Omaha World-Herald once again took up the issue of Americans in Mexico in an editorial entitled "Exodus From Mexico." The editor said there were two types of Americans in Mexico,

those who felt no fear due to their good relations within the nation and those who realized the danger and were departing. Those who felt secure and remained in Mexico seemed to be siding with Huerta and embarrassing the United States, according to the author. They could not be ordered to leave by Wilson, but American officials hoped they would be discrete.⁴⁶

Just two days later, an editorial entitled "Huerta Eliminated," in an optimistic view, stated that Mexico was to elect a President on October 26 and that Huerta had announced he would not run. The editorial also stated that an armistice was in the works which would leave little time for Carranza, the rebel leader, and others to campaign. The author concluded by stating that the "Straightening out (of) Mexico is a long hard job." This job was the subject of The Omaha World-Herald's cartoon of the same date entitled "One Doctor Is Sufficient." The cartoon depicted Mexico and the western hemisphere as being in poor health with the attending physician, Uncle Sam, saying, "I think I can handle the case better without assistance, gentlemen" to characters representing France, Germany, and Great Britain.⁴⁷ (See Illustration 5.)

Unfortunately, another editorial the same day entitled "When War Comes" stated that war worsened all that it touched, that it brought cruelty, tyranny, blasphemy, pain, sadness, and many other maladies to the location of the fighting. According to "The Mexican Fog Bank" editorial, also of October 26, 1913, since the situation developed over time it would take time to find a solution. Also, the Wilson administration was not acting too quickly because it did not want to commit an irreparable mistake. The drama of the situation would become more

One Doctor Is Sufficient.



Attending Physician—"I think I can handle the case better without assistance, gentlemen.

intense, according to the editorial, if the United States refused to recognize the winner of the Mexican election.⁴⁸

The financial aspect of the conflict in Mexico and foreign interests was raised once again in the October 28, 1913, editorial entitled "Oil and Diplomacy." This editorial stated that although John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil Company helped in the financing of the Madero Revolution with an estimated ten million dollars, the Huerta government was siding with the Englishmen in the matter of controlling the Mexican oil. This development, according to the author, was important to England because it planned "to use oil exclusively in its navy in the near future and it wants to have an oil supply owned by its own subjects." The editorial concluded by stating that the true conflict in regard to Mexico was that its residents were concerned with the land question and foreigners with the oil question. A cartoon entitled "The Last Rites" expressed a similar opinion. The cartoon portrayed the burial of "Dollar Diplomacy" with representatives of South American republics and President Wilson present and reading a speech.⁴⁹ (See Illustration 6.)

President Huerta became the focal point of the World-Herald in October and November 1913. A cartoon published in early November pictured President Huerta with a chip on his shoulder refusing to resign from his position of leader of a bankrupt and devastated nation and attempting to build up his military force's numbers.⁵⁰ And an editorial of November 17, 1913, entitled "Mexican Anarchy" declared that Mexico was not experiencing a revolution but rather anarchy, a situation which would exist as long as Huerta was dictator. The editorial further

THE LAST RITES



Illustration 6.

claimed that recognition would not be forthcoming as long as Mexico remained under Huerta's control. This situation, according to the editorial, was affecting the financial state of Mexico in which interest was unpaid, a railroad abandoned, mines closed and dividends not being paid. The editorial concluded that Huerta could ruin the whole of Mexico, especially its commercial faction.⁵¹ Lastly, on November 20, 1913, "Private Conscience," a cartoon series by an artist known as Follett, began commenting on the Mexican situation. In this series a character named Private Conscience attempted to correct wrongs, as the author saw them. In this issue the character made a rigorous journey in search of Mexico's President Huerta. On the accomplishment of his objective "Private Conscience" viewed only the feet of a reclining man, although he said he saw Huerta. President Huerta, in Follett's view, was certainly in a tenuous position.⁵²

With the coming of another year in the continuing conflict within Mexico, a World-Herald editorial entitled "Mr. Bryan's Prayer" endorsed Secretary of State Bryan's prayer "that God would help him to make it unnecessary for the United States to go to war with Mexico." This editorial stated that such a war would cause the loss of life and billions of dollars, the distraction of energy which would otherwise have been applied to the United States, "the distraction of the thought and attention of the nation from its serious domestic problems and responsibilities," and the United States' relations with Latin America. However, the writer also declared that although President Wilson was a proponent of peace, there was still good reason to believe that military intervention might occur because the Monroe Doctrine prevented European

nations from taking action. Therefore, those nations could insist that the United States do so. Also, a large number of United States naval and marine forces were present in or near Mexico, which The New York World reported were indicative of "some decisive move on March 1 to force Huerta out of office." The World-Herald editor concluded that despite those pressures and military activities, Bryan would remain loyal to President Wilson no matter what the outcome.⁵³

On March 7, 1914, The Omaha World-Herald printed a letter in the "Public Pulse" entitled "The Mexican Problem" in which the author, E.M.A., defended the lack of military activity in Mexico on the part of President Wilson. The author concluded that taking an armed force into Mexico would not settle the problem but rather would cause economic problems within the United States and cause Americans to be seen as bullies.⁵⁴ Following this endorsement of the President's policy, the comic "Private Conscience" began to turn his attention to Mexico with greater frequency. In one of these cartoons the hero attempted to warn President Huerta against executing prisoners. The President refused to listen only to find out, after the fact, that a cousin of the Rothchild's had been executed, thus ruining his chance of a loan. In another, Private Conscience was pictured telling President Huerta that all he had to do to end the war was resign, for which advice the hero was imprisoned. Private Conscience concluded that Huerta deserved what he got for not listening to his advice. Finally, in a cartoon of March 9, 1914, a confrontation occurred between Private Conscience and a member of the Mexican military in which the Mexican threatened the continent with his "dogs of war" only to be warned by the Private that

if Mexico was not careful some real "dogs of war" would appear. In the next frame, from across the United States border, larger dogs came and annihilated those of Mexico and sent the man running. As usual Private Conscience concluded by saying he did his best to forestall the incident.⁵⁵

Finally, on March 20, 1914, "The Public Pulse" turned its attention once more to the region's continuing interest in the financial aspect of the Mexican situation with a letter which spoke of the unequal economics of Mexico and the abuses perpetuated by the foreigners on that nation's wealth. The writer concluded by stating that the United States should not intervene militarily but rather diplomatically in Mexico to bring about peace.⁵⁶

Mexico had experienced many changes during this period from the fall of 1911 to the spring of 1914. It gained a revolutionary leader, Madero, as President, witnessed his incomplete presidency and murder, and finally the continued violence of the Huerta reign over Mexico. In spite of the promise made by its leaders, Mexico was not able to attain peace. ✓

Mexico remained of major interest to The Omaha World-Herald, as expressed via its news articles, editorials, cartoons, "Public Pulse," and various other formats. The World-Herald during this period continued to follow past practices by supporting the Democratic President's policy of non-intervention. The newspaper also continued to blame financial interests in the United States and Europe, that is, the "Wall Street Millionaires," to some degree for the troubles in Mexico,

but apparently it felt Wilson was replacing the Republicans' "Dollar Diplomacy" with negotiation and arbitration.

Endnotes

- ¹The Omaha World-Herald, February 23, 1913, pp. 1 and 2.
- ²*Ibid.*, February 24, 1913, pp. 1 and 2.
- ³Atkin, p. 121.
- ⁴The Omaha World-Herald, February 24, 1913, pp. 1 and 2.
- ⁵*Ibid.*, February 25, 1913, p. 8.
- ⁶*Ibid.*, March 1, 1913, p. 8.
- ⁷*Ibid.*, March 1, 1913, p. 3.
- ⁸*Ibid.*, February 28, 1913, pp. 1 and 3.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, March 4, 1913, p. 1; and March 5, 1913, p. 6.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, March 5, 1913, p. 9.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, March 5, 1913, p. 9.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, March 6, 1913, p. 8; and Webster's Biographical Dictionary (G & C Merriam Co., Publishers, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1980), p. 363.
- ¹³The Omaha World-Herald, March 7, 1913, p. 15; and March 8, 1913, p. 6.
- ¹⁴*Ibid.*, March 8, 1913, p. 6.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*, March 9, 1913, p. 1.
- ¹⁶*Ibid.*, March 11, 1913, p. 8.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, March 12, 1913, p. 1.
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, March 12, 1913, p. 18.
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*, March 15, 1913, pp. 3 and 17.
- ²⁰*Ibid.*, March 13, 1913, p. 1; March 14, 1913, pp. 1 and 3; and March 15, 1913, pp. 3 and 17.
- ²¹*Ibid.*, March 17, 1913, pp. 2 and 3; March 18, 1913, p. 1; March 20, 1913, p. 5; and March 21, 1913, p. 1.
- ²²*Ibid.*, March 12, 1913, p. 8.
- ²³*Ibid.*, April 2, 1913, p. 6.

- ²⁴Ibid., April 1, 1913, p. 12.
- ²⁵Ibid., April 3, 1913, p. 8.
- ²⁶Ibid., April 25, 1913, p. 1; and May 8, 1913, pp. 1 and 6.
- ²⁷Atkin, p. 136.
- ²⁸The Omaha World-Herald, May 23, 1913, p. 1.
- ²⁹Ibid., May 28, 1913, p. 1; June 3, 1913, p. 2; and Atkin, p. 136.
- ³⁰The Omaha World-Herald, June 7, 1913, p. 1.
- ³¹Ibid., June 18, 1913, p. 1; and June 21, 1913, p. 8.
- ³²Ibid., July 12, 1913, p. 3.
- ³³Ibid., July 13, 1913, p. 6N.
- ³⁴Ibid., July 16, 1913, p. 1; July 17, 1913, p. 10; July 18, 1913, p. 1; July 19, 1913, p. 15; July 22, 1913, p. 1; and July 23, 1913, pp. 1 and 3.
- ³⁵Ibid., July 17, 1913, p. 10.
- ³⁶Ibid., July 27, 1913, p. 1; and July 23, 1913, p. 2.
- ³⁷Ibid., July 28, 1913, p. 8; and Atkin, pp. 137-139.
- ³⁸The Omaha World-Herald, August 5, 1913, pp. 1 and 2; and August 6, 1913, pp. 1 and 6.
- ³⁹Atkin, p. 137.
- ⁴⁰The Omaha World-Herald, August 7, 1913, pp. 1 and 8; August 8, 1913, p. 1; August 9, 1913, pp. 1 and 3; and August 10, 1913, pp. 1 and 7N.
- ⁴¹Ibid., August 13, 1913, p. 6; and August 17, 1913, pp. 1 and 9N.
- ⁴²Ibid., August 14, 1913, pp. 1 and 2; August 15, 1913, pp. 1 and 3; and August 18, 1913, p. 2.
- ⁴³Ibid., August 24, 1913, p. 1.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., August 27, 1913, p. 6.
- ⁴⁵Ibid., August 28, 1913, p. 6; and August 31, 1913, p. 2E.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., September 4, 1913, p. 6.

- ⁴⁷Ibid., September 6, 1913, p. 10; and October 26, 1913, p. 1.
- ⁴⁸Ibid., October 26, 1913, p. 2E.
- ⁴⁹Ibid., October 28, 1913, p. 5; October 29, 1913, p. 1.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., October 31, 1913, p. 1.
- ⁵¹Ibid., November 17, 1913, p. 1; and November 18, 1913, p. 1.
- ⁵²Ibid., November 20, 1913, pp. 1 and 10.
- ⁵³Ibid., January 11, 1914, p. 4E.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., March 7, 1914, p. 6.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., January 28, 1914, p. 10; January 30, 1914, p. 10; March 3, 1914, p. 10; March 5, 1914, p. 8; and March 9, 1914, p. 10.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., March 20, 1914, p. 8.

CHAPTER 5

MEXICO ON THE ROAD TO WAR OR PEACE?

Early April 1914 marked an important event in Mexican-American relations. Some American sailors who had been sent into Tampico for fuel from the USS Dolphin were arrested and almost immediately released. The Federals arrested the Americans because of confusion brought on by rebel attacks in the city. The Tampico garrison commander, General Ignacio Morelos Zaragoza, soon issued an apology for this incident to Lieutenant Commander Earle and American Consul Miller, explaining that "the soldiers who made the arrest were members of the state guard and 'evidently ignorant of the first laws of war.'" This apology satisfied the two American officials, but not Rear Admiral Henry T. Mayo who was present on the USS Dolphin. The Admiral acted on his own authority and demanded a formal apology, punishment of the guilty, and a twenty-one gun salute to the American flag. Mayo's demand for formal action was later supported by Washington.¹

The consequences of this incident were portrayed on the April 16, 1914, front page of The Omaha World-Herald in a cartoon in which U.S. warships were shown sailing toward the shore of Mexico and the concerned President Wilson with a caption which read "Huerta is about to discover that there is a limit."² (See Illustration 7.)



Illustration 7.

In the same issue an editorial further commented on Tampico. Entitled "The Mexican Crisis," the editorial stated that the President, Congress, and people of the United States were greatly affronted by the actions of Mexico at Tampico and expected some sign of respect from General Huerta. The patient stand taken by the American administration, according to the author, although applauded at the beginning was at this time causing some criticism of the President. The editor felt that the President had acted correctly, but unless Huerta apologized the chance of war was very possible if not probable. Thus, the editorial supported the President but still took the attitude that war could erupt between the United States and Mexico at any time.³

On April 17, 1914, the World-Herald specifically commented on what action it felt the United States should take against Mexico because of the Tampico incident. The cartoon published on this date, entitled "The Dictator Takes A Little Dictation, Himself," pictured Huerta typing the forcefully delivered message of President Wilson demanding that Mexico apologize to the United States. The typewriter's page read: "Authorities At Tampico You Will Fire Salute Of Apology To U.S." This cartoon obviously referred to the steadfast position which the American government had taken on the matter of Mexico formally apologizing to the United States for the Tampico incident. The Omaha newspaper certainly seemed to agree with this course of action in order to avoid war between the two nations. The editorial of the same issue further expanded on the situation. "Troubles, Foreign and Domestic" began by stating that the Huerta government had to salute the American flag in apology even though Mexico would therefore lose some esteem and pride. Concern was

also expressed over the fact that the leadership of Mexico could change at any time to the Villa-Carranza camp, which according to the author, was not particularly pro-American either in its attitude. The editorial also commented on a topic which was of frequent concern to the Omaha newspaper, the diversion of the President's and Congress' attention to Mexico rather than to domestic matters. It concluded with praise for the President and Congress with the statement that "it is fortunate, indeed, not merely for the good of the democratic party but for the good of the republic that the people generally, and irrespective of party, have shown such a genuine confidence in the President himself and in democratic courage, wisdom and good faith." Therefore, The Omaha World-Herald once more took the opportunity to express its pro-Democratic views as well as to maintain the attitude that America was in the right.⁴

An editorial entitled "A Matter Of Symbols" appeared in the following issue which discussed the importance of the use of symbolism, that is, salutes and uniforms, in relation to the Tampico incident. According to the author, the American marines were in uniform and were quickly released with an apology. Since the flag, American uniform, and Uncle Sam were all insulted, Huerta must then make a symbolic apology. A twenty-one gun salute to be returned by the United States was proper, but Huerta demanded that the salutes be simultaneous, which the United States felt was an improper request. Therefore, the United States refused the proposal and threatened to send in a million American troops if the exchange of salutes was not made. The editorial concluded that

these events illustrated the impact symbolism could have on international relations.⁵

On April 19, 1914, the editorial "The Gathering War Clouds" elaborated further on the topic of the twenty-one gun salute. The editorial stated that President Wilson had set 6 p.m. that evening as the deadline for Huerta to guarantee that Mexico would salute the American flag. The author stated that Wilson took this action because the issue was beginning to take on a humorous demeanor to most people rather than the serious diplomatic attitude it deserved. This presidential action, according to the editorial, might appeal to the American people due to its strong stance. The author concluded that no matter what the result of this incident it was becoming evident that the Mexican situation was nearing the crisis point, with the possibility of intervention, even though Mr. Bryan, as Secretary of State, had made every effort to avoid war.⁶

Two days later the editorial "'A Trivial Happening!'" criticized the denigrating comments of Omaha Judge Abraham L. Sutton, a possible Republican congressional nominee, on the administration's policy toward the Mexican crisis. According to the author, the Judge was quoted in the Omaha Bee as condemning the gravity with which the Tampico incident was dealt. The editorial concluded that this was not a time to criticize but rather to support the President in his defense of American honor. Once again, the World-Herald was proud to defend President Wilson and his Mexican policy.⁷

On April 22 The Omaha World-Herald took up another aspect of the Mexican situation when it published an editorial entitled "No Political

Colonels." This editorial discussed the many volunteers who wanted to serve in Mexico, their qualifications, and preparedness. The author praised the National Guard and the training which it provided, while he criticized Nebraska legislators who wished to abolish this institution. The editorial concluded that the military leadership should be well-trained and therefore come from the regular Army or National Guard since this was a serious business.⁸

The same day the World-Herald continued along this same military vein in a cartoon entitled "Easy Now! Don't Get Excited! I Only Want To Extract This Thorn!" This cartoon pictured Uncle Sam approaching a dog named Mexico with a pair of tweezers, labelled Army and Navy, to extract the thorn of the Huerta Government from its paw.⁹ Assumedly this cartoon referred to the fact that the previous day Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, had ordered that the navy in Vera Cruz seize the customs house and prevent war supplies from being delivered to the Huerta government or any other party.¹⁰

The World-Herald's editorial of April 23, "Vera Cruz--And After," stated that the United States had occupied Vera Cruz at low human cost. The cause for this occupation was, according to the author, to punish Huerta for his disrespect toward the United States. Unfortunately, the editorial continued, the Mexican people could unite against the American government and produce a different result from the one the United States had planned. In short, the results could be detrimental to Mexico rather than beneficial, and the United States could be forced to become more thoroughly involved than it had originally planned. Still, the

editorial concluded that the President had at least taken this action and that the American people were supporting him and his policy.¹¹

On April 24, 1914, there appeared an editorial which commented on the leadership of Mexico. According to "By Side of Huerta," the revolutionary leader, Carranza, wrote to Secretary Bryan demanding that the United States military within Mexico be put under Carranza's control. Believing this a totally unrealistic demand, the author concluded that there was not a fit leader among Carranza, Villa, and Huerta and that it might become necessary to rid Mexico and the United States of all three. The World-Herald obviously believed that the United States knew best, even about another nation's leadership.¹²

In another editorial the same day, titled "The Mexican Population," the World-Herald discussed the background of Mexican people. According to the author, due to the diversity and make-up of the Mexican people, it would take two generations for the United States to bring about a modern government in Mexico. A major problem was that many of the Mexican leaders were of Indian descent, although the writer added that "the Indians are of a high order of intellect." The racial attitudes of the World-Herald had not changed. Along this same vein appeared, "The Pawn of Mexico," a letter to the editor in "The Public Pulse." According to the author the Mexican people could not be expected to act in any way other than that which they had for many of them were "barbaric savages" and had no respect for human life or discipline. Their only good trait was that "they admire nerve and grit," an uncommon characteristic in Mexico.¹³

"The Spinning Fate," an editorial of April 25, reiterated the World-Herald's opposition to war in Mexico. The author stated that despite the activity in Vera Cruz President Wilson still hoped to avoid war with Mexico. The President might be hoping, according to the editorial, to merely block supplies going to Huerta. This would allow opponents to rid Mexico of Huerta and allow the United States to remain at peace. The only possible impediment to such a course, according to the author, was that anti-American action might occur in Mexico and force the United States to go to war. The editorial concluded that once the American forces went to Vera Cruz and blood was spilled, part of the control slipped out of the hands of the United States into those of fate. "Troubled Parliament," another editorial appearing on the same date, continued the anti-war theme by questioning the amount of time and attention the Congress was devoting to the Mexican issue rather than to other internal problems. According to the author, this international involvement was very detrimental to the Progressive Movement. Thus, the World-Herald still maintained its attitude of America first.¹⁴

On April 27, 1914, The Omaha World-Herald published "Friendly Offices," an editorial which commented on a new aspect in the Mexican situation, the appearance of three South American nations as advisors. According to the author, these nations, the ABC powers (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile) were permitted to contact all factions involved in the Tampico dispute and to offer suggestions but not to take any further action. In short, no arbitration was to take place under the present circumstances. The editorial speculated that finding a settlement acceptable to all parties would be a difficult task, as it would involve an apology

to the United States as well as reparations and probably the ousting of Huerta. The author concluded that the possibility of mediation must have been pleasing to the President and Secretary Bryan since it might prevent war, the goal for which they had so long searched. Mediation might also enable Latin America to see the United States as a friend rather than an enemy to be feared. The Omaha World-Herald was pleased that the Democratic President possibly was going to avoid a messy entanglement in Mexico. The newspaper proudly printed an article from the Washington Star in which the author rallied support for President Wilson and Secretary Bryan now that they had taken action in Mexico. The same issue to the Omaha newspaper also contained an editorial titled "The Mexican Press" in which the writer discussed freedom of the press in Mexico and blamed Huerta for many of Mexico's problems. According to the author, the people of Mexico were being kept in ignorance regarding the progress of the constitutionalistas, Carranza's followers, and the indignities placed on the United States. These events, according to the editorial, would not occur if the people were kept informed. Furthermore, the constitution of Mexico was not at fault, but rather it was its application by rulers such as Huerta.¹⁵

The World-Herald's front page for April 28, 1914, published several articles dealing with Mexico. A cartoon pictured the ABC mediators, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, coaxing General Huerta to be reasonable. It was subtitled "The Mediators Certainly Have a Man's Size Job Cut Out for Themselves."¹⁶ (See Illustration 8.) This cartoon simply referred to the mediation offer which was made on April 25 by Argentina, Brazil,

and Chile and which both the Americans and Huerta government had accepted.¹⁷

During the month of May the World-Herald followed and commented upon the attempt by the "ABC" powers to avoid war between the United States and Mexico by mediation. In an early editorial titled "What Is



The Mediators Certainly Have a Man's Size Job Cut Out for Themselves.

War?" the writer questioned why the United States' actions in Mexico had not resulted in war. He stated, in fact, that if another nation had made such moves then it would be war. The editorial concluded that the American people in general did not wish to have a war with Mexico and that perhaps this attitude was helping calm demands for war by a minority.¹⁸

On April 28, 1914 the subject of Pancho Villa appeared on the editorial page. The author called Villa "mysterious," yet he went on to state that the Wilson administration had confidence in this constitutionalista and was "hopeful of Villa's friendship and good faith." At this time Villa was fighting against Huerta with Carranza and the constitutionalistas. But, according to the editor, there were officials and others, including himself who did not trust the revolutionary, who some characterized as "speaking with a forked tongue." The author concluded that he felt Villa was a cruel and brutal murderer, but the real Villa would only be known at a later date. The editorial concluded by approving the embargo on arms to the constitutionalistas.¹⁹

As April ended the World-Herald once again portrayed its anti-Wall Street attitude with a front page cartoon entitled "'Nothing to Arbitrate'" which pictorially commented strongly on the impact of the Rockefellers on Mexico. John D. and John D., Jr. were illustrated with halos over their heads and "social uplift" in their pockets, but with bodies laying all about them. The World-Herald expressed similar feelings for those Americans in Mexico who wanted the United States to intervene to protect them and their property. An editorial, "The Refugees," stated that all American nationals who were able to do so were

fleeing from Mexico. The author estimated their number to be in the thousands and speculated that approximately 99% had left behind the majority of their possessions and brought only bitterness in their place. The editorial writer was sympathetic toward these refugees, but he reminded his readers that both Presidents Taft and Wilson had warned these individuals and had attempted to have them return to the United States earlier. Now the refugees wanted war in order that they might regain their homes, businesses, and possessions. This cry for war, concluded the writer, was not one with which the American people and President agreed. The refugees had only themselves to blame for their loss, and therefore they should not expect the American government to come to their aid.²⁰

The page one cartoon of May 3 titled "A Change of Policy," showed Carranza, Uncle Sam, and Huerta each in a corner preparing for war, a war correspondent preparing to cover the actions, and the mediators conferring in the center. The subtitle of the illustration was "From 'Watchful Waiting' to 'Watchful Mediating.'" And, on May 4, a cartoon entitled "In the Mean Time" showed Uncle Sam waiting outside a door marked "South American Mediation Board" while carrying Huerta by the seat of his pants which were labelled Vera Cruz. The World-Herald clearly had supported mediation as a means of avoiding war, but it also had taken a stand in defense of American honor at Tampico. The page one cartoon of May 5 likewise reflected this sentiment. Titled "The True Fan," this cartoon showed a man reading the "Daily Paper" and "humming and hawing" over the reports of military activity in or related to Mexico. "True Fan" became excited only when he read that "Ty Cobb Hits

The Toboggan, Bats Only 240." To the World-Herald American honor in Mexico obviously was more important than Ty Cobb's batting average.²¹

On May 10 the World-Herald continued to examine the progress of the ABC mediators. In an editorial entitled "Recalls War Incident," the author reported that a meeting had been planned between American and Mexican delegates and the ABC mediators in Niagara Falls for May 18. The editorial writer recalled a Civil war incident in which a supposed mediation between North and South took place, but it turned out to be a matter of false representation on the southerners' part. Thus, there was no guarantee the meeting would produce peace. Meanwhile, on May 12, 1914, the World-Herald carried a front page story about a memorial service which was held for the heroes of Vera Cruz. On that same page there appeared a cartoon entitled "A Long Flight--Can He Make It?" The cartoon pictured a dove with an olive branch in its beak being released from its cage in Niagara Falls by the Peace Commission and setting off on the over 2,000 mile journey to Mexico City.²² (See Illustration 9.)

Simultaneously, the World-Herald returned to its defense of President Wilson. An editorial, "The Snipers," referred to the criticism of President Wilson's Mexican policy. According to the editor, the President had no way of stopping such sniping even though he was doing what he felt was right. The author concluded that since the road on which the President had embarked, that of peaceful settlement, was not an easy one, it was "not too much to ask" that the snipers leave him alone. The editorial clearly portrayed the pro-Wilson sentiment which was being presented in the World-Herald at this time. The World-Herald was undoubtedly pleased to print a letter to "The Public Pulse" entitled

A Long Flight—Can He Make It?

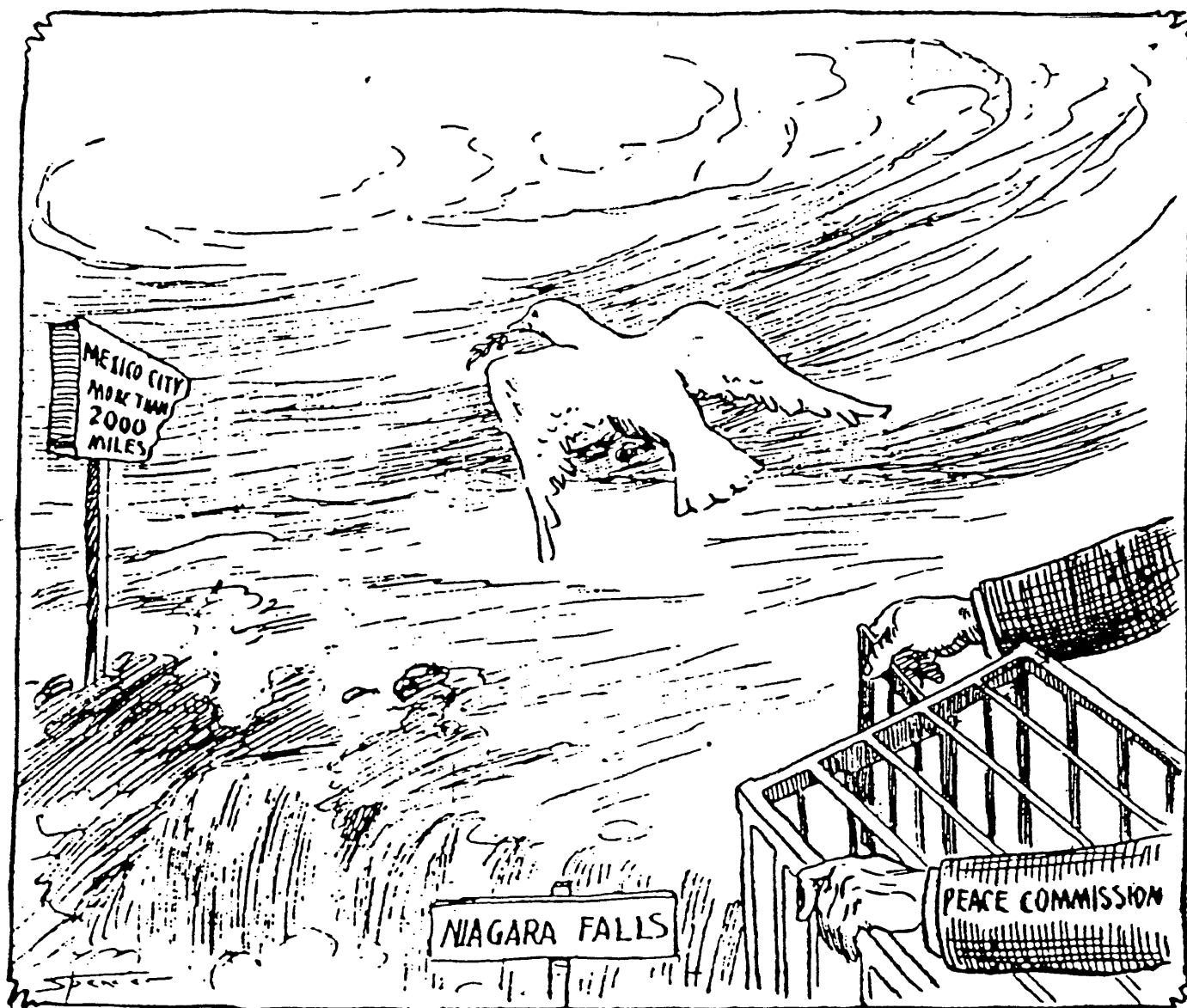


Illustration 9.

"Wilson's Mexican Policy" on May 16. In this letter L. J. Quinby compared President Wilson to President Lincoln, and he commended him for keeping peace between the United States and Mexico. The author concluded that he had faith in the President and in his approach to the Mexican situation.²³

Three days later an editorial entitled "At Niagara Falls" brought the news of a scheduled meeting at Niagara Falls later in the week. The purpose behind this meeting, according to the author, was to reestablish fair and orderly government in Mexico. He also stated that the Mexican representatives were empowered to "include the abdication of the presidency by Huerta" if necessary. The Tampico affair and other incidents were to take a back seat to this matter. However, the editorial questioned whether any decision reached by the ABC mediators would function for long since the constitutionalistas were not to be represented at these meetings, and the Huerta government had not been recognized by the American government and apparently by a large portion of the Mexican population. The author of the editorial concluded that "Carranza and Villa hold the key to the situation."²⁴

The World-Herald's pro-Wilson position surfaced again in an article reprinted from the Chicago Record-Herald entitled "The President's 'Mexican' Interview." This article commented on a conversation with the President which was in the current issue of the Saturday Evening Post. The Chicago newspaper stated that the President's high-mindedness, sincerity, and idealism were above question. The article also stated that Wilson denied that the United States would gain any territory through the mediation and stated that he wished to help the "disinherited and

oppressed millions of Mexico" through reform. The conclusion reached by the article was that although the President did not have all the details worked out there was no question as to his policy in broader terms.²⁵

On May 28 the ABC mediators proposed a peace plan for Mexico which involved a provisional President, "four cabinet ministers who would be acceptable to all factions," new elections, and American recognition of the new government. Huerta agreed to the plan, with some reservations, on the stipulation that Mexico be at peace, but Carranza refused. Little wonder that a front page cartoon published a few days later was anti-Carranza. Entitled "The Pebble in the Pot," the cartoon illustrated many men cooking some "Peace Broth," three of whom were the mediation cooks, with Carranza standing above and throwing a rock into the soup.²⁶ (See Illustration 10.)

Mediation continued to draw front page attention from the World-Herald. On June 5, the page one cartoon pictured the Mediators in a Mexican hospital offering "Agrarian Problem Pills," "Provisional President Dope," and "Foreign Recognition Stimulant" to Villa and Carranza following the resignation of Huerta. And the next day an editorial entitled "Mediation Proceeding" stated that Villa denied any political aspirations and that the constitutionalistas should be included in the mediations because they controlled over half of Mexico. The author also reported that there were rumors as to the possible resignation of Huerta and that protest might soon occur if the Niagara Falls mediations did not soon conclude.²⁷

As June dragged on, so did the attempt at mediation by the ABC powers. On June 11 a cartoon entitled "She Is Certainly a Skittish

The Pebble In the Pot



Illustration 10.

"Animal" portrayed an individual labelled "Mediation" driving a carriage with a shying horse labelled "Peace." The horse was staring frantically at a piece of paper which was marked "U.S. balks at method suggested for

naming provisional president." Along the path which the carriage had taken there were papers marked "Constitutionalista Representative," "Carranza Statement," and "Huerta's Blockade Order." And a few days later a cartoon entitled "The Present Situation at Niagara Falls" portrayed Mediation and Peace in a row boat which was already halfway over the falls.²⁸

On June 24 the ABC conference finally reached agreement by calling for the establishment of a provisional government made up of all parties involved in the civil war in Mexico. Nothing was said about Wilson's desire to remove Huerta from power, and nothing was said about the desired salute to the American flag. The agreement promptly collapsed, however, when Carranza, whose constitutionalistas were by then nearing victory, followed through on his threat not to sign. The World-Herald soon followed with a cartoon titled "Music That Had No Charm to Soothe the Wild and Savage Beasts" in which three musicians, labelled the "ABC Mediation" were shown walking away with anger and sadness on their faces to the growls of Villa and Carranza.²⁹

In mid-July events took a sudden upturn when Huerta resigned from the presidency. On July 16, The Omaha World-Herald printed a cartoon entitled "The 'Dictator'" which showed an individual, presumably Huerta, leaving with bundles under his arms and the shadow of a noose behind him. On this date there were several articles dealing with Mexico and the response to recent occurrences there. In the following issue there appeared an editorial entitled "A Victory Of Peace" which stated that the Wilson Mexican Policy had scored well with the resignation of Huerta from the presidency of Mexico. Thereby, according to the author, the

United States accomplished its goal of ending the Huerta presidency. The editorial commended this accomplishment by pointing out the loss of lives, money, and respect in Latin America that the United States might have suffered if peace had not been preserved. The author concluded that the Mexican government was now primarily in the hands of Mexicans and once again praised President Wilson for his hard won "victory of peace."³⁰

On July 21, 1914, a letter to "The Public Pulse" made one of the last comments on the Mexican situation. L. J. Quinby commended President Wilson and his non-war policy in Mexico. The letter concluded that "Wilson's policy is succeeding. It marks not only an epoch for civilization, but it shall mark an epoch for the suffering people of Mexico as well."³¹ The World-Herald itself could not have said it better.

Endnotes

- ¹Atkin, pp. 188-190.
- ²The Omaha World-Herald, April 16, 1914, p. 1.
- ³Ibid., p. 6.
- ⁴Ibid., April 17, 1914, pp. 1 and 8.
- ⁵Ibid., April 18, 1914, p. 14.
- ⁶Ibid., April 19, 1914, p. 4E.
- ⁷Ibid., April 21, 1914, p. 8.
- ⁸Ibid., April 22, 1914, p. 8.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 7.
- ¹⁰Atkin, p. 194.
- ¹¹The Omaha World-Herald, April 23, 1914, p. 6.
- ¹²Ibid., April 24, 1914, p. 8.
- ¹³Ibid.
- ¹⁴Ibid., April 25, 1914, p. 14.
- ¹⁵Ibid., April 27, 1914, p. 4.
- ¹⁶Ibid., April 28, 1914, p. 1.
- ¹⁷Atkin, p. 200.
- ¹⁸The Omaha World-Herald, May 1, 1914, p. 8.
- ¹⁹Ibid., April 28, 1914, p. 6; and The New Columbia Encyclopedia, 1975 ed., pp. 2892-2893.
- ²⁰The Omaha World-Herald, April 30, 1914, pp. 1 and 6.
- ²¹Ibid., May 3, 1914, p. 1; and May 5, 1914, p. 1.
- ²²Ibid., May 10, 1914, p. 4E; and May 12, 1914, p. 1.
- ²³Ibid., May 12, 1914, p. 6; and May 16, 1914, p. 1.
- ²⁴Ibid., May 19, 1914, p. 6.

²⁵Ibid., May 24, 1914, p. 4E.

²⁶Ibid., June 3, 1914, p. 1; and Atkin, p. 201.

²⁷The Omaha World-Herald, June 5, 1914, p. 1; and June 6, 1914,
p. 14.

²⁸Ibid., June 11, 1914, p. 1; and June 20, 1914, p. 1.

²⁹Ibid., July 10, 1914, p. 1; and Atkin, p. 201.

³⁰Atkin, p. 208; and The Omaha World-Herald, July 16, 1914,
pp. 1 and 6.

³¹The Omaha World-Herald, July 21, 1914, p. 6.

CONCLUSION

This violent era in Mexican history, 1910-1914, saw a great many changes and yet a certain continuity. Mexico experienced the end of Diaz's reign, the Madero presidency with its attempts to improve Mexico, his assassination, the rise of Huerta's regime marked by American involvement and constant violence, and finally an attempt at peace through the mediation of the ABC powers. This, then, was truly a time of turmoil and significant change for the Mexican nation, its people, and those outsiders who became involved in these events.

The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1914, was a war which gave Americans ample opportunity to choose sides among the Mexican factions, at least before the Tampico incident. The position taken by the American President, first William H. Taft and then Woodrow Wilson, obviously played a major part in the stand taken by The Omaha World-Herald. However, even though the World-Herald apparently adopted a position of non-intervention in Mexico primarily because Wilson and the Democratic Party took such a stand, there were other factors as well that motivated this Omaha newspaper to argue against becoming involved in Mexico. The World-Herald continually proclaimed a suspicion regarding Wall Street interests in Mexico, and fear that those interests wanted the United States to intervene militarily for their protection. The paper, in declaring that it

was not the duty of the average American to fight foreign wars to protect millionaires' interests, clearly reflected the sentiment of the Progressive Era. In addition, one cannot ignore the racial views of the World-Herald. Ethnic prejudice was a blatant fact of life in early twentieth century America, and this midwestern paper reflected that sentiment by opposing intervention in a country which it contended was inhabited by inferior "non-whites." On the other hand, The Omaha World-Herald edged close to supporting intervention when the "honor" of the United States was at stake in Tampico. The Democrats and the World-Herald may have criticized "Dollar Diplomacy," but they did not reject the jingoism of "Walk softly and carry a big stick."

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