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UNITED STATES-BRITISH DIPLOMACY OVER MEXICO, 1913

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UNITED STATES-BRITISH DIPLOMACY OVER MEXICO, 1913

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For the most part, the history of the diplomatic negotiations between the United States and Great Britain over Mexico in 1913, has been ably done. Some of the major diplomatic historians in the United States have written on this subject, as have many Wilson scholars. Memoirs, autobiographies, diaries, edited letters and papers, and countless secondary works have been devoted to various aspects of this interesting period. They have all suffered from the same limitation; they were written basically from United States documents. Even the materials from those individuals intimately connected with the events reflect this one-sided approach. Some of the principal participants did not know, in many cases what was going on behind the scenes; therefore, on occasion their letters and documents actually lead the historian astray. There has also been a tendency to gloss over some of the events because the details were not available.

On January 1, 1964, with the official opening of the 1913 British Foreign Office documents, answers to many of these questions were revealed for the first time. In addition, the availability of certain private papers such as those of Lord Cowdray, John Bassett Moore, and the recently published letters of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, to mention a few, have provided a better understanding of the diplomacy. Even fuller use of records long available, such as the Navy Records in the National Archives, have helped provide a clearer picture of certain events.

This study is an attempt to clarify, explain, and even to correct some of the misconceptions about the diplomacy between the United States and Great Britain that took place in the period from the February revolution through the naval controversy in December 1913. What were the main problems involved? A few examples should suffice to answer this question. The official documents from Henry Lane Wilson, the United States Ambassador to Mexico, indicate that Great Britain withheld recognition from the new Mexican government headed by General Victoriano Huerta at least temporarily because of the assassinations of the former president and vice-president. The British documents indicate that quite to the contrary, the assassinations had nothing to do with the delay. Statements have been made to the effect that the visit of Sir William Tyrrell to the United States in November 1913, resulted in a "deal" whereby Great Britain would support

the United States in Mexico in return for repeal of the objectionable exemption clause in the Panama Canal Act of 1912. Not only is there no evidence to support such a theory, but definite proof exists to refute such claims. Moreover, Great Britain denied that Sir Lionel Carden was sent to Mexico in the fall of 1913 to thwart the United States efforts to unseat Huerta. But the documents reveal that even before leaving England Carden was dedicated to a policy of sustaining the Mexican President. While British policy changed, there is every indication that Carden did not. Other illustrations abound, but they are reserved for their proper place in the narrative.

From 1876 to 1910, Mexico was under the heavy hand of General Porfirio Díaz. When Díaz came to power Mexico had for years been the scene of turmoil and strife. Revolution, counterrevolution, civil war, foreign invasion, had all played their part. Armed bandits haunted the highways and byways, so that travel without a strong escort was hazardous. With the exception of gold and silver, the rich natural resources of the country had hardly been touched. This was to change under the new leadership.

Eager to see the material development of the country, Díaz encouraged investment by foreigners. In return for their capital investments and technical skills he gave lucrative concessions in such fields as mining, industry, transportation, and eventually petroleum. Businessmen from

the United States came into this bonanza at an early period, so before long Mexico was looked upon as little more than a commercial appendage of its northern neighbor. Díaz recognized this too and deliberately began to encourage investors and contractors from other countries, particularly Europe. The natural result was competition and rivalry. Unfortunately for Mexico, most of the profits from these enterprises were leaving the country. Only a small elite element in Mexico was benefitting from this industrial and commercial development. The vast bulk of the population was living at the subsistence level or at best little above it. Some Mexicans saw and felt the need for change. Seeing and feeling it was one thing, but doing something about it was something else. The old General had ways and means of dealing with trouble-makers. Díaz, however, was not getting any younger, and by 1907 and 1908 there was talk of a successor.

Seemingly, the President encouraged the idea, and Francisco Indalecio Madero, the son of a wealthy family from northern Mexico, sought the presidency. Madero soon discovered that he had been a little precipitate and fled to Texas. Although a visionary and an idealist, he had developed a following in Mexico, and in 1910 headed the revolution that deposed Díaz. Madero was then elected president of the republic in 1911.

Quite popular at first, the new president did not have the administrative or military ability to rule effective-

ly. Disorders soon broke out in various parts of the country. Conditions seemed to get worse, and dissident factions sprang up until finally a full scale revolt occurred in the capital in February 1913. This uprising was headed by Félix Díaz, who was soon joined by General Victoriano Huerta. Their victory brought Huerta to power as the new leader in Mexico. As these events occurred, the United States and Great Britain became involved.

CHAPTER II

HENRY LANE WILSON AND THE MEXICAN CRISIS

One of the most unusual chapters in the story of the Mexican Revolution during 1913 was the part played by the United States Ambassador to Mexico, Henry Lane Wilson. Much has been written about his role in Mexican affairs from February to July, but now additional facts have come to light. Evidence is available, for example, which indicates that he exerted a heavy influence on Sir Francis William Stronge, the British Minister to Mexico, and that he played a hitherto unknown part in the removal of Miguel Covarrubias, the Mexican Minister to Great Britain. It is common knowledge that he actively collaborated with General Victoriano Huerta, the new Mexican President, but one of the Ambassador's plans to force United States recognition of Mexico has been concealed in the British Archives for over fifty years. Other details concerning the United States and Great Britain have likewise been undisclosed. But like many such tales, these events must be told in the context of the Mexican Revolution and the diplomatic crises it produced.

The revolt against President Francisco Indalecio Madero on February 9-18, 1913, crystallized to a great extent because Madero failed to provide vigorous and firm leadership. The situation degenerated until near anarchy was the order of the day. It culminated in the cuartelazo in Mexico City. Even before the fighting had begun in the capital, Ambassador Wilson sent the State Department a stinging indictment of the Mexican government and its failure to restore order.¹ After the actual battle opened in the city, Wilson and other members of the diplomatic corps became extremely alarmed at the destruction of property and the loss of life. Within a few days they were convinced that the Mexican President was incapable of ending the slaughter. Acting under the leadership of the American Ambassador, the British, German and Spanish Ministers agreed that the solution to the problem was for Madero to resign. Bernardo de C6logan, the Spanish Minister, delivered their request to the President.² Madero was incensed and not only refused, but told C6logan that the diplomatic corps had absolutely no business becoming involved in the internal

¹Henry Lane Wilson to Secretary of State, February 4, 1913, U. S., Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1913] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 696-99 (hereafter cited as Foreign Relations 1913).

²Stronge to Sir Edward Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, February 16, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, Foreign Office Archives, Public Record Office, London, England (hereafter cited as PRO).

affairs of Mexico. Ambassador Wilson without approval from Washington decided to adopt a sterner course and dropped thinly veiled hints of United States intervention if the President did not resign.³

Madero suspected the Ambassador was bluffing, and telegraphed President William Howard Taft to find out. He informed Taft that the situation was not as bad as some reports indicated, referring undoubtedly to the Ambassador's alarming comments to the State Department. Madero asked for assurances that United States troops would not be landed, and is said to have remarked, "Now you will see how the intrigues of this evil ambassador are dealt with."⁴ When Ambassador Wilson learned of the message he immediately cabled the State Department advising them that Madero's telegram was misleading and inaccurate.⁵ Despite his most determined efforts Wilson could not get the President or

³Stanley R. Ross, Francisco I. Madero Apostle of Mexican Democracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 172ff. Luis Meza Morton, "The Close of an Era: Act One of the Mexican Tragedy" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of History, University of Texas, 1956), contains very little on the post-Madero period, but appears to have insight into the problem. He calls Ross' biography of Madero "eulogistic."

⁴Ross, Madero, 297-98; Secretary of State to American Ambassador (Mexico City), February 15, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 713-14, contains Madero's message. For an excellent condensation of Ambassador Wilson's part in the entire affair see, Arthur S. Link, Wilson The New Freedom (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 353, f.n. 21.

⁵Wilson to Secretary of State, February 15, 17, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 712-13, 715-16.

the State Department to issue an ultimatum to Madero. He decided then to turn to his British colleague.

At Wilson's urging Stronge sent several messages in an attempt to get British support for the American Ambassador's plan. Stronge advised the British Embassy in Washington that he could see no solution for the problem except for Madero to resign, and indicated that Wilson would like for these sentiments to be passed on to the White House. It was felt that a threat of United States intervention might force the Mexican President's resignation, and the Foreign Office was asked to use its influence in support of such a declaration.⁶ Stronge's and Wilson's appeals were part of a scheme to have President Taft assume a "get tough" attitude with Mexico.

The British Foreign Office was reluctant to have Stronge involved in the demands for Madero's resignation. Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary, considered this purely a matter of internal Mexican politics, but because of the unusual circumstances and his intimate knowledge of the immediate problems Stronge was left to be the judge of the situation. He was, however, cautioned to be careful. Grey warned him that it would be best not to say anything

⁶Stronge to Grey, two dispatches dated February 16, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO; Isidro Fabela, Historia Diplomática de la Revolución Mexicana (2 vols.; Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1958-1959), I, 84-92, gives additional details of the part played by Stronge and Carden.

to Ambassador Wilson which might be interpreted as encouraging United States military intervention. For this the United States would have to assume sole responsibility, and the Foreign Office concluded that neither side in Mexico would appreciate British meddling.⁷ Events would shortly bring an end to the necessity for the Machiavellian intrigues of the two diplomats.

Secret meetings between the revolutionary leaders and some members of Madero's staff had been going on for several days. On February 18, General Huerta, the commander of the army in Mexico City and in charge of the government's defense there, openly went over to the rebels. That afternoon the president, vice-president, and certain cabinet officers were arrested. In the evening Huerta and General Félix Díaz⁸ met at the American Embassy at the invitation of Ambassador Wilson. There the two generals agreed upon a plan, later known as the Pacto de la Ciudadela, whereby Huerta would become provisional president within seventy-two hours. Díaz was given the major hand in selecting the new cabinet, but he declined a place in the government in order that he might be free to campaign for president at the next election. No date was set at this time for the

⁷Grey to Stronge, February 19, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO.

⁸Félix Díaz was the nephew of the deposed dictator Porfirio Díaz and was one of the leaders in the revolt against Madero.

election.

On the following day, Madero and José María Pino Suárez, the vice-president, while still in custody tendered their resignations to the Congress. According to the Mexican Constitution the presidency then devolved on the Minister of Foreign Relations, Pedro Lascurain, who immediately took the oath of office. Lascurain did not name a Minister of Foreign Relations, but did appoint General Huerta as Minister of Gobernación, the secretary next in line for the presidency. After less than an hour Lascurain resigned, and Huerta as Minister of Gobernación succeeded him as president.⁹ But this series of acts propounded a searching question. Under what constitutional right had

⁹The principal messages from Wilson to the Secretary of State are found in Foreign Relations 1913, 720-26; the British equivalent are Stronge to Grey, February 18, 19, 20, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO. An unconfirmed report later held that Rafael Hernández, Secretary of Gobernación under Madero had never resigned his office and, therefore, Huerta's appointment to that post was illegal, Edwin Ludlow to E. M. House, September 12, 1913, National Archives, State Department Papers (hereafter cited as SDP). President Woodrow Wilson to Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, August 26, 1913, SDP, is a summary of the legal aspects of Huerta's presidency asserting that he never became legitimate president; there is also a study by a contemporary Mexican lawyer, Juan Neftalí Amador, which argues against any legal basis for Huerta's accession, Isidro Fabela (ed.), Documentos Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana: Revolución y Régimen Constitucionalista (4 vols.; Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), I, 17-21. Link, Wilson The New Freedom, 348, has inadvertently transposed the sequence of events which occurred on February 18. The correct sequence follows in this order: Madero's arrest, Huerta's message to Taft, Pacto de la Ciudadela; on February 19, resignation of Madero and Pino Suárez, Lascurain assumes presidency and resigns, Huerta elevated to president.

Huerta arrested the president and vice-president, and just how valid were the resignations submitted under such obvious circumstances of duress? Even though constitutional requirements were subsequently followed, it is apparent that a cloud of suspicion had been cast on the legitimacy of Huerta's title to office.

Immediately following the successful revolution two questions were paramount. First, was Huerta legally the constitutional president of Mexico, and would the United States and Great Britain formally recognize him as such? The State Department was receiving contradictory advice on the constitutional issue.

Ambassador Wilson notified the Department a few hours after the inauguration that the provisional government had taken "office in accordance with the Constitution and precedents." He also asked for instructions regarding recognition of the new government.¹⁰ The following day, Irwin Laughlin, Chargé d'affaires of the United States Legation in London, wired that he had just been in conference with the Mexican Minister to Great Britain, Miguel Covarrubias. Covarrubias had informed him that there was no constitutionally legal way in which Huerta could become president through the forced resignation or execution of the president and vice-president. The Mexican Minister also advised Laughlin

¹⁰Wilson to Secretary of State, February 20, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 725.

that he had just come from the British Foreign Office where he had given Sir Louis Mallet the same advice. Mallet had replied that the British "would not recognize any president in Mexico except one chosen by the legal method of election."¹¹ The State Department was interested in getting the British reaction first-hand.

As a result, Secretary of State, Philander Chase Knox, instructed Laughlin to discuss the matter discreetly with Mallet.¹² This he did and Mallet told him that the British would "carry on" with the Mexican government. Formal recognition would not be extended, however, until the King was advised that the Mexican president had been elected in accordance with constitutional methods.¹³ The Mexican Minister had also been in touch with the Foreign Office again.

Covarrubias stated that Madero was being held prisoner in order to extort his resignation and feared that he would be shot unless he complied. He was anxious to get the British to intercede on behalf of the president, but the Foreign Office was not disposed to intervene in any

¹¹Laughlin to Secretary of State, February 21, 1913, SDP. Sir Louis de Pan Mallet was the Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Whitelaw Reid, the United States Ambassador to Great Britain, had died in December 1912. The new ambassador Walter Hines Page did not arrive until May 1913. Laughlin was in charge of the Legation during the interim.

¹²Knox to American Embassy (London), February 24, 1913, SDP.

¹³Laughlin to Secretary of State, February 25, 1913, SDP.

manner between the rival Mexican factions.¹⁴ Information received from Mexico indicated that Madero and Pino Suárez were not to be harmed, and this served as an additional reason why the British were reluctant to make any representations to Huerta.¹⁵ Despite the guarantees which were given by the Mexican government, Madero and Pino Suárez were assassinated on the night of February 22. The fears which Covarrubias expressed were now realities, and his conversations with Laughlin and Mallet would shortly be used against him.

On March 3, Knox forwarded copies of Laughlin's messages containing the statements by the Mexican Minister to Ambassador Wilson in Mexico City.¹⁶ Wilson considered Covarrubias' comments as disparaging and his attitude as inimical to the new Mexican government and so informed the Mexican Minister for Foreign Affairs Francisco de la Barra. Based on this information from the American Ambassador, de la Barra relieved Covarrubias of his post, and plans were made for his transfer to Russia.¹⁷ Without intimating that

¹⁴Minute of Covarrubias' visit to Foreign Office, number 8794, February 24, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO. This meeting apparently took place on February 20 or 21.

¹⁵Stronge to Grey, February 20, 24, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO.

¹⁶Knox to American Embassy (Mexico City), March 3, 1913, SDP.

¹⁷The information about Wilson's part in this episode was revealed to Stronge by de la Barra. Stronge was com-

he had been the informant, Ambassador Wilson on March 8, reported "he [Huerta] informed me that he [Huerta] had assurances that the British Government had been misled as to the constitutionality of this Government by the Mexican Minister to London, who has been removed, and that recognition by that Government would soon be made."¹⁸ There is no indication that the information supplied by Covarrubias had any more than a momentary effect on the Foreign Office. Huerta's claim to Wilson of British recognition, while well-founded, came only after days of diplomatic activity.

On the evening of February 20, Ambassador Wilson received word that General Huerta would like to meet with the diplomatic corps at noon the next day. The Belgian Minister Paul May pointed out that attendance at such a reception would imply recognition of the new government. Acting on May's advice, Wilson called a meeting of the foreign ministers to discuss this development. They all realized that they were acting without instructions from their govern-

pletely in the dark not having been advised by either Wilson or the Foreign Office. Stronge to Grey, March 6, 11, 17, 1913; Grey to Stronge, March 8, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO; Bryan to American Embassy (London), March 13, 1913; Laughlin to Secretary of State, March 14, 1913, SDP; C. Romero, Mexican Legation (London), to British Foreign Office, April 2, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO. Ambassador Page later revealed that Covarrubias was unfriendly to Huerta, and that he had said he hoped and expected Huerta's fall, adding that he was glad the United States had not recognized him. Page to Secretary of State, July 25, 1913, SDP.

¹⁸Wilson to Secretary of State, March 8, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 760.

ments, but it was unanimously decided that it was desirable for them to attend. The reasons given for their decision were: interest in reestablishing order under the new government; the new government had followed constitutional forms, the president and vice-president had resigned, all the required formalities had been met, and the new government was considered as legally installed; the new cabinet was expected to inspire confidence in the administration; no obstacles should be thrown in the path of the government which might arise by their refusal to attend; and the new government should benefit from the measure of recognition which their presence might imply.¹⁹

The reception took place at noon on February 21. Ambassador Wilson as doyen of the diplomatic corps delivered a speech on behalf of the ministers. He congratulated President Huerta on assuming the office of "Interim President of the Republic, in accordance with the laws that exist in Mexico."²⁰ Wilson stressed the restoration of law and order by the new government. The British Minister was

¹⁹Stronge to Grey, February 21, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO, contains more detail on this meeting than any of Ambassador Wilson's dispatches about it. Thomas Beaumont Hohler, one of the secretaries at the British Legation prepared a memorandum which Stronge enclosed with his message. This memorandum contained an excellent resumé of each new cabinet officer. Wilson to Secretary of State, February 21, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 726-27.

²⁰Ross, Madero, 326.

happy to note that Huerta dwelt on this point in his reply.²¹ The Mexican President was obviously pleased with the meeting and especially by the friendly sentiments expressed. Although Stronge and Wilson were in agreement on this matter, they were not in accord on the government statement over the assassinations.

Ambassador Wilson accepted the official explanation that Madero and Pino Suárez were killed "in an attempt to escape" more readily than the British Minister. Wilson advised the Secretary of State on February 24, that he accepted the government's version of the deaths and considered it a closed incident. Knox thought it best, however, to await the report of the promised thorough investigation by the Mexican government before making any official statement.²² Stronge in his report elaborated on the American Ambassador's attitude, "he [Wilson] accepts the official version of death of President and Vice-President, and has urged his Government to do so too, as he thinks that the new administration will effect pacification of the country." Stronge was inclined to suspend judgement until the investigation was

²¹Stronge to Grey, February 21, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO. Victoriano Huerta to His Majesty King of England, February 19, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, indicates the importance which Huerta attached to guarantees for foreign interests, "Peace at last your subjects interests respected protected."

²²De la Barra to the Mexican Embassy (Washington), February 23, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 732; Wilson to Secretary of State, February 24, 1913, ibid., 736; Secretary of State to Wilson, February 28, 1913, ibid., 747-48.

completed.²³ If the implication of the British Minister's statement is clear, then Wilson accepted the government's account not so much because he believed it but because he thought the government could restore peace and order. By thus glossing over the affair there was a possibility that United States recognition would be extended without undue delay. Recognition by the Taft administration was withheld, but not because of the murders.

Secretary Knox accepted Wilson's counsel as to the constitutional legality of the new government. But he declined to recommend formal recognition until satisfactory arrangements could be made on certain outstanding grievances which existed between the United States and Mexico. These included: resolution of the Tlahualilo controversy, settlement of the Chamizal tract, a convention arranging for the equitable distribution of the waters of the Colorado River, settlement of the border claims growing out of the battles at Aguaprieta and Juarez in 1911, and adjustment and compensation of claims for the death of American citizens and the disturbances there. Ambassador Wilson was directed to advise the new government that recognition hinged on the satisfactory settlement of these problems.²⁴ Wilson even

²³ Stronge to Grey, February 24, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO.

²⁴ Knox to Wilson, February 21, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 728-29.

told Stronge that recognition was being withheld pending settlement of these matters.²⁵ The Mexican government assured the American Ambassador that the stated problems were receiving its attention and that there was no reason to believe that they could not be amicably resolved.²⁶ Unfortunately, no concrete details were worked out before the Republicans left office in the United States. Secretary Knox some years later told Wilson that he would have recommended recognition as late as ten o'clock on the morning of March 4th, if the Huerta government had conceded the United States demands in full.²⁷

While the United States was holding out for the settlement of the grievances, the British also hesitated to extend immediate recognition but for different reasons. Ambassador Wilson's reports from February 24 through March 1, indicated that British recognition was being withheld

²⁵Stronge to Grey, February 23, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO.

²⁶Wilson to Secretary of State, February 24, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 736-37.

²⁷Henry Lane Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile (Garden City: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1927), 297. President Taft some eight months later wrote "There was no time to recognize the Huerta Government before I left office. The battle was on in Mexico City until two or three days before I left office. All I could pray for was that I could turn over the situation to my successor." Taft to J. C. Schmidlapp, November 16, 1913, William Howard Taft Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division. Taft's account is not an exact statement of the circumstances.

because of the deaths of Madero and Pino Suárez.²⁸ Stronge's reports to the Foreign Office, however, clearly certified that Huerta had assumed office through constitutional means, and there was no indication that recognition should be withheld because of the assassinations.²⁹ Several months later while dining together Stronge told Wilson that the British government had never considered Madero's assassination after his resignation as in any way pertinent to recognition.³⁰

²⁸Wilson to Secretary of State, February 24, 25, March 1, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 736, 738, 750. Edith O'Shaughnessy, wife of the United States Chargé d'affaires in Mexico City later wrote "Mr. Stronge did not counsel his government against recognition. He quite simply realized, as did the other diplomats, that Madero had but paid the normal though high price of political failure in Mexico. Recognition was given, not of course, at the moment, but with that decent regard for 'les convenances' which stamps British diplomacy with such dignity, when the affair was literally cold in its grave, and the protocolic amount of grass and weeds had grown above it,--nicely watered with oil." Edith O'Shaughnessy, Intimate Pages of Mexican History (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1920), 235-36.

²⁹Stronge to Grey, February 20, 21, March 1, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO. In the March 1 message he reported "United States Ambassador has informed his Government that present Mexican Government is a duly constituted and legal one. In this opinion I concur." Grey to Stronge, March 3, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, instructed him "You should meanwhile not give any reason for supposing that recognition will be refused or that we shall bring into our consideration of the matter the death of Madero under circumstances of which we cannot have accurate knowledge."

³⁰Henry Lane Wilson to Bryan, May 13, 1913, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division. An example of the traditional account in which Great Britain withheld recognition because of the assassination and later reversed itself is in Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters (8 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, Page and Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1927-1939), IV, 240-43.

The Foreign Office as early as February 21, indicated that formal recognition would be extended to Huerta as soon as he notified the King in writing of his legal right to office. The only dissenting note had come from the Foreign Office, American Department, on February 19, and it merely suggested to the Foreign Secretary that recognition be withheld until it had been determined that Huerta had been duly selected. This comment was probably a direct consequence of Covarrubias' visit. Stronge's messages cleared up that point, and the only reference subsequently made to withholding recognition concerned the "provisional" aspect of the president's title.³¹

There was a little confusion over the title of "provisional" president which seemed to indicate that Huerta must still be confirmed in office, and Grey recommended that the proper time for him to write the King would be after he was finally installed. Stronge was able to resolve this problem by explaining that Huerta was president ad interim and, as such, ineligible for the office of president. The date of election for a permanent president would be set by Congress and it was anticipated that it would be held in

³¹Foreign Office, American Department, minute number 8275, February 21, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, contains the dissenting opinion; see especially Foreign Office minute number 8310, February 21, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, in which the question of recognition is fully discussed without any dissenting opinion; Grey to Stronge, February 22, 25, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO; Stronge to Grey, February 25, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO.

April. Stronge also reported that Huerta would announce his accession to the presidency within a fortnight.³²

Things at least for the moment were at a stalemate. The United States refused recognition until Huerta agreed to the solution of the specific problems enumerated by Knox. Great Britain had promised recognition as soon as Huerta's letter was received, but that was at least some weeks away. Based on the information given it by Laughlin and Wilson, the State Department was still under the impression that Great Britain did not plan to recognize Huerta because of the assassinations. The situation left the diplomatic corps in Mexico in suspense.

On March 3, two weeks after Huerta had assumed office, the various foreign representatives in Mexico decided to draft a statement which would define the position of the diplomatic corps in its relations with the Mexican government. Wilson, Stronge, and the German Minister Admiral Paul Von Hintze drew up the desired memorandum which stated, "The Diplomatic Body has in fact entered into communication with the Mexican Government reserving at the same time to the respective Governments the privilege of formally recognizing the provisional Government at whatever moment

³²Grey to Stronge, February 25, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, raises the question of the "provisional" title; Stronge to Grey, February 28, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO, clears up ad interim part of title.

they may consider opportune."³³ The statement was agreed to by the heads of the other missions, and presented to de la Barra. Even though the diplomatic corps had clarified its position the failure of Great Britain to grant immediate recognition created problems for some of its commercial representatives in Mexico.

J. B. Body, director of the Mexican interests of the British Firm of S. Pearson and Son, attempted on March 1 to reopen negotiations with the Mexican government. Body was informed that until Great Britain recognized the new government, it "could hardly contemplate with satisfaction the continuance of such business relations with a British firm."³⁴ At almost the same time the Minister of Justice informed Luis Riba, legal adviser of the Mexican Light and Power Company, that the United States, Germany, and France had already granted recognition.³⁵ This was, of course, absolutely false. Stronge was at a loss to determine why these Mexican officials had taken such an attitude unless

³³Stronge to Grey, two dispatches, March 3, 1913, F.O. 371/1671 and F.O. 371/1672, PRO. The original statement in French is included in Stronge's letter of March 3. The British translation differs somewhat in wording but not in thought from the American. See Wilson to Secretary of State, March 3, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 753.

³⁴Stronge to Grey, March 3, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO. S. Pearson & Son was an English company with extensive interests in Mexico, especially oil. Weetman Dickinson Pearson, the head of this organization, was the First Viscount Cowdray, normally referred to as Lord Cowdray. See Chapter IX.

³⁵Riba was one of Lord Cowdray's attorneys.

they were trying to force the British to move faster on the recognition issue.³⁶ They certainly accomplished nothing by it, and they took the risk of alienating the only government which had promised to recognize them. Chances of United States recognition were at the same time beginning to dim.

The inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson on March 4 brought no relief for the Mexican problem. Huntington Wilson, Assistant Secretary of State, with other state department officials had urged President Wilson a day or so after he assumed office to recognize Huerta without results. On March 7, at the first cabinet meeting Mexico was discussed, but nothing was decided.³⁷ Three days later, on March 10, the new Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, indicated that the United States had no immediate plans in regard to the recognition of the Mexican government. He informed the British that the United States intended to maintain the status quo, and meanwhile would closely observe the situation.³⁸ This was followed by President Wilson's first policy statement on Latin America, which, while not specifically mentioning Mexico, certainly had that country in

³⁶Stronge to Grey, March 3, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO.

³⁷Philip Holt Lowry, "The Mexican Policy of Woodrow Wilson" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of International Relations, Yale University, 1949), 45. Lowry's excellent dissertation covers the entire eight years, 1913-1921, of the Wilson administration.

³⁸Huntington Wilson, Assistant Secretary of State, Memorandum, March 10, 1913, SDP.

mind.

The President's statement which was drafted without the benefit of advice or counsel from the State Department or from members of his cabinet revealed Wilson's prepossession with democratic forms and appearances.³⁹

Co-operation is possible only when supported at every turn by the orderly processes of just government, based upon law and not upon arbitrary or irregular force. We hold, as I am sure all thoughtful leaders of republican government everywhere hold, that just government rests always upon the consent of the governed, and that there can be no freedom without order, based upon law and upon the public conscience and approval. We shall look to make these principles the basis of mutual intercourse, respect, and helpfulness between our sister republics and ourselves.

The President pledged to use the influence of the United States to see that these objectives were realized. He emphasized that no sympathy would be shown toward those who seized office for their own personal interest or ambition. "As friends . . . we shall prefer those who act in the interest of peace and honor, who protect private rights and respect the restraints of constitutional provision." He denied that the United States sought anything except what was best for the people and nations of Central and South America. The President stated that this public communique set forth as much of his policy toward Latin America as it was deemed necessary to announce at the

³⁹Baker, Wilson, IV, 64-69.

time.⁴⁰ Its overriding theme could easily be discerned. Ballots not bullets were the orderly processes which clothed governments with an aura of respectability.

It is impossible to understand United States-British-Mexican relations during this period without first understanding Woodrow Wilson. Wilson's thought, politics, and diplomacy were all deeply rooted in morality. Morality to Wilson was epitomized by the Christian religion, but the political reflection of morality was best characterized by popular sovereignty and self-government. He believed that the democratic process had reached its peak of perfection in the United States. The mission of the United States then was to encourage the development of democratic forms of government throughout the world.⁴¹ But Wilson would go even farther. The moral force of the United States would be used to carry this doctrine to the rest of the world. This was a new kind of imperialism--"moral imperialism."⁴²

⁴⁰New York Times, March 12, 1913, 1:7, Editorial comment concluded that the statement was directed more toward the pending revolutionary movement in Central America than toward Mexico, but it would apply equally well in either place. The Times (London), March 12, 1913, 7c, quoted only that part of the statement which reflected on trade relationships between the United States and Latin America overlooking completely the President's sentiment on constitutional government.

⁴¹Samuel Flagg Bemis, The Latin American Policy of the United States: An Historical Interpretation (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1943), 168-69.

⁴²Lowry, "The Mexican Policy of Woodrow Wilson," 43-44.

As applied to the recognition of governments which came to power through revolutionary means it gave birth to yet another term--"constitutional legitimacy." In the case of Mexico it meant more than merely meeting the constitutional requirements. It inquired into the motives of the newly installed leaders. Were they motivated by high ideals or was it only personal gain and ambition that had inspired the overthrow of the old government?⁴³ In addition, and perhaps even more important, did the government enjoy popular approval? Huerta might have complied with the letter of the law, but he could never pass Wilson's other tests. With this insight into the President's philosophy of foreign affairs it is easier to understand why the United States decided to maintain the status quo and observe the situation in the face of almost urgent appeals from Ambassador Wilson to extend recognition to the Huerta government.⁴⁴

Even before the President's statement of March 12, in regard to the United States' attitude toward Latin America, the Mexican government knew that de facto recognition would be extended by Great Britain. The autograph

⁴³Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 142. See also, Arthur S. Link, Wilson the Diplomatist: A Look at his Major Foreign Policies (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957), 3-29, for an analysis of Wilson's approach to foreign policy matters.

⁴⁴Link, Wilson The New Freedom, 348, f.n. 5.

letter from Huerta which the British were awaiting was dispatched on March 5, and a copy was cabled to the Mexican Embassy in London. When the copy was communicated to the King, the Embassy was informed that the King would await the original letter and that upon its receipt recognition would be granted to General Huerta, as interim president. Instructions from the Foreign Office to the various British embassies, specifically emphasized that recognition had been promised, and advised them to notify the governments to which they were accredited.⁴⁵ There was some delay in transmitting this information to Washington and Mexico City which added to an already confused situation.

The State Department learned from Ambassador Wilson on March 13, that de la Barra had received word that Britain would recognize the Huerta government. This information must have come from the Mexican legation in London. Neither Stronge nor Lord James Bryce the British Ambassador to Washington had as yet received the instructions sent them about advising the governments to which they were accredited

⁴⁵De la Barra to the Mexican Legation (London), March 11, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO; Huerta to King George V, February 19, 1913, copies of the original in Spanish and the translation, F.O. 372/448, PRO. This message was dated February 19, but was not dispatched from Mexico until March 5. Louis Mallet to Mexican Minister (London), March 6, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, noting receipt of Huerta's message of the 5th., and informing him that they must await the arrival of the actual letter. Grey to Bryce (Washington), March 12, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, is a copy of Grey's message instructing the several embassies to inform the government to which they were accredited.

that the British government had promised recognition to Huerta. Getting no information on the subject from Bryce, Bryan instructed the American Embassy in London to inquire into the matter and to learn just what position the British had taken.⁴⁶ Laughlin confirmed that Great Britain would formally extend recognition to Mexico on receipt of the official letter from Huerta.⁴⁷ The Mexican government, however, was interested in speeding up the publicity surrounding the British decision.

De la Barra cabled their embassy in London on March 11 to ascertain when the decision could be made public. Grey advised the Mexican chargé d'affaires that no publicity could be given the British action until the letter was received by the King and he had given the necessary directions regarding the appropriate reply to be made.⁴⁸ Huerta's letter was finally received on March 25, and the King's formal reply was signed on the 31st. On that date Grey advised Stronge that he could inform Huerta that the King's reply would be sent shortly, and permission was

⁴⁶Bryan to American Embassy (London), March 13, 1913, SDP.

⁴⁷Laughlin to Secretary of State, March 14, 1913, SDP.

⁴⁸De la Barra to the Mexican Legation (London), March 11, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO; Mexican Chargé d'affaires to Sir Edward Grey, March 20, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, acknowledging Grey's verbal note of March 19, in regard to publicity restrictions.

granted to the Mexican government to make the information public. This also cleared the way for Bartolomé Carbajal y Rosas to replace Covarrubias as the new Mexican Minister to Great Britain.⁴⁹ The King's letter was not actually delivered to Huerta until May 3, 1913.⁵⁰ This official act seems to have touched off an exchange between Mexico and the United States.

The negotiation of the outstanding problems existing between Mexico and the United States referred to previously as a condition of recognition had been agreed to in principle by Mexico as early as February 24.⁵¹ However, this attitude of cooperation had begun to wane by early May. On the 7th Huerta and Ambassador Wilson conferred on the question of United States recognition. After the meeting Huerta issued a rather pointed statement to the effect that the Mexican government was willing to arrange for the disposition of the pending questions, but the

⁴⁹ See Foreign Office minute number 13809, March 25, 1913, F.O. 372/448, PRO, autographed copies of Huerta's and the King's letters are not in the Foreign Office Archives in the PRO; Grey to Stronge, March 31, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO; Secretary of State to American Embassy (London), March 28, 1913, SDP; Laughlin to Secretary of State, March 31, 1913, SDP; C. Romero, Mexican Chargé d'affaires to Foreign Office, April 2, 1913, F.O. 371/1672, PRO; the British Ambassador to the Secretary of State, March 31, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 784-85.

⁵⁰ Stronge to Grey, May 3, 1913, F.O. 372/448, PRO.

⁵¹ Wilson to Secretary of State, February 24, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 736-37.

failure of the United States to recognize the current government prevented a discussion of any except urgent matters.⁵² Ambassador Wilson and the British Minister later discussed his meeting with the General.

Wilson had pointed out to Huerta that there were probably three things delaying recognition: "First, the circumstances attending the overthrow of the Madero Administration; second, the claims of American citizens for losses incurred since disturbances began, about which no agreement had been arrived at; and third, the unsettled state of parts of the country."⁵³ Huerta had replied that it would be impossible to settle any of the outstanding questions without first obtaining recognition. Stronge felt that Huerta had put it in such a way that "he rather sought to elicit Mr. Wilson's opinion as to the effect that this attitude would produce." Without specifically giving any answer to this statement the United States Ambassador had offered a plan whereby he believed recognition would almost certainly result. Ambassador Wilson said that if the five major problems were settled both in principle and fact, and the United States still did not extend recognition he would apply what

⁵²Stronge to Grey, May 12, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO, contains a translated copy of Huerta's statement. Wilson to the Secretary of State, May 8, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 799-800, is Wilson's account of his meeting with Huerta.

⁵³Ibid. Stronge's account of the Wilson-Huerta meeting relates many facts not mentioned in Wilson's reports.

pressure he could by offering his resignation.⁵⁴ He reasoned that the government would be unwilling to leave matters in the hands of a chargé d'affaires, and they could not very well send a new ambassador without extending recognition. Stronge was cautioned not to let word reach Washington that he [Ambassador Wilson] planned to use his intended threat of resignation as a lever to force recognition of Huerta.⁵⁵ As the Ambassador was to learn the new administration in Washington was not predictable.

Ambassador Wilson's recommendations and advice were discounted almost from inauguration day for at least three reasons: a newspaper crusade against him because of his alleged involvement in the Ten Tragic Days, a growing distrust of his optimistic reports about the restoration of peace and order by Huerta, and the knowledge that he personified the "dollar diplomacy" of the Republican party. Yet Washington hesitated to recall him because it would necessitate sending a new ambassador, and would thus force the question of recognition. On this point the Ambassador and Washington agreed. Unwilling any longer to rely on the Ambassador, the President turned to another means for information. The reports from William Bayard Hale, one of

⁵⁴Certain members of the State Department were also advocating recognition. See John Bassett Moore, Memorandum to Secretary of State, May 14, 1913, SDP; Link, Wilson The New Freedom, 348-49, 351.

⁵⁵Stronge to Grey, May 12, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

several executive agents sent to Mexico, began to arrive in early June and were highly critical of Huerta and the American Ambassador. Hale recommended forcing Huerta's resignation after which new elections should be held with the United States recognizing the new government. Hale also recommended that:

the President should explain the reasons for his action to the European governments and appeal on high moral grounds for their acquiescence. He was convinced, Hale concluded, that the European governments would cooperate and that Huerta would yield peacefully, provided the American government made it plain that it was prepared to use force to obtain its demands.⁵⁶

In this instance Europe meant principally England, and the President was already suspicious of the motives behind British recognition.⁵⁷

President Wilson relied a great deal more on personal diplomacy than he did on State Department channels in the handling of delicate foreign problems. The Hale mission to Mexico was one example. A second was the trip to Europe in the summer of 1913, of Colonel Edward Mandell House. House was a close personal friend of Wilson's and served as an unofficial adviser to the President on many matters. In

⁵⁶Link, Wilson The New Freedom, 354-55.

⁵⁷Baker, Wilson, IV, 256. British oil interests especially Lord Cowdray were alleged to have been behind British recognition. Sir Edward Grey, under direct questioning in Parliament as early as May 30, denied that Cowdray had influenced British recognition. Grey did admit that Cowdray as well as others had made representations on the matter. The Times (London), May 30, 1913, 13b.

England, on July 3, House had an opportunity to discuss the Mexican situation with Sir Edward Grey the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The central thought which he left with the Foreign Secretary according to his own account was that it really didn't matter which faction was in control in Mexico as long as order was maintained. He even suggested that Huerta might have been recognized if he had carried out his promise to have an early election. At least one historian concludes, and quite properly it seems, that House had completely misconstrued Wilson's attitude toward Mexico. He had created the impression that the President was no different than the vested interests in his approach to the Mexican problem. Namely, that the most important thing to be achieved there was order. It is also argued that if Grey had really known the President's feelings then he might have taken a different course than the one he pursued.⁵⁸ At any rate a week after his meeting with House, Grey called the United States Ambassador Walter Hines Page to the Foreign Office.

He asked Page whether it was possible for the President to recognize the Mexican government? After the meeting Page expressed surprise that Grey had told him that British recognition of Huerta was only provisional and would be reconsidered after the election of the new Mexican president

⁵⁸Baker, Wilson, IV, 258-60.

on October 26, the date which had finally been set for the election. What Page did not understand was that Huerta had been recognized as president ad interim, or until the election of a permanent president could be held. The question of continued recognition would then be taken under advisement.⁵⁹

In reply to Grey's inquiry about the possibility of the United States recognizing Huerta, Bryan informed Page that Ambassador Wilson had been summoned to Washington for consultation on July 17. Under the circumstances Page was instructed to avoid any discussion of the matter until the Department had talked with the Ambassador, and had decided on the policy which it would follow.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, Page intimated to Grey that he did not believe President Wilson would recognize Huerta because the proposed election was so near at hand. The Foreign Secretary was also informed that the close proximity of the United States and Mexico introduced conditions that the British did not fully apprec-

⁵⁹Page to Secretary of State, July 11, 1913, SDP.

⁶⁰Bryan to American Embassy (London), July 19, 1913, SDP; Nelson O'Shaughnessy, Chargé d'affaires to Secretary of State, July 17, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 812, advising of the Ambassador's departure, and announcing that he [O'Shaughnessy] had taken charge of the embassy. Wilson left Mexico on July 17, and arrived in New York on July 26. New York Times, July 17, 1:8; 18, 2:6; 26, 1913, 1:1. The Ambassador in his book, Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, 312, states he did not arrive in New York until August 1. New York Times anticipated that his resignation would be accepted at the end of the conferences, July 25, 1913, 1:6.

iate. Grey agreed and indicated that there was no desire on his part to "push."⁶¹ Page's comments were confirmed in a telegram from the British Embassy in Washington. Sir Edward Grey was informed that there was little chance the United States would recognize Huerta, and also that Ambassador Wilson would not return to Mexico because of his outspoken sympathy for Huerta.⁶² Thus, even the influence of the British Foreign Office coupled with Ambassador Wilson's recommendations had not been enough to move the American President.

The recognition controversy was continually in the news, and the events of the summer of 1913 gave it even greater prominence. Ambassador Wilson's recall for "consultation," the Hale and House missions, Huerta's almost defiant attitude toward Washington, the Constitutionalist movement in Northern Mexico, and the talk of possible intervention had all contributed to the publicity. Great Britain came in for some criticism over having recognized Huerta, and it was even insinuated that the British decision had been influenced by powerful financial interests.

Such accusations concerning the reasons for Britain's recognition of the Mexican government finally brought a re-

⁶¹Page to Secretary of State, July 25, 1913, SDP.

⁶²Grey to Stronge, July 26, 1913, F.O. 204/420, PRO, repeating Washington to Foreign Office, July 25, 1913.

buttal from the Foreign Office. The decision was defended not in an official government statement, but rather in an anonymous article which appeared in the press in mid-August. Criticism of the British policy, it was asserted, was based on a misconception of the facts, and charges that financial interests had been behind recognition were repudiated.

The recognition of President Huerta was the recognition of a Provisional President pending an election. It was done on the advice of the British Minister to Mexico as being likely to assist in the restoration of order--an important consideration in view of the large British interests involved.

The French and German Governments also recognized President Huerta after a reception by him of the whole diplomatic party at which a congratulatory speech was made in their behalf by the American Ambassador.⁶³

The New York Times account created a stir in Washington and Page was asked to determine whether or not it had originated in the British Foreign Office. Bryan expressed particular concern over that part of the statement which implied that Ambassador Wilson's congratulatory speech had influenced not only the British but the French and German decisions too. Page confirmed that the press release had been inspired by the Foreign Office.⁶⁴

In an interview two days after the statement was published, Ambassador Wilson was asked whether he believed reports that the Foreign Office was responsible for the

⁶³New York Times, August 12, 1913, 3:4.

⁶⁴Bryan to American Embassy (London), August 13, 1913, SDP; Page to Secretary of State, August 14, 1913, SDP.

news release. The Ambassador who was thoroughly familiar with British diplomatic practice could not believe that the Foreign Office had based their recognition of Huerta on anything that he had said. Therefore, he categorically denied that his remarks had in any way influenced the British decision, but rather he claimed recognition had been extended to assist in the restoration of order. In any event, the speech, the Ambassador asserted, had actually been drawn up by the Spanish and British Ministers at the suggestion of all the diplomats, and he declined to accept the responsibility for its wording.⁶⁵

The Spanish Minister admitted that he and Stronge had drafted the speech, and expressed the opinion that it had not influenced British policy. Stronge refused to comment "due to illness." Other diplomats generally felt that it was the strong representations from the British Minister in Mexico City, and not the Ambassador's speech which brought about British recognition.⁶⁶

President Wilson was thoroughly upset by the Ambassador's comments which he felt cast a reflection on the British Foreign Office. The President considered them a serious breach of propriety. He immediately instructed Bryan to disclaim any responsibility for Amba-

⁶⁵New York Times, August 14, 1:1; August 15, 1913, 1:2.

⁶⁶Ibid., August 15, 1913, 3:2-3.

sador Wilson's interview and to advise Sir Edward Grey that it was very much to be regretted.⁶⁷

Bryan also reacted quite angrily over the affair. He wanted to discharge the Ambassador immediately, but was advised by John Bassett Moore, Counselor of the State Department, that since there seemed to be some provocation summary dismissal was rather extreme. In reality the administration had already accepted Wilson's resignation, but it was not to be effective until October 14. The only question was whether it should be made to take effect at once. Since about fifteen hundred dollars in salary was at stake, it would amount to a substantial penalty. Bryan then asked Moore about the advisability of a reprimand with a warning that a repetition of like offense would bring immediate dismissal. Moore did not agree with this procedure either because he felt it might look like they were trying to strike a bargain with the Ambassador to keep him quiet. Moore's able arguments calmed Bryan, and they then turned to the wording of the message to London repudiating the Ambassador's interview which President Wilson had instructed the Secretary of State to prepare.

Bryan had already made a draft of the telegram, but its wording was so blunt that Moore recommended some changes before it was transmitted. In so doing he gave the Secre-

⁶⁷Bryan to American Embassy (London), August 14, 1913, SDP; New York Times, August 15, 1913, 1:2.

tary of State some extremely sage advice, "it should always be borne in mind that a government as compared with an individual, occupied a position of advantage, and that it was therefore incumbent upon it to speak with dignity and moderation and avoid a tone of petulance and resentment." Even though Moore had moderated the apology to London the wording of the message indicated quite forcefully that the United States government could not accept the responsibility for such outbursts.⁶⁸ This still left Bryan with an unfinished task. He had to write Ambassador Wilson and advise him that his statements to the press had been officially denied.

Bryan's letter of admonition to Ambassador Wilson was quite mild in comparison to the message to Page which he delivered to the Foreign Office. A few weeks later Ambassador Wilson obtained a copy of the Department's telegram to Page and realized just how emphatic the government had been in repudiating his statements. After realizing that he had been denounced in no uncertain terms he wrote Bryan a blistering letter in which he justified his own action and severely criticized both Bryan and the President for their attitude in regard to the entire affair.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Moore, Memorandum, August 14, 1913, John Bassett Moore Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.

⁶⁹ Henry Lane Wilson to W. J. Bryan, August 28, 1913, in Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, 378-86.

President Wilson's regrets over the incident as expressed by Page were accepted by Grey, although he indicated surprise at the President's apology. The interview reportedly had not caused the least ill-feeling there.⁷⁰ The British Foreign Secretary could deny the importance which he attached to Ambassador Wilson's remarks to Huerta in February, but he had found occasion to mention them at least twice before the newspaper article appeared.

Grey's first reference to it on May 21, was similar to the August 12 press release, but was not made public. In a message to Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador to the United States, Grey indicated that the speech had inferred a certain measure of recognition. A week later in an exchange with a member of Parliament, Grey gave the Ambassador's remarks an entirely different connotation. "In February last," he said, "the whole diplomatic body attended a reception of General Huerta at which a congratulatory speech was made on their behalf by the American Ambassador."⁷¹ The difference in emphasis between

⁷⁰Page to Secretary of State, August 18, 1913, SDP; New York Times, August 16, 1913, 3:7.

⁷¹Grey to Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, May 21, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO, which in part states "entire Diplomatic Body paid him [Huerta] a complimentary visit, at which the United States Ambassador pronounced a speech of congratulation. This in itself constituted a certain measure of recognition, and it was understood that all the foreign representatives were agreed as to the advisability of doing everything

the two comments is quite obvious. The important question was not really the remarks themselves, but whether they had been instrumental in the British decision to recognize Huerta.

The Ambassador's reference to the reestablishment of peace merely expressed sentiments shared by members of the diplomatic corps. Prospects of the restoration of order no doubt played some part in the British decision, but the evidence also indicates that Grey was completely satisfied with the legal aspects of the situation. In all fairness to both parties, Ambassador Wilson's speech certainly did nothing to discourage British recognition, nor is it reasonable to assume that it played any significant part in such an important decision. It must, however, be admitted that Ambassador Wilson was a powerful influence on Stronge, the British Minister.

Ambassador Wilson seemed constantly to take the initiative on matters, and Stronge frequently followed suit. The British Minister's messages to the Foreign Office are heavily flavored with references to the American Ambassador's views and his own agreement with the action or policy recommended.⁷² Undoubtedly, this was recognized by

possible to diminish difficulties of Huerta's Government, which seemed only one likely to restore tranquillity. In these circumstances, and having regard to extensive British interests in Mexico, His Majesty's Government took the step they did." See also Grey's reply to queries from one of the members of Parliament about British recognition of Huerta, The Times (London), May 30, 1913, 13b.

⁷²One example among a number is Stronge to Grey,

Grey and may well have been a factor in Stronge's own recall, which had been planned even before the Foreign Office was aware that Ambassador Wilson would not return to Mexico.

The February revolution had given Mexico a new President but it had created almost as many problems as it had solved. From the diplomatic point of view the problems can be telescoped to a few basic issues. Great Britain and a number of other nations after satisfying themselves that Huerta was the de facto president of Mexico extended recognition. The question of United States recognition was complicated by a change in administrations, and by an ambassador who advocated a policy contrary to that held by his superiors in Washington. Events in Mexico did nothing to help solve the problem, and finally led to Ambassador Wilson's recall. He had hardly reached home before he became involved in an open disagreement with the British government.

In spite of this disagreement it was evident that the Ambassador was more sympathetic with the British policy than with that of his own government. This may also explain why he and the British Minister were able to work so compatibly. He had cooperated closely with the new Mexican government--so much so that it was reflected in Washington's attitude toward the Ambassador. Wilson's efforts to secure recog-

March 1, 1913, F.O. 371/1671, PRO, "United States Ambassador has informed his Government that present Mexican Government is a duly constituted and legal one. In this opinion I concur." Stronge's association with Ambassador Wilson during the Ten Tragic Days was noted earlier.

nition for Huerta had failed. He had been unable to understand or appreciate the new moral philosophy of the Democratic administration, but for that matter neither had the British. The recall of the American Ambassador ended one phase in the Mexican imbroglio. The change of British Ministers was to introduce another phase.

CHAPTER III

SIR LIONEL CARDEN

On July 18, 1913, it was reported that Sir Lionel Edward Greasley Carden had been appointed British Minister to Mexico to replace Francis William Stronge. This was confirmed the following day by Page, who advised that the formalities of the appointment still needed to be completed.¹

Carden was a veteran of over thirty-five years in the British diplomatic service, all of which had been spent in Latin America and the Caribbean. He began his service in Cuba in 1877 and was transferred to Mexico in 1882 or 1883, where he remained until 1898. He returned to Cuba in 1898 as Consul-General and in 1902 was appointed Minister. In 1905, he became Minister to Guatemala, and by April 1913 was also Minister to Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua.²

¹Washington Star, July 18, 1913, clipping in SDP; New York Times, July 19, 1913, 2:3; Page to Secretary of State, July 19, 1913, SDP.

²Who's Who 1907 (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1907), 290; Laughlin to Secretary of State, April 11, 1913, SDP. Carden died in London, October 16, 1915, New York Times, October 17, 1915, 15:5.

During his years of service Carden had created the impression that he was "anti-American," leading to complaints about him by the State Department to the British Foreign Office. The Foreign Office replies had taken the general tone that he was not really so much anti-American as pro-British. His appointment to Mexico at this particular time created a stir and resulted in a request that Page try to delay it. Page read the earlier correspondence on Carden between the Embassy and the Foreign Office which the latter rejected, and concluded that unless some new facts could be obtained the request would be denied.³ The State Department decided to drop the matter and to consider it a closed incident.⁴ But events in Mexico delayed Carden's arrival for several months.

On July 21, Stronge was asked to see if Carden's appointment as his successor would be agreeable to the Mexican government. A few days later Lord Cowdray received a wire from Luis Riba requesting that he do everything

³Bryan to J. P. Tumulty, July 19, 1913, SDP; Boaz W. Long to the President, "Statement Regarding Sir Lionel Carden Great Britain's Newly Appointed Minister to Mexico," July 19, 1913, SDP; Tumulty to J. B. Moore, July 24, 1913, SDP; Bryan to American Embassy (London), July 25, 1913, SDP; Page to Secretary of State, July 29, 1913, SDP; Russell H. Fitzgibbon, Cuba and the United States 1900-1935 (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, 1935), 108-109, relates the United States' problems with Carden in Cuba.

⁴Bryan to American Embassy (London), July 31, 1913, SDP.

possible to keep Stronge in Mexico because of Stronge's great assistance to the Mexican government. Stronge's impending departure was delayed for some weeks.⁵ The immediate need for Stronge's retention in Mexico is uncertain, but he soon became an invaluable intermediary between the Mexican government and President Wilson's new agent extraordinary to Mexico, John Lind.

After Ambassador Wilson's recall to Washington the President did not want to send a new ambassador, but he did want a personal representative in Mexico. Ex-Governor John Lind of Minnesota, a long-time friend of the Secretary of State was selected for the mission. Lind's goal was to secure the early elimination of Huerta and to serve as conciliator between the Constitutionalists in the North and the government in Mexico City. Other governments, including the British, were asked to use their good offices to get Huerta to give serious consideration to the Lind proposals. Unfortunately, the Mexican President learned of the forthcoming visit through the newspapers and immediately announced that he would ignore Lind unless he

⁵Grey to Stronge, July 21, 1913, F.O. 204/420, PRO; Riba to Lord Cowdray, July 27, 1913, Cowdray Papers, these papers are in the custody of S. Pearson & Son, Limited, London, England. Cowdray was suspected as having heavily influenced the British government in its recognition of Huerta, and of having engineered Carden's appointment there. Stronge did not return to England until October 4, The Times (London), October 6, 1913, 9a.

arrived with credentials as ambassador. Huerta rejected any plan to come to terms with the Constitutionalists.⁶ Stronge offered to use his special friendship with Huerta to avoid further friction over the impending mission.⁷ The Foreign Office, however, preferred to move cautiously, not willing to jeopardize Mexican good will, and advised Stronge that it was best not to intervene unless asked to by both sides.⁸

Huerta's opposition to the Lind mission created an unfavorable reaction in the United States. Grey modified his instructions to Stronge after he was warned by the British Embassy in Washington that if this attempt at mediation failed, armed intervention by the United States appeared inevitable. The British Minister was advised to discuss the matter unofficially with the Mexican government, and to inform Huerta that it would be a serious mistake not

⁶ Arthur S. Link, Wilson The New Freedom (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 356-59; Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters (8 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, Page and Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1927-1939), IV, 264-69; Stronge to Grey, August 6, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

⁷ Stronge to Grey, August 7, 1913, F.O. 371/1674, PRO.

⁸ Grey to Stronge, August 9, 1913, F.O. 371/1674, PRO. Grey had been informed by the British Embassy in Washington on August 6, that President Wilson's plan was destined to failure because the elections for a new Mexican president would not be accepted by the contending factions in Mexico. Grey to Stronge, August 8, 1913, F.O. 204/420, PRO.

to receive Lind and hear him out.⁹

A few days after Lind's arrival in Mexico City Stronge found an opportunity on August 16 to meet him and to discuss in general some of the problems. During this meeting Lind accepted Stronge's offer to arrange a meeting with Huerta. That same evening at a dinner party given in his honor by Huerta, Stronge was able to work out the arrangements whereby Lind would receive an audience with the Mexican President. The British Minister was instrumental in smoothing the way for Lind and did what he could to ease tensions between Mexico City and Washington.¹⁰ The best tribute to Stronge's efforts was made by Lind when he related that if Stronge had remained in Mexico he believed a settlement could have been reached.¹¹

⁹Grey to Stronge, two dispatches dated August 11, 1913, F.O. 204/420, PRO. Grey was still opposed to the idea of the British acting as mediator unless requested to do so by both parties, Page to Secretary of State, August 22, 1913, SDP. Cowdray was convinced that the Lind mission would do no good as it would make the Mexicans feel like they were being dictated to. He also feared intervention might cause a shutdown of his operations there. Cowdray to Herbert J. Carr, in charge of the New York office of S. Pearson & Son, August 9, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

¹⁰Stronge to Grey, August 19, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO. Cowdray who was well informed on Mexican matters reported that "I saw the Foreign Office yesterday and they told me that Stronge is doing all he can--of course unofficially and in friendly spirit--with Huerta so as to cause as little irritation to Washington as possible." Cowdray to Guillermo de Landa y Escandon, August 21, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

¹¹Lind to Bryan, November 1, 1913, Wilson Papers. The high regard in which the Mexicans held Stronge was re-

The question naturally arises as to why Stronge was replaced by Carden. Carden was transferred, the Foreign Office claimed, because a crisis existed in Mexico and he was asked to take over the post.¹² Conditions in Mexico during the summer of 1913 were in a turmoil, and undoubtedly the British concluded that they needed a firmer hand there. It has already been noted that Stronge was influenced by Ambassador Wilson, and the Foreign Office may well have wanted someone to take the lead instead of following in the footsteps of the American representative. Carden had more experience in Latin America and particularly in Mexico than Stronge. His well-known sympathy for and protection of British interests and his willingness to "stand up" to the United States, no doubt served as factors in his selection. British commercial interests were suspected of having had a hand in the matter too. Lord Cowdray was accused, but repeatedly denied any part in Carden's appointment. Lind remained convinced, however, that Cowdray and the English government were after a monopoly of Mexican oil,

lated on several occasions. At a farewell banquet in his honor Huerta eulogized him and stated that he would never forget all that Stronge had done for him, The Times (London), August 8, 1913, 8c. The Foreign Office also received a formal note of thanks for delaying Stronge's departure, Grey to Carden, November 12, 1913, F.O. 204/420, PRO.

¹²The Times (London) Weekly Edition, March 20, 1914, 233b. It should be noted that this statement was not forthcoming until almost eight months after the appointment was made.

and that Stronge was just not big enough to pull it off; hence Carden's appointment.¹³ It was evident Carden thought the overthrow of Madero and the establishment of a strong government under Huerta would end the anarchy and bring order to Mexico.¹⁴ In a memorandum to Grey just before he left for Mexico, Carden unburdened himself on the situation there and how it could best be handled.

The document was a condemnation of United States policies in Latin America, and a clear expression of British

¹³Cowdray to American Ambassador [Page], November 17, 1913, copy in Cowdray Papers; copy of an undated statement to the editors of certain newspapers from Cowdray, Cowdray Papers; Lind to Bryan, October 25, 1913, Wilson Papers. This same view was expressed by Henry Clay Pierce, President of the Pierce Oil Co., and a Cowdray competitor in Mexico, Memorandum, Long to Bryan, November 3, 1913, SDP. The head of the Pierce interests in Mexico, J. N. Galbraith, was known to have been filling Lind with much anti-Cowdray propaganda. One report asserted that the Pierce [Galbraith] and Standard Oil interests were backing the Constitutionalist revolution against the Huerta government, and were also influencing the United States government in its opposition to Huerta. The Mexican government, therefore, highly resented the close association and intimacy between Lind and Galbraith, and asked that Bryan so inform Lind. C. F. Z. Caracristi to Honorable John H. Stephens, Democratic Representative from Texas, September 21, 1913, SDP; Another claimed, "Strictly confidentially learned today from American attache that Galbraith has been month past assuring Lind that you are endeavouring by a loan to make General Huerta resistance to United States possible," and that Carden's support of Huerta was due to your influence, Fred Adams to Lord Cowdray, November 25, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

¹⁴Carden's views on this were revealed in an interview in London, March 15, 1913, see Inclosure A to letter, Covarrubias to Page, October 26, 1913, SDP. Covarrubias stated that the interview was reported in the Evening Standard, March 15, 1913.

economic imperialism. It could have been considered a perfect rejoinder to President Wilson's statement of March 12. In Carden's opinion United States' policies in Mexico from 1910 to 1913, had been inept, in bad faith, and had already been responsible for huge losses to British investors. He feared American intervention might mean the complete destruction of British economic interests there. Huerta, Carden stated, appeared able to restore order, and, in fact, had already made some progress toward that end. The United States on grounds completely unrelated to Huerta's ability to govern or to provide guarantees to foreigners was determined to force his resignation. Carden considered it utter madness to think of substituting a new and untried man for Huerta, and concluded that to give "moral support to such a policy would be absolutely suicidal to our interests."

Britain must now, he argued, turn its attention to a policy which would provide protection for her investments in Mexico. Such a step would free the British from acquiescing in a policy which was not in the best interests of the Empire. The solution was to give Huerta a free hand and all the moral and financial support possible. Such a plan Carden believed would best serve Great Britain and British interests. The memorandum reveals that in sending Carden to Mexico Grey was well aware that a new and risky game was about to be played. Carden hoped to

thwart President Wilson's idealistic crusade.¹⁵

Carden departed from Southampton on September 18, and reached Veracruz, October 7, where he met Lind for the first time at a luncheon given by United States Rear Admiral Frank Friday Fletcher, commanding the naval forces in Mexican waters.¹⁶ So far Lind had been unsuccessful in reaching any agreement with Huerta, and he tried to impress on Carden the wisdom of President Wilson's policy. He told Carden that if Huerta would eliminate himself as a candidate in the October 26 presidential election, then he did not believe there would be any objection if Huerta later resumed the office.¹⁷ Carden interpreted this to

¹⁵Carden to Grey, September 12, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO, and "Memorandum by Sir L. Carden," attached.

¹⁶Ibid., Carden to Grey, October 21, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO; Burton K. Hendrick, The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page (3 vols.; New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1924-1926), I, 197. Hendrick indicates Carden stopped in New York enroute to Mexico where the New York World published an interview with him in "which he was reported as declaring that President Wilson knew nothing about the Mexican situation and in which he took the stand that Huerta was the man to handle Mexico at this crisis." Hendrick is one year off on this reported interview which was published on September 17, 1914, after Carden had been relieved of his post in Mexico and had been assigned as Minister to Brazil. This is one of two Carden interviews quickly repudiated by the Foreign Office. New York Times, October 16, 1914, 18:1. Hendrick contains several other minor errors in his account of Carden, I, 196-98.

¹⁷Lind most likely meant that he could see no reason why the United States would object to Huerta's candidacy at some subsequent election, as long as he did not run in October.

mean that President Wilson was looking for some way in which to extricate himself with dignity from the impasse. Lind also tried to convey to Carden the necessity for the government to come to terms with the Constitutionalists. Carden was quite skeptical of the revolution in the North and doubted that Carranza exercised any real control over the widely scattered rebel bands. He was convinced that these men were satisfied with their life of fighting and looting, and in all probability would not be willing to abandon it for whatever government might be established in Mexico City.¹⁸ Carden countered by attempting to enlist Lind to the British cause.

The British Minister advocated support of Huerta on the grounds that he was the kind of strong man Mexico needed at this time. He argued that the country was in no condition to hold an election and that it would only make things worse. He did not say so but he meant that the election would not solve anything unless Huerta was permitted to be a candidate. Carden offered two alternatives: recognize Huerta until elections could be held at a later date, or permit him to stand as a candidate in the October 26 election and then resign after a suitable successor was decided upon. Lind did not have authority to accept either proposition. He then asked Lind what attitude Washington

¹⁸Carden to Grey, October 21, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO. Venustiano Carranza, Chief of the Constitutionalists.

would take if Mexico was pacified even though the election of October 26 was not successful? Lind could not say how Washington might react. In any event, he gathered from conversations with Carden that either the elections would be postponed or, if held, set aside as void.¹⁹

The evidence that Carden was aware of Huerta's plans at this early date came only from his conversations with Lind. Lind knew that the British Minister had talked with Fred Adams on the day he [Lind] and Carden met. Adams was in charge of engineering contracts for Lord Cowdray in Mexico, and Lind was convinced that Adams was the man behind the Mexican throne. Adams was no doubt well informed and probably told Carden that he suspected the election would be annulled one way or another, and that Huerta intended to remain president ad interim for the foreseeable future.²⁰

President Wilson agreed fully with the course Lind had taken in his meeting with Carden. He recommended that Lind do his best to bring Carden around to the United States point of view, indicating that there had been no

¹⁹John Bassett Moore to American Embassy (London), October 11, 1913, copy in Wilson Papers, quoting Lind's account of the meeting.

²⁰Ibid. In reality Carden had two separate meetings with Lind on October 7, in between which he met with Adams. There is no way to "prove" that Huerta had already formulated his plan to insure the election would not be valid, but the evidence to support such a theory will be introduced in the succeeding pages.

change in his attitude toward Huerta. The President insisted on "a moral as well as a physical basis for government there."²¹ As a result of the Lind-Carden meeting the President asked Page to adroitly impress on Grey "that moral considerations should be put before material at every point in the treatment of the Mexican situation," and it was hoped that the Foreign Office would encourage Carden to take this broader view.²² Events in Mexico City were destined to pull the United States and Great Britain even farther apart on the Mexican question than they seemed at this point.

The dissolution of the twenty-sixth national Congress by General Huerta on October 10, 1913, is invariably recounted as if it was a sudden and totally unanticipated stroke. Related in that fashion it appears that President Wilson was completely unprepared and shocked by it. But a review of the correspondence Nelson O'Shaughnessy, United States Chargé d'affaires in Mexico City, sent during the preceding month contains a number of warnings in which he

²¹Moore to American Ambassador (London), October 11, 1913, SDP, quoting the President's reply to Lind of October 10, 1913.

²²Ibid. Bryan suggested to the President that Page be instructed to explain Carden's attitude to the Foreign Office and to explain the reasons for the President's position. Beyond this he felt that nothing further could be done except to watch developments. Manton M. Wyvell, Bryan's private secretary, to Joseph P. Tumulty, October 10, 1913, Wilson Papers.

predicted this very thing. In fact, he advised the State Department several days before the session began on September 16 that the Huerta government looked on Congress with apprehension and "if Congress becomes uncontrollable Huerta will dissolve it."²³ The session was barely underway when the expected trouble between the Chamber of Deputies and Huerta broke into the open. O'Shaughnessy again warned "if the Chamber perseveres in opposing the Chief Executive there will be a dissolution of the Chamber and a military dictatorship." Huerta during one of the crises did tell O'Shaughnessy that he had no intention of dissolving the Chamber, but to O'Shaughnessy it was apparent that things could not long go on as they were.²⁴ Relations between Huerta and the Congress went from bad to worse until finally the showdown came on October 10.

The incident which brought about the dissolution

²³O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, September 9, 1913, Wilson Papers; Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), October 13, 1913, SDP. Many of the members of this Congress were opposed to Huerta. They had been elected on June 30, 1912, while Madero was President. That election is often acclaimed as the most honest and free ever held in Mexico to that time. Mexican Herald (Mexico City), June 30, 1912, 3:3-4; July 1, 1912, 1:3; for an evaluation of the conditions at the time of the election in 1912 see Charles Curtis Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, Genesis under Madero (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952), 248-50; Stanley R. Ross, Francisco I. Madero Apostle of Mexican Democracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 225-26; José C. Valadés, Imaginación y Realidad de Francisco I. Madero (2 vols.; Mexico: Antigua Librería Robredo, 1960), II, 248-49.

²⁴O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, two dispatches dated September 19, 1913, Wilson Papers.

of the Congress was the disappearance of Senator Belisario Domínguez from the State of Chiapas. Domínguez had planned to deliver an anti-Huerta speech on September 23, but he was ruled out of order and the speech was made a matter of record. Domínguez disappeared and rumors were that he was dead. The Chamber of Deputies on October 10 passed a resolution to form a commission to investigate the matter; the general tone of which was a reflection on the government. It was even threatened that if the members could not depend on the government to protect them, then they would be forced to hold their sessions where protection would be available--presumably behind Constitutionalist lines.

This resolution was just one in a series of Chamber actions to which Huerta objected. Failing to get the Deputies to reconsider the resolution, Congress was dissolved and 110 deputies were imprisoned. Elections for the new Congress were set for October 26, the same day the presidential election was to be held. Shocked by such totalitarian action and at the undisguised dictatorship, President Wilson notified O'Shaughnessy that the results of the proposed elections would not be recognized.²⁵

²⁵U. S., Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1913] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 836-46 (hereafter cited as Foreign Relations 1913); Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), October 13, 1913, SDP; Mexican Herald, October 10, 1913, 1:6-7; October 11, 1913, 1:6-7; Fidencio S. Soria, Las Tempestuosas y Memorables Sesiones Habidas en la Cámara de Diputados del Congreso de la Unión las Noches

It is interesting to compare the reactions of O'Shaughnessy and Carden to the dissolution of the Congress. While O'Shaughnessy had anticipated Huerta's action, still his reports contained an element of surprise and indictment. He informed Bryan, for example, "Huerta may now be considered an absolute military dictator."²⁶ Carden's reports on the other hand were quite matter of fact, and one concluded that "The general opinion amongst Heads of Missions seemed to be that the action of the President was justified by circumstances & more than one of them seemed surprised that this action had not been taken earlier."²⁷ This appears to have been Carden's reaction

del 9 y 10 de Octubre de 1913 (Mexico: Tipografía de Fidencio S. Soria, 1914), is an account of the last two meetings before the Congress was dissolved. Lind gave what in his opinion were two important reasons for Huerta's action: the Congress had blocked the bill to postpone the October 26 elections which Huerta had earnestly wanted them to pass. If the elections were postponed Huerta in his role as provisional president would continue in office until new elections could be held. If the elections were not postponed he could not legally be a candidate, and it would necessitate him stepping aside unless for some other reason the results were annulled. The other was that the Congress had proposed a one dollar per ton tax on oil. Since this would have struck a blow at the Cowdray oil interests, Lind implies that pressure was exerted to have the Congress dissolved before it could pass the measure, Lind to Bryan, October 10, 23, 1913, Wilson Papers; New York Times, October 21, 1913, 3:1, reported it as one peso per ton of crude oil.

²⁶ O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 11, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 836-37.

²⁷ Carden to Grey, October 11, 15, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO.

too.

If the dissolution of the Congress upset President Wilson, it was mild compared to his reaction when on October 11 the new British Minister presented his credentials to the Mexican President. Carden arrived in Mexico City on October 10. Feeling no compulsion to postpone his official duties, Carden at noon the following day, was formally presented to Huerta in a ceremony at the National Palace. After the exchange of salutations, Carden made a short speech in which he said that on behalf of the King he was asked to "assure Your Excellency of the warm and sympathetic interest which His Majesty takes in the welfare of Mexico." As for himself he stated:

Under any circumstances Your Excellency may rest assured that my very best efforts will be directed towards maintaining and strengthening, if possible, the friendly relations so happily existing between England and Mexico, and towards promoting, in every way in my power, their mutual interests, a task in which I feel sure I may rely on Your Excellency's cooperation and on that of the members of your government.

Huerta's reply was equally warm, and fully endorsed the desire that the friendly relations between their respective countries be strengthened. It was obvious from the press reports that Huerta intended to make the most of the event.²⁸ American reaction was sharp and decidedly pointed.

Lind denounced both Carden and Great Britain over

²⁸ Mexican Herald, October 12, 1913, 1:2; El Imparcial (Mexico City), October 12, 1913, 1:3-5.

the incident. He felt certain that the timing had been no accident, and anticipated action by Huerta which would be extremely favorable to English interests.²⁹ O'Shaughnessy expressed regret that one so out of sympathy with the United States should now be representing Great Britain in Mexico.³⁰ President Wilson commented, "The bottom was about to drop out when Sir Edward [sic] Carden appeared on the scene and took charge of its [Huerta's government] rehabilitation."³¹

O'Shaughnessy's evaluation of Carden during the next week or ten days more than confirmed the suspicions to which his arrival had given rise. The presentation of Carden's credentials the day after Huerta dissolved Congress had boosted British stock in the eyes of the Mexican government. Carden was outspoken in his support of Huerta and in his belief that Huerta could restore peace in Mexico. In conversations with O'Shaughnessy he let it be known that the policy which the United States was following could only lead to intervention, and this Carden believed would be fatal to British interests. Such partisan support of the government was returned in full measure, and made Carden

²⁹Lind to Bryan, October 15, 23, 1913, Wilson Papers.

³⁰O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 14, 1913, ibid.

³¹Quoted in Philip Holt Lowry, "The Mexican Policy of Woodrow Wilson" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of International Relations, Yale University, 1949), 65.

very important there. These reports caused concern in the State Department, and led Bryan to direct O'Shaughnessy to keep him informed on what Carden was saying and doing.³² Carden's penchant for saying the wrong thing which had in the past led to complaints about him was to make this warning unnecessary.

In an interview on October 21, Carden criticized United States' policies in dealing with Mexico. Publication of his comments landed like a bombshell on Washington. It excited a great deal of editorial comment and official reverberations too.

He emphatically refused to make any comment on the coincidence of his presenting his credentials to President Huerta simultaneously with the dissolution of Congress, merely saying that he had carried out the orders he had received. He said it was not incumbent upon him to investigate what President Huerta had done the night before he presented his letters.

Sir Lionel made it plain that he did not consider it right for foreigners to constitute themselves a committee of investigation into the internal affairs of Mexico. He also expressed his belief that Great Britain did not intend to withdraw its recognition of President Huerta.

. . . I do not believe that the United States fully realizes the seriousness of the situation here.

The present revolt, he said, has no leader whom all recognized and with whom foreign Governments could treat. . . .

While professing not to criticize the Washington policy, he intimated that he considered its dealing with the situation here superficially, without full knowledge of the real causes of the

³²O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 14, 20, 1913, Wilson Papers; Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), October 20, 1913, SDP.

trouble, as complicating affairs rather than contributing to their solution.

Regarding the comments upon his action contained in dispatches from Washington, Sir Lionel said:

These comments have been made, and that is sufficient; no answer is forthcoming.

He showed, however, that he considered the Washington criticisms of his actions childish.

He evaded all questions related to intervention on the part of the United States. He said his Government had not asked his opinion on this matter, and he did not understand that the United States had any intention of intervening. Consequently he had done nothing to block the American policy.³³

Most of his comments were a reiteration of those he had made to Grey in his memorandum of September 12, but it was the first time that they had been so blatantly advertized.

Bryan immediately renewed his complaints of the previous summer against Carden's strong anti-American attitude. He left no doubt that he believed Carden was acting as an unofficial adviser to the Mexican President.³⁴

The New York Times while acknowledging the truth of some of Carden's statements expressed surprise that they did not result in his recall. The Times got to the heart of the controversy when it pointed out that "The more serious aspect of the matter is the appearance, though we

³³New York Times, October 22, 1913, 1:1; for criticism of the interview see, October 23, 3:2; 25, 1913, 1:1,3; in the last issue cited the Daily News (London) was quoted, "That British diplomatic representatives should criticise the conduct of a friendly Government through the medium of a newspaper seemed too wild folly to be believed."

³⁴British Embassy (Washington) to Grey, October 23, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO, reporting a conversation between one of the Embassy staff and Bryan, October 22.

trust not the reality, of British obstruction to the policy we are pursuing in Mexico."³⁵ Such a thought must certainly have occurred to President Wilson, but even more basic was his sound dislike for those who disagreed with him, or were in any way critical of his policies.³⁶

Shortly after Carden's statements hit the front page, Wilson advised Bryan to have Page check with the British government to determine if Carden had really made the comments attributed to him. Attempts to brush the matter off lightly did not appeal to the President who insisted that the criticism be disavowed or explained. Wilson considered the incident much more serious than Henry Lane Wilson's comments in August, when an immediate apology had been made to the Foreign Office.³⁷ The denial which the President desired was even then enroute from London.

The British Embassy, on October 24, notified Bryan that His Majesty's government had publicly disclaimed the interview based on Carden's own disavowal. Carden's reply to the Foreign Office inquiry denied the accusation that he had made any allusion to United States policy or

³⁵New York Times, October 23, 1913, 10:1.

³⁶Arthur S. Link has ably summarized these aspects of Wilson's character, Wilson The New Freedom, 65-70.

³⁷Woodrow Wilson to Bryan, October 24, 1913, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Letterbook 6-7, Firestone Library, Princeton University.

interests in Mexico during the interview.³⁸ Page, who had been following the matter very closely, reported that it seemed the denial was forced and that private reports claimed Carden had not denied it.³⁹ Even though the British statement was accepted, the Secretary of State was still not satisfied with Carden's presence in Mexico. He wired Page that at the first opportunity he should inform Sir Edward Grey that it was unfortunate the Foreign Office information came from someone "so out of sympathy with this Government's point of view."⁴⁰

The debate created by the incident continued to rage in the press for several weeks. The Associated Press reporter who was responsible for the article maintained that Carden had made the remarks attributed to him, but Grey accepted Carden's disavowal and accused the papers of manufacturing the attacks on the British Minister.⁴¹

³⁸Carden to Grey, October 25, 1913, F.O. 371/1677, PRO.

³⁹Page to Secretary of State, October 25, 1913, Wilson Papers.

⁴⁰Bryan to American Embassy (London), October 24, 1913, SDP.

⁴¹Grey to British Embassy (Washington), October 28, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO; The Times (London), October 25, 8b; October 28, 1913, 8a; New York Times, October 25, 1: 2-3, 4:2, 5:2; October 27, 3:2-3, 8:5; October 28, 5:3-4; November 9, 1913, 2:5-6; The Literary Digest, XLVII (November 8, 1913), 863, called Carden an unintentional harmonizer, stating that "the importance of the incident lies in the prompt action of the organs of British opinion in telling us that the British people are with us in our Mexican policy."

The best judgment on the situation would seem to be that Carden did make the statements, and then found it expedient to deny them.

From the announcement of his appointment in July, Carden had been the center of several unpleasant incidents. Page had been advised to delay the assignment, but had concluded that representations without new evidence would be a waste of time. The delay was accomplished, but from Mexican rather than American appeals. Lind had become suspicious of him during their brief meeting in Veracruz, and had so advised Washington. Carden's arrival in Mexico City the day Congress was dissolved, followed by the presentation of his credentials could not have been more poorly timed from the American viewpoint. Moreover, his intimate association with Huerta during the first few days he was there led to some unpleasant conclusions by both Lind and O'Shaughnessy. Finally, the interview in which he criticized Wilson's policies in Mexico merely confirmed in many observers minds what they had thought anyway.

Carden had accomplished his immediate objectives. Huerta had, or at least thought he had, an ally against the "Colossus of the North." The British had sent him an official adviser, or so it must have seemed, and one who had no more love for his chief antagonist than he. Carden and Huerta agreed on the need for strong government. They both looked on the Constitutionals in the North as

nothing more than a few bands of marauders and highway-men. They both, at least publicly, opposed intervention from the United States, but for different reasons. Carden feared it would mean the destruction of British interests. Huerta thought it might mean his downfall and that of Mexico too. At least Huerta was rejuvenated in mind and spirit, if not in a more material way. The next obstacle in Huerta's path was the election of October 26. How could he overcome it? The plan was already formulated, but would it work?

CHAPTER IV

OCTOBER 26 ELECTIONS

In late August, Lord Cowdray made an able summary of the diplomatic impasse between the United States and Mexico. Washington would not recognize Huerta, but intervention appeared doubtful unless some untoward event occurred. Huerta would be permitted to remain in office until the election of October 26, at which time the United States would recognize the president elected on that day. Cowdray believed that the United States had made a mistake in not recognizing Huerta, but concluded that, if things worked out as he had predicted, it was about as satisfactory an arrangement as could be hoped for.¹ If this pattern had held true to form many problems would have been averted.

The most important of the approaching events was the election of October 26 when a new president would be chosen. But as election time neared a series of incidents marred the prospects of an end to the Mexican problem. It

¹Cowdray to Dr. C. W. Hayes, Vice-president of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company, and in charge of all oil drilling operations, August 30, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

would prove to be a trying time for everyone.

On May 31, 1913, the Mexican government passed an electoral law which provided that the election for the new executive officers would be held on October 26, 1913. In order for the election to be valid, it required a vote from fifty-one per cent of the electoral districts. This would permit a president to be legally elected without those states participating which were outside of government control.²

The leading aspirant in September appeared to be General Félix Díaz, candidate of the National Democratic party, who had announced his intention of running for president in the Pacto de la Ciudadela on February 18.³

²O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, September 9, 1913, SDP. A copy of the new electoral law was sent as an inclosure to O'Shaughnessy's letter. In September the five states of Sonora, Coahuila, Durango, Guerrero, and Morelos and parts of some other states were considered outside of government control due to the revolutionary activity of the Constitutionalists and the Zapatistas. Nevertheless, the electoral districts still under the control of the central authority constituted more than fifty-one per cent. In Guerrero conditions were so bad that the lives of the members of the electoral board were threatened by the rebels if the elections were held. Clarence Miller, United States Consul at Tampico, to Secretary of State, October 18, 1913, Wilson Papers. On October 12, Lind reported that a letter from certain senators and representatives claimed that "eleven States are wholly and seven partially in control of Constitutionalists" and cited this among other reasons why elections should not be held. Lind to Bryan, October 12, 1913, Wilson Papers.

³See the fourth point in the Pacto, U. S., Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1913] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 722 (hereafter cited as Foreign Relations 1913).

Díaz worked hard to secure the support of the Constitutionalists of the North. One of the objects of the Lind mission was to get Huerta to accept the participation of the Constitutionalists in the presidential elections.⁴ If Díaz was able to get support of this group and, at the same time, win the general election, there was every possibility that President Wilson would extend recognition to his government. But warning signals were in evidence long before the election that plans were afoot to insure that Huerta would remain in office.

In early October, O'Shaughnessy guardedly expressed the opinion that the elections would be held, but that none of the candidates would receive enough votes to meet the constitutional requirements. The following day, Lind reported hearing rumors that the Congress would either postpone the elections or declare the results void. Lind was not sure but he had a feeling that Huerta might be trying to hold on. If things were as he suspected, Lind feared that no argument would induce Huerta to step down, unless

⁴William O. Manson to President Woodrow Wilson, September 6, 1913, Wilson Papers. Manson accused the Guggenheim interests of backing Díaz in his drive to get support in the northern states. If elected Díaz was expected to see that the lucrative contracts secured by the Guggenheims from old General Porfirio Díaz were confirmed. If Díaz was elected Manson felt, the Mexican people would be just as badly off as before. Lind to Bryan, October 7, 1913, SDP. This message from Lind describes his efforts to get the central government and the Constitutionalists to cease fighting in order that both sides could participate in the presidential election.

accompanied by threats of direct action from the United States.⁵ On October 5, after having received what he termed "trustworthy information," Lind advised Bryan that he now knew Huerta's plan. The elections would be held with Federico Gamboa of the National Catholic party receiving a plurality of the vote. The Liberal party, however, which controlled the Chamber of Deputies, would not permit a Catholic to take office. Therefore, sufficient excuse would be found for voiding the election, and Huerta would be forced to continue as president.⁶

Before the Congress was dissolved by Huerta on October 10, there were several attempts to secure passage of a bill to postpone the elections. Most of the available information regarding Huerta's role in this is contradictory. On October 3, Huerta confidentially informed O'Shaughnessy that if the Chamber passed the bill postponing the elections he would veto it. At the same time Lind was reporting on "absolutely reliable evidence" that Huerta was behind the efforts to push the bill through, and

⁵O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 1, 1913, SDP; Lind to Bryan, October 2, 1913, SDP. The Constitution required that one-third of the three million voters must go to the polls. New York Times, October 27, 1913, 1:1.

⁶Lind to Secretary of State, October 3, 1913, SDP. O'Shaughnessy in his report of October 1, stated, "I have talked with several members of the Liberal party today and they tell me that they prefer the continuance in power of Huerta rather than the election of any candidate whom the Catholic party may propose." O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 1, 1913, SDP.

that the bloc sponsoring it was completely under his control. On the day Congress prematurely met its end, and before Lind was aware of its demise, he wired that it was evident the postponement bill could not pass. Lind also told Bryan that one of Huerta's men had been to see him and had presented several propositions for his consideration.⁷

Two of the proposals made to Lind concerned the forthcoming election. If the elections were held as scheduled would the United States recognize the person elected; and, second, if the elections were held and the country pacified would the United States recognize Huerta for the remainder of his ad interim term? Lind had replied that if the person under the first proposition was elected according to the conditions specified by President Wilson's instructions then he would undoubtedly be recognized. As for the second point, Lind advised the agent that it would be impossible under any conditions to reopen the question of recognition for Huerta.⁸ The dissolution of October 10 cast an entirely new light on the elections of October 26; now, in addition to a president

⁷O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 1, 3, 1913, SDP; Lind to Bryan, October 2, 3, 1913, SDP.

⁸Lind to Bryan, October 10, 1913, Wilson Papers. President Wilson's conditions were set forth in his instructions to Lind and were restated in his address to Congress on August 27, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 820-23.

and vice-president, elections must also be held for the new Congress.

On October 11, O'Shaughnessy attempted to see General Huerta, but had to settle for a talk with Huerta's private secretary. During the conversation which was primarily concerned with the arrest and imprisonment of the deputies from the late Congress, the secretary made a revealing comment about the elections. He told O'Shaughnessy that even if the country could not elect a new president, it could at least elect a new Congress. Thus, a remark made in what may have been a purely casual manner by a person close to the Mexican President indicated that there would be no new president on October 26.⁹ This comment also becomes more significant when added to a report which claimed that the Governors of San Luis Potosi, Aguascalientes, and Zacatecas had been ordered to insure that an insufficient number of votes be returned in order to nullify the elections in those states.¹⁰

While reports of this nature were being received by the State Department, President Wilson made clear his attitude toward the approaching elections. In view of the dissolution of Congress and the arrest of the deputies,

⁹O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 11, 1913, SDP.

¹⁰There was insufficient identifying data on this message to tell who it was from, but its file number was 812.00/9175, October 10, 1913, SDP.

Huerta was advised that the United States could not accept the results of elections held under such conditions.¹¹ In order to acquaint all the governments with representatives in Mexico about his communication from the President to General Huerta, copies were sent to United States embassies throughout the world, including London. Page was instructed to present it to the Foreign Office and to report Grey's comments.¹²

Sir Edward told Page in discussing the President's message that the British government would wait until October 26 before making any decision, and at that time would let Page know what it planned to do. Grey said he hoped that rumors that the United States might soon raise the embargo on arms to the rebels were not true. Page was able to dispel this fear and advised Grey that President Wilson would not sanction intervention merely for the sake of United States financial interests. He was able to gather from this conversation that the British Foreign Secretary appreciated the difficulties surrounding President

¹¹Bryan to O'Shaughnessy, October 13, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 838. It was anticipated by at least one newspaper that if the elections were not held as scheduled even those governments which had already recognized Huerta would withdraw that recognition. Mexican Herald, October 12, 1913, 1:7.

¹²Secretary of State to certain diplomatic officers of the United States, October 14, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 841.

Wilson's policy.¹³ Grey's instructions to the British Embassy in Washington on the meeting amplified Page's comments.

Grey pointed out to the American Ambassador that the only end which Britain had in mind for Mexico was the reestablishment of order and security. Recognition of Huerta while awaiting the election of a permanent president had seemed to him the best way of achieving that goal. He asserted that the British were unaware of the coup d'etat of October 10 and that it had created a bad impression in London. Even so, he refused to commit himself in advance on the election, but would await Carden's report before deciding what action to take. As for the Constitutionalists, Grey said that his information about them was that they were nothing more than bandits. The British had already stopped traffic in arms with the Constitutionalists, and he concluded that extending recognition to them would only make things worse. Grey's statements were relayed to Bryan by Ernest S. Scott.¹⁴

¹³Page to Secretary of State, October 21, 1913, ibid., 846.

¹⁴Grey to Spring-Rice, October 21, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO. Ernest S. Scott was the First Secretary of the British Embassy in Washington. Recognition of a belligerent status for the Constitutionalists would have given them a tremendous advantage over the Central Government. At this time the United States had not recognized either faction. Without such recognition both sides were finding it difficult to get credit. In addition, the arms embargo was being applied against Huerta as well as against Carranza,

During their conversation Bryan informed Scott that the United States would probably not recognize the results of the October 26 elections. He also told Scott that it seemed Huerta was trying in one way or another to secure his own election. Small wonder that Bryan should express such an opinion in view of the reports from Mexico. Bryan also showed surprise at the British attitude toward Huerta, and felt that it had encouraged him in his "lawless conduct." This aside was obviously a reference to Carden's arrival and the sequence of events which followed. Unable to offer any alternative that would insure a return to stable conditions in Mexico, the Secretary of State told Scott that almost anything was better than the current conditions. Grey was somewhat upset by Bryan's accusations, and fired a reply to the British Embassy in Washington saying:

I do not understand Secretary of State's statement that our attitude is likely to encourage Huerta in his lawless conduct. Statement I made to U. S. Ambassador here was that I would not decide whether to recognize result of elections in Mexico or not

although it was known that an active illicit trade in munitions was going on across the Rio Grande with the Constitutionalists. The fact that they controlled most of the northern border gave them a decided advantage in smuggling arms from the United States. Grey may well have remembered more history than President Wilson. British recognition of the belligerent status of the Confederacy, it will be recalled, was later regarded by them as having been an error. The possibility of the United States extending such recognition to the Constitutionalists must have seemed to Grey a far more serious mistake.

till after they had taken place. To reserve decision can hardly be described as encouraging Huerta and I gather U. S. G. [Government] themselves have not quite definitely decided what their attitude after the elections will be.

Grey wanted this explained to Bryan, but cautioned that he did not wish to do anything that would upset the amiable relations that existed between him and Page.¹⁵ As events began to move more swiftly, President Wilson, in order to gain a temporary respite, asked the British as well as other nations to withhold any action until the United States had a chance to consider its next move. After receiving these instructions Page requested permission to elaborate on them.

Page believed that the British were in something of a quandary. British recognition of Huerta, which he thought they now considered a mistake, tied their hands until after the elections. Page suggested to Bryan that he be permitted to talk with Grey to see if the Foreign Office would refrain, as a friendly act, from extending recognition to whomever was elected President of Mexico on October 26, at least until the United States had a chance to evaluate the situation and could announce its decision. The American Ambassador felt that Grey would accept this proposal in order to avoid any further differences with the United States, or, if he would not, perhaps Page could

¹⁵Spring-Rice to Grey, October 23, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO; Grey to Spring-Rice, October 27, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO.

discover the real reason behind the British refusal.¹⁶

Page wrote President Wilson the same day:

I have been trying to find a way to help this Government to wake up to the effect of its pro-Huerta position and to give them a chance to refrain from repeating that mistake--and to save their faces; and I have telegraphed one plan to Mr. Bryan today. I think they ought now to be forced to show their hand without the possibility of evasion. They will not risk losing our goodwill--if it seem wise to you to put them to a square test.¹⁷

This request by Page had been prompted by a published report that Huerta would rely on British, French, and German help in case of United States intervention.¹⁸

The statement which spurred Page's recommendation had been made by General Huerta at a meeting of the diplomatic corps in Mexico City on October 23. Carden's and O'Shaughnessy's accounts of the meeting were quite similar. Huerta had called a conference of the representatives of the foreign powers to discuss the situation in Mexico in view of the approaching elections. First, he told them that he had assumed office in February in order to pacify the country pending the election of a new president. He

¹⁶ Secretary of State to certain diplomatic officers, October 24, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 849; Page to Secretary of State, October 24, 1913, Wilson Papers.

¹⁷ Page to Wilson, October 24, 1913, quoted in Burton K. Hendrick, The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page (3 vols.; New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1924-1926), I, 184-85.

¹⁸ Page to Secretary of State, October 24, 1913, Wilson Papers.

had, he said, been forced to dissolve the Congress because fifty of its members had joined various revolutionary groups throughout the country. The fact that incriminating documents had been found in the desks of a large number of the deputies had led to the wholesale arrests that followed. Huerta also realized that some of his friends had put him forward as a candidate, which he was unable to prevent, but he assured the diplomats that he would not accept election even if he received a majority of the votes. The Mexican President gave as his reasons for this decision the fact that the constitution would not permit it, and that he had given his word that he would not be a candidate. Further, he wanted to make it known that there would be complete freedom at the polls and that force would be used only to keep the peace. In his report Carden added that "This step, which was taken by the President under my advice, may prove, it is to be hoped, to the U. S. Gov't. that he is actuated by a real desire to comply with his engagements."¹⁹ While these same sentiments were reported in the news release mentioned by Page, several additional statements were

¹⁹Carden to Grey, October 23, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO; O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 23, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 848-49; New York Times, October 23, 1913, 1:1, rendered a somewhat more thorough account, adding that Huerta's statement had come only after a long conference with Carden, who was charged by other diplomats as having taken a large share in the political situation there.

also attributed to Huerta which were not contained in either Carden's or O'Shaughnessy's accounts.

The Pall Mall Gazette reported that Huerta had stated that because of the unsettled conditions in the country it was possible that some voters would not go to the polls. If so, the required number of electoral districts might not render returns, therefore, invalidating the election. Under such circumstances it would force the present de facto government to remain in office until new elections could be held. If this last was found to be necessary, it was hoped, Huerta reportedly said, that the United States would extend recognition to his government and give him the support needed to pacify the country. The failure of the United States to do so, Huerta claimed, could produce a crisis in Mexico "which might bring Washington face to face with the Governments of London, Paris, and Berlin, and lead either to the upsetting of the Monroe Doctrine or to an appalling injustice of American intervention."²⁰

²⁰ Clipping of the article from the Pall Mall Gazette (London, England) was included in the Foreign Office minute number 48431, October 24, 1913, F.O. 371/1677, PRO. Other comments attributed to Huerta included a statement that intervention by the United States would "cost them in addition to at least a quarter of a million lives more money than the entire amount of foreign investments in Mexico." New York Times, October 24, 1913, 1:1, mentioned the possibility that the elections might be voided and that Huerta would have to continue in office, but made no reference to the prospect of trouble from Europe if recognition was not extended. The Times (London), October 25, 1913, 8a, re-

The Foreign Office reaction to the two different accounts of Huerta's speech is quite interesting. The first comments were based solely on Carden's report of the meeting, and before the newspaper story had been seen. Accordingly, it was believed that Huerta's statement should appease the United States, and it was felt that "It would be well to inform them [the United States] that Huerta's action was taken on Sir L. Carden's advice." Later that same day after the newspapers appeared, it was noted that the references to "Europe and the Monroe Doctrine" and the "Cost of Intervention," had not been mentioned by Carden. The Foreign Office adopted a cautious attitude, "if President Huerta did make them it would perhaps be as well to say nothing about Sir L. Carden having given advice." To which the British Foreign Secretary added, "Certainly we must say nothing or Sir L. Carden will be held responsible for some very undesirable things."²¹ Grey shortly advised Carden that he should be "careful not to incur responsibility for Huerta's statements or policy, it will apparently be his object, if need be, to create tension

ported an account quite similar to that in the Pall Mall Gazette, but a day after the story appeared in the Gazette. New York Times, October 25, 1913, 4:1, called Huerta's statement a "grand stand play," and predicted he would remain in office.

²¹Foreign Office minute number 48431, October 24, 1913, F.O. 371/1677, PRO.

between European countries and the United States Government."²² Carden was able to deny in what appeared to be complete truthfulness that the statements attributed to Huerta had not been made in the meeting of October 23.²³

No evidence has been uncovered to indicate whether the newspaper account was the work of an imaginative reporter, or whether the Mexican government planted it. The latter theory has some validity because Huerta was certainly at odds with the United States, and it is possible that he expected such an outburst to split Great Britain and the United States. From Carden's reports it

²²Grey to Carden, October 27, 1913, F.O. 371/1677, PRO.

²³Carden to Grey, October 27, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO. Several days later Grey showed Page the telegram to Carden recommending that he not be held responsible for Huerta's action, and Carden's denial that Huerta had made the statements charged to him. Grey asked Page what would happen if Britain did withdraw its recognition of the Mexican president? Page thought he would collapse and then the people would have a chance to establish a successful government. In case that should fail, Page told Grey that the United States would probably take the same steps in Mexico that they had been forced to take in Cuba. Grey wanted time to think it over and told Page that he would await President Wilson's message. Page to Secretary of State, October 28, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 852. The British Foreign Office was not at all pleased by Huerta's alleged comments. In minute number 48503, October 25, 1913, F.O. 372/448, PRO, the following two statements appear, "If the Mexican Government make too much of British goodwill & sympathy they will do neither themselves nor us any good vis-à-vis the United States," and, "The less 'gush' we get from Huerta just at present the better. I see that he appeared to have been making mischief in the Mexican Press by saying that he had the support of Great Britain against the United States. But very possibly the report was only another newspaper lie."

was obvious that he intended to give Huerta all the support possible, including advice, and this may have been enough to have triggered the newspaper story. But this is mere speculation. In any event, Washington was not pleased by Huerta's speech.

It is evident that President Wilson's reply to O'Shaughnessy's report of the meeting was based on the newspaper version as well as on O'Shaughnessy's message. The President considered the statements as an indication that Huerta intended to disregard constitutional government completely and planned to establish a "despotism." Wilson went on to point out that the United States would recognize no one in Mexico unless freely and legally elected. This was a clear warning that Wilson would not condone Huerta's continuation in office after the election.²⁴ The President's concern was also expressed quite forcefully in his address at Swarthmore College the following day:

And yet the mere extent of the American conquest is not what gives America distinction in the annals of the world, but the professed purpose of the conquest which was to see to it that every foot of this land should be the home of free, self-governed people, who should have no government whatever which did not rest upon the consent of the governed. I would like to believe that all this hemisphere is devoted to the same sacred purpose and that nowhere can any government endure which is stained by blood or

²⁴Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), October 24, 1913, Ray Stannard Baker Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.

supported by anything but the consent of the governed.²⁵

Although the President made the trip to Swarthmore, the importance attached to the Mexican situation was such that Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels cancelled a scheduled trip to Philadelphia, and it was feared that the President might have to postpone his visit to Mobile where he was to speak before the Southern Commercial Congress on October 27.²⁶ Meanwhile, however, Carden was making suggestions to the Foreign Office which were to prove all too true an indication of events to come in Mexico.

In all fairness to Carden, he was not reporting anything that had not already been prophesied. The military situation between the Mexican government and the Constitutionalists had been turning sharply in favor of the rebels from the North. In early October, the Constitutionalists had captured the city of Torreón, an important link between central Mexico and the northern states. Its loss was considered so important that Carden reported as late as October 25, the day before the presidential election, that the diplomatic corps believed it would be

²⁵U. S., Congress, Senate, "Address of President Wilson at Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, October 25, 1913," 63d Cong., 1st Sess., Document No. 234, 3-5.

²⁶New York Times, October 25, 1913, 1:1.

unwise to change presidents at that time. There was no indication whether O'Shaughnessy was at the meeting in which this decision was reached. Carden also reported that, since the United States had announced it would not recognize the results of the election, it would be "less regrettable if no candidate be found to be legally elected." Such a contingency would mean that new elections would have to be called at a later date. He suggested that the United States might somehow be persuaded to "maintain the status quo" until this could be accomplished.²⁷ It would, of course, mean that Huerta would continue as president ad interim. This report from the British Minister closely paralleled his conversation with Lind in Veracruz. On the same day, October 25, Huerta held a meeting with all of the presidential candidates except Félix Díaz.

The four candidates, Manuel Calero of the Liberal party, Federico Gamboa of the National Catholic party, David de la Fuente of the Liberal Republican or "Agrarian" party, and José Luis Requena the running mate of Félix Díaz of the National Democratic party, issued a proclamation regarding the election. The candidates announced that they would support the government of whomever was elected. In case no one was elected, they also agreed loyally and patriotically to sustain the present govern-

²⁷Carden to Grey, October 25, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO.

ment until new elections could be held. The candidates acknowledged that such a contingency might mean the temporary suppression of the ideals for which they were struggling, but that it would contribute to the consolidation of the government and peace for the country.²⁸

When the proclamation reached Washington, Bryan forwarded a copy of it to President Wilson noting, "It is fair to assume, however, that they had little choice. If they had refused to sign they would have invited attack."²⁹ Bryan was only guessing, but it is reasonable to assume that the candidates believed Huerta had no

²⁸ O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 26, 1913, Wilson Papers; Carden to Grey, October 27, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO. Requena was probably acting for Félix Díaz who was at Veracruz. Under normal conditions Díaz was given a good chance to win the election, but there is more than enough evidence to indicate that Huerta wanted Díaz to withdraw his candidacy. In fact, after his return from Cuba in October he was virtually under house arrest or close surveillance in Veracruz. He made no attempt to make the trip to Mexico City, although it was rumored on several occasions that he would put in an appearance there. Díaz finally fearing for his life on October 27, asked for asylum from the American consulate in Veracruz and was transferred to the USS Wheeling where adequate protection could be afforded on October 28. He was subsequently put aboard the Ward Line Steamer Esperanza at sea and taken to Cuba. Mexican Herald, October 29, 1913, 1:6-7. Gonzales; American Legation at Habana, Cuba, to Secretary of State, October 19, 1913, Wilson Papers; O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 25, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 850; Admiral Fletcher to Secretary of Navy, October 23, 1913, November 13, 30, 1913, SDP; Mexican Herald, October 25, 1913, 1:5, has a brief rundown on the four political parties and their candidates.

²⁹ Bryan to the President [c. October 28, 1913] Wilson Papers.

intention of stepping down.

Reports from O'Shaughnessy, Lind, and others all indicated that orders had been issued to the state governors to insure that an insufficient number of votes would be cast on election day. But to make certain there was no slip in the procedure, enough votes were to be cast for Huerta and General Aurelio Blanquet to give them a majority of the ballots counted.³⁰

The elections were held as scheduled on Sunday, October 26. The returns indicated that the election would not meet constitutional requirements, but Congress would have to convene before the official canvas could be determined. It was not expected that this would be accomplished until late in November, but the reports favored Huerta and Blanquet. Since Huerta had announced publicly that he would not accept the election even if he got the necessary votes, the government-controlled press speculated that Blanquet might step up to the presidency. Carden thought such newspaper speculation was an effort by Huerta

³⁰Blanquet was the Secretary of War and the vice presidential candidate on the ticket with Huerta. O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State (copy undated), SDP, contains a copy of the instructions sent to General Joaquin Maas, Governor of the State of Puebla by Huerta. Similar instructions were transmitted to the other state governors. See Memorandum H., Division of Latin American Affairs, to Mr. Long, November 11, 1913, SDP; Lind to Bryan, October 26, 1913, SDP; Lespinasse, American Consul at Frontera, State of Tabasco, to Secretary of State, October 20, 1913, SDP; O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 18, 25, 1913, SDP.

to sound out public opinion on this possibility.³¹ The consensus was that the election of the president and vice-president would be voided by the new Congress. The election of senators and representatives was generally considered valid, and it was assumed that Huerta would continue in power until Congress rendered its decision.³² Nonetheless, Huerta was being criticized, even by many Mexicans, for his highhanded methods during the election, and particularly because he controlled the election of the Congress, thus assuring a majority amenable to his wishes.³³

In spite of the approaching Mexican elections and the furor which preceded them, President Wilson decided to make the trip to Mobile. His speech to the Southern Commercial Congress on October 27 was delivered before any definite results on the elections could have reached him. The keynote of the address was Latin America with some rather obvious implications directed at Mexico. It will be recalled that this was the pattern of his first policy statement on Latin America on March 12. He began by

³¹Carden to Grey, October 27, 31, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO.

³²O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, October 26; two dispatches dated October 27, 1913, Wilson Papers; New York Times, October 27, 1913, 1:1, 3:4; The Times (London), October 28, 1913, 8a; Mexican Herald, October 29, 1913, 1:5.

³³O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, November 3, 1913, SDP; Carden to Grey, November 5, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

saluting those Latin American delegates attending the Congress and stressed the desire for a common understanding. Referring to the Panama Canal, he expressed the hope that this new commercial route would do much to cement the two continents together. In a pointed reference to foreign capital in Latin America, he emphasized that where concessions to foreign corporations were granted there was a tendency for those interests to dominate domestic affairs. This was interpreted as a rebuke to British commercial penetration in Mexico. The President was still convinced that British concessionaires in Mexico were behind Huerta, and that they were instrumental in shaping British foreign policy there. Latin America, he stressed, was going to seek emancipation from the domination of such vested interests. He stressed that a common goal should be the establishment of true constitutional liberty for the American nations. In an attempt to allay any suspicions that intervention in Mexico would be followed by territorial demands, the President asserted that the United States would never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest.³⁴ This address coupled with the one which he gave

³⁴New York Times, October 28, 1913, 1:1; The Times (London), October 28, 1913, 8a, commented that the Mexican elections were proof of the Utopian character of the President's idealism. For an analysis of the effect which this policy was to have on European financiers see R. J. Mac-Hugh, "The Monroe Doctrine and the Latin-American Republics," The Fortnightly Review, XCV (January to June, 1914), 671-81.

at Swarthmore were regarded as kernels in the formulation of the long-awaited Wilson Mexican policy.

Bryan, in an exceptionally able analysis of the relationship of this new policy to the evolving interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine, offered his conclusions to the President on his return from Mobile. Bryan wrote:

The first announcement of the Monroe doctrine was intended to protect the republics of America from the political power of European nations--to protect them in their right to work out their own destiny along the lines of self-government. The next application of that doctrine was made by Cleveland when this Government insisted that European governments should submit their controversies with American republics to arbitration, even in the matter of boundary lines.

A new necessity for the application of the principle has arisen, and the application is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the doctrine and carries out the real purpose of that doctrine. The right of American republics to work out their own destiny along lines consistent with popular government, is just as much menaced today by foreign financial interests as it was a century ago by the political aspirations of foreign governments. If the people of an American republic are left free to attend to their own affairs, no despot can long keep them in subjection; but when a local despot is held in authority by powerful financial interests, and is furnished money for the employment of soldiers, the people are as helpless as if a foreign army had landed on their shores. This, we have reason to believe, is the situation in Mexico, and I cannot see that our obligation is any less now than it was then. We must protect the people of those republics in their right to attend to their own business, free from external coercion, no matter what form that external coercion may take.

Bryan commended the President on his statement that the United States planned no more territorial acquisitions by conquest, and offered a plan which he believed would

permit Latin America to throw off the shackles of foreign financial domination. This could be accomplished by providing these countries with credit through the United States government, thereby eliminating the "excuse for their putting themselves under obligations to financiers in other lands." Bryan suggested that the loan proposition might be a valuable addition to the policy which the President was expected to announce. He explained the practical aspect of the plan as it effected Mexico. If the United States could succeed in getting foreign support withdrawn from Huerta, the Constitutionalists with what help the United States could provide them, might be able to force a real election in Mexico.³⁵ While Bryan's plan may have had some long range implications for American policy, the more immediate problem facing the United States was the action European countries were going to take in regard to the election just held in Mexico.

Most countries had offered to withhold any action regarding recognition until after the elections. The elections had now been held, but nothing definite would be known for some time at least until Congress convened. Under the circumstances Great Britain was asked to further delay any policy decision until the President's long-promised statement was available, and this was expected

³⁵Bryan to Wilson, October 28, 1913, William Jennings Bryan Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.

within the week. Grey readily agreed.³⁶ After returning from Mobile the President finally penned his long-awaited policy communication.

The draft of the presidential note briefly encompassed these propositions: the interests of governments other than the United States in Mexico were primarily commercial; the United States on the other hand had interests and responsibilities which put it in a class by itself; Huerta's government had been sustained by the recognition it received from the other nations; the United States refused to recognize the Huerta regime and disapproved its continuation; the United States had refused to intervene physically, but had sought to apply moral persuasion to better conditions there; other governments had not knowingly attempted to thwart the United States policies in Mexico, but they had encouraged Huerta to the point that he refused to relinquish his hold on the government; the nations concerned were requested to adopt policies in harmony with those of the United States; and finally, assurances were given that, while the United States did not plan armed intervention in Mexico, it was willing to accept full responsibility for whatever action it might be necessary

³⁶ Spring-Rice to Grey, October 28, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO; Grey to Spring-Rice, October 27, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO. Page had already received Grey's assurances that Britain would await the President's pleasure. Page to Secretary of State, October 27, 1913, Wilson Papers.

to undertake to accomplish its objectives.³⁷

Bryan gave John Bassett Moore a copy of the draft to look over before it was sent out. In handing him the paper Bryan asked Moore if there was not some way in which the Monroe Doctrine could be invoked against the European powers, "especially if it should be assumed that they acted under the influence of financial interests." Moore replied that the Monroe Doctrine did not apply in such cases. Recognition of independent nations in this hemisphere was not a privilege which the United States could give or withhold, and any attempt to exercise such a right would be deeply resented by the American governments affected.

Moore then turned his attention to the note. As for the President's comments on the commercial penetration of foreign nations in Mexico, Moore wrote, the United States owed a great deal to foreign capital in its own industrial development. Any efforts on the part of the United States to prevent Latin American countries from obtaining European funds for industrial or governmental expenditures would be reason enough for them to take offense at such interference. Moore admitted that in some cases foreign concessions had involved political questions, but on the whole they had assisted in the industrial and

³⁷Inclosure 1 to letter John Bassett Moore to the President, October 28, 1913, Wilson Papers.

economic development of Latin America and had, therefore, contributed to its political stability and independence.

On the recognition of the Mexican government, Moore asserted that the nations which had done so had only followed diplomatic practice. Most of those governments had waited some time for a policy announcement by the United States, which was not publicly available until after the President's message to Congress on August 27. Severing diplomatic relations once extended, he stated, was an unfriendly act, and should be carefully reviewed before asking other nations to reconsider their recognition of Huerta.

Moore then turned to the question of British recognition of Mexico, and the imputation that Great Britain had been motivated by "improper or sordid motives" in its Mexican policy. He brushed aside the argument that British oil interests had been supporting Huerta, by pointing out that United States oilmen had been openly antagonistic toward him. There were other examples why the United States could hardly point an accusing finger at the British. The Panama Canal Act of 1912 granted free tolls to American coastwise shipping. The British as well as many reputable American statesmen argued that the act was a violation of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901, which provided for the equal treatment of all nations in the use of the Canal. In addition, the Senate refused to act on various arbitration treaties because it feared that a similar treaty

with Great Britain embraced "an obligation to arbitrate the tolls question." Among several other things, he mentioned the passage by the Senate of the Seaman's Bill, which directly affected both Germany and Great Britain, and included matters on which the United States had agreed to negotiate. Moore's note is said to have accomplished one objective, "President Wilson never again spoke publicly or diplomatically about the commercial exploitation of Latin America by Great Britain."³⁸ Moore's note was such an excellent rejoinder that the President decided to drop the matter for the moment.³⁹

Wilson now decided that the only solution to the problem was to force Huerta's resignation, since it was apparent the election had not dislodged him. The result was a note to O'Shaughnessy on November 1 suggesting that Huerta voluntarily separate himself in all respects from the government of Mexico. Failure to accept this counsel from the President of the United States, it was warned, would lead to an ultimatum which, if rejected, would force President Wilson to propose some "very serious measures" to the Congress. O'Shaughnessy was directed to

³⁸Philip Holt Lowry, "The Mexican Policy of Woodrow Wilson" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of International Relations, Yale University, 1949), 68; Moore to the President, October 28, 1913, Bryan Papers.

³⁹Moore to the President, October 28, 1913, Wilson Papers.

suggest that the United States was entertaining the idea of open assistance to the Constitutionalists, and, if Huerta persisted, the United States would cut off all outside aid to his government. President Wilson even went so far as to recommend the composition of a provisional government which would be acceptable to the United States. No one connected with Huerta would be considered a suitable replacement.⁴⁰

Negotiations on the basis of the penultimatum were disrupted on November 4, when the press published a report that Huerta's resignation had been demanded by President Wilson. The publicity which followed merely helped to strengthen Huerta's hand, and efforts to deny the story failed. Wilson was back where he had been before the elections, and he decided to turn again to Europe.⁴¹

Meanwhile, the British Embassy staff especially Scott, the First Secretary, had been carrying on almost daily conferences with Bryan. Some of his conversations with the Secretary of State have already been noted, but on October 29, he composed a very thorough report for the Ambassador Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, who was seriously ill.

⁴⁰Lowry, "The Mexican Policy of Woodrow Wilson," 68, f.n. 34, is a copy of the penultimatum Bryan to O'Shaughnessy, November 1, 1913.

⁴¹Ibid., 69-70.

The major part of this message was devoted to a summary of Bryan's well-known antipathies toward British recognition of Huerta. Essentially, Bryan blamed everything which Huerta had done on England, Carden, and Lord Cowdray in about that order, and rejected out of hand any suggestion of joint intervention in Mexico. The words attributed to Bryan were: "If anything is to be done, it will be done by the United States alone."⁴² Scott then turned to a discussion which had recently occurred between Colonel House and one of the embassy personnel.

Scott characterized House as "President Wilson's most intimate friend and trusted adviser, who though very unobtrusive in his methods, is in fact 'the power behind the throne,' and is, perhaps, the only man who really influences the President's policy." According to Scott, House said, that it was a mistake to believe the President's hesitation to recognize Huerta was based only on his "devotion to democratic constitutional principles and theory." Rather it was founded on the facts. Revolutions in Latin America had been commonplace largely because of the spoils of victory. This placed a premium on revolution, and, House continued, the United States had

⁴²Spring-Rice to Grey, October 29, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO; Bryan believed British policy was dictated by their interest in Mexican oil. See Tyrrell to Grey, November 8, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO; Paxton Hibben, The Peerless Leader, William Jennings Bryan (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1929), 330.

finally decided that it was high time to put an end to this practice. What House probably had in mind was that the refusal of the United States to recognize such revolutionary governments and the threat of United States intervention to restore popular rule would no doubt impair their credit on the world money markets, complicate their dealings with other nations commercially, and tend to discredit them diplomatically. Thus, because they would be unable to enjoy many of the advantages normally available to legitimate governments, such revolutionary movements would be discouraged. The Huerta regime was a perfect example of what the President had in mind. President Wilson did not expect that representative democratic institutions would work in Mexico as they would in a more civilized country. But, House said, "in the absence of pure democracy, let there at least be some semblance of legality; if there must be an oligarchy, let it be a good and efficient one which commands respect."

This Scott believed, was really what the President had in mind, although he observed that Wilson was inclined to give the impression to the public that he was more concerned with democratic ideals than the more practical approach suggested by Colonel House. Scott thought Bryan "is far more ardent in his devotion to abstract theory and is averse from recognising any Government in Mexico, however successful in re-establishing order, which does not

conform to the American democratic ideal." Scott concluded his remarks by referring to the fact that it seemed common knowledge that President Wilson was his own secretary of state, and that this had been determined even before Bryan was rewarded with the post as a tribute to his long struggle for the Democratic party.⁴³

Such information must surely have kept the British Foreign Secretary off balance. From one of the President's most intimate advisers on two occasions, the preceding July when House was in London and again during the heat of the Mexican elections, he had been led to believe that President Wilson was just as much interested in order as the British. Page, on the other hand, had been trying to convince Grey that the President was more concerned with a new approach which rested on a moral basis, divorced of any thought of protection for vested interests.⁴⁴ Scott, however, had

⁴³Spring-Rice to Grey, October 29, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO; Bryan to American Embassy (London), October 29, 1913, SDP.

⁴⁴Page to the President, October 24, November 16, 1913; Page to House, November 2, 1913, Hendrick, Page, I, 184-91. These three letters show Page's efforts to convert Grey to the moral aspect of the President's policy. The following excerpt from Page to the President, November 16, 1913, ibid., I, 188, clarified in Page's mind, anyway, Grey's narrow view of foreign affairs, "I can't get away from the feeling that the English simply do not and will not believe in any unselfish public action--further than the keeping of order. They have a mania for order, sheer order, order for the sake of order. They can't see how anything can come in any one's thought before order or how anything need come afterward. Even Sir Edward Grey jocularly ran me across our history with questions like

identified the dichotomy in what House was saying privately and what President Wilson was saying publicly. Grey, if he ever recognized what was happening, never let on that the president seemed to be speaking with a "forked tongue," one position for official consumption, another for the public.

Failing in his bid of November 1 to secure Huerta's voluntary retirement, the President once more sought the good offices of the European governments. In a circular note of November 7, Wilson outlined a three-point program which he announced as a temporary substitute for his detailed policy statement which, it will be recalled, Wilson had decided not to send after Moore had written his critical rebuttal. He was, the President stated, committed to Huerta's ouster, and the United States would employ the necessary means to accomplish that end. The note reiterated the President's earlier determination that the Mexican people should not be bound by any acts of Huerta or the fraudulent legislature which was soon to convene.

this: 'Suppose you have to intervene, what then?' 'Make 'em vote and live by their decision.' 'But suppose they will not so live?' 'We'll go in again and make 'em vote again.' 'And keep this up 200 years?' asked he. 'Yes,' said I. 'The United States will be here two hundred years and it can continue to shoot men for that little space till they learn to vote and to rule themselves.' I have never seen him laugh so heartily. Shooting men into self-government! Shooting them into orderliness--he comprehends that; and that's all right. But that's as far as his habit of mind goes."

The governments, principally the major powers, to which the note was addressed were asked to use their good offices to encourage Huerta to accede to President Wilson's demands "in the interest of peace and constitutional government."⁴⁵

Page replied the following day advising that Grey wanted time to consult with France and Germany before answering the President's message. Grey was troubled not so much by the fact that Huerta might be eliminated but because he could see no one capable of taking his place. Page had informed the Foreign Secretary that this request was the prelude to intervention if Huerta did not resign. The only question was whether Huerta was to be "eliminated with or without the moral support of the British Government? Sir Edward's last words were 'It is a very grim situation.'"⁴⁶

During the summer and early fall things had gone badly for Huerta. The failure of the United States to recognize his regime had made it difficult for him to borrow money abroad. The Constitutionals had proved more militarily capable than was expected, and the fall

⁴⁵ Secretary of State to certain diplomatic officers of the United States, November 7, 1913, Foreign Relations 1913, 856. The note was sent to Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway as well as Great Britain. Bryan to Page, November 9, 1913, SDP; Page to Grey, November 10, 1913, SDP.

⁴⁶ Page to Secretary of State, November 8, 1913, Wilson Papers.

of Torreón was especially serious. The military reverses were accompanied by political opposition from Congress which finally culminated in its dissolution by the Mexican President on October 10. Just when it seemed Huerta had no place left to turn, Carden arrived. This seemingly led Huerta to believe that he could count on Great Britain and perhaps other European countries in case of trouble with the United States. Rumors and reports soon began to emanate from Mexico that the elections were rigged, and President Wilson announced that the United States would not accept the results of elections conducted under such circumstances. All this, coupled with Carden's and Huerta's criticisms, did nothing to conciliate Wilson, but rather convinced him more than ever that Huerta must go.

In his Mobile speech and in the draft of his policy statement the President was highly critical of the role played by foreign capital in Latin America. The Secretary of State echoed these sentiments in his desire to add a novel interpretation to the Monroe Doctrine. The State Department Counselor effectively countered both propositions. Wilson failed to secure Huerta's voluntary retirement through the threat of an ultimatum which seemed only to strengthen the Mexican President's determination to hold on. This was the situation the first week of November.

The evidence is too inconclusive to assign the re-

sponsibility for Huerta's determination not to resign solely to the British Minister, Sir Lionel Carden. It is true that in his letter to the British Foreign Secretary before he departed from England in September, Carden had outlined a program which called for whole-hearted co-operation with the Mexican government. In his conversation with Lind on October 7 he advanced two plans designed to keep Huerta in power. One of these worked. Excluding the presentation of his credentials, he was known to have acted as an adviser and confidant to the Mexican President. Carden, as late as October 25, suggested to the Foreign Office that it would be well to get the United States to observe the status quo if for some reason the election for president was not successful and Huerta remained as president ad interim. Huerta was not only Carden's selection but, from Grey's conversations with Page, that of the Foreign Office too. Of course, the General had been the choice of Henry Lane Wilson and Stronge while they were in Mexico. It does not matter whether Carden specifically told Huerta what to do, gave his assent to the General's own plans, or merely knew what was going to happen, Huerta was stronger in early November than he had been a month earlier when Carden had arrived.

Events showed that President Wilson was policy poor. Mediation by Hale, Lind, and others had failed.

Foreign governments had been condemned for following traditional diplomatic practices, although Wilson had charged that "sordid motives" controlled their policies. Moore cited several examples when United States policies had been determined by motives of self interest too. There had been threats of intervention in one form or another from February to November. After so long, the cry of "wolf, wolf" had lost its effectiveness. The role played by the United States had been a negative one, and the results demonstrated it. But what of Huerta?

The Mexican President had remained in office in spite of efforts to force him to resign. He had undoubtedly schemed and connived to control the elections, and had intimidated the major candidate, Félix Díaz, to the point that Díaz fled the country. No matter which way the election went, Huerta would win. If the elections for president were declared void, he was to remain in office until new elections could be scheduled. He even had the "support" of the presidential candidates on that score. Since the Huerta-Blanquet ticket polled the most votes, it was possible that he might even be counted into the executive mansion. This would be for the Congress to decide, and after all Huerta had seen to it that the right men had been elected to that branch of the government. He had openly defied the President of the United States, and had refused to resign in the face of any ultimatum. He

was a scoundrel, but he had nerve, and, on November 7, he was still President of the Republic of Mexico. On that day President Wilson, while still unwilling to announce a definitive policy, did insist that Huerta relinquish his position and called on the major powers to use their influence to get Huerta to resign. Grey hesitated to commit Great Britain until he could get the reaction of other European governments.

CHAPTER V

THREE-POWER POLICY

While Grey was awaiting word from France and Germany in regard to the November 7 note, he wired both Spring-Rice and Carden about his discussion with Page concerning the request for British assistance. The Foreign Secretary told Spring-Rice of his reluctance to give Huerta advice because even that could be considered intervention. Sir Edward recalled that he had been hesitant in August to help smooth the way for Lind when asked by the United States, fearing Huerta would blame the British if the negotiations failed. Grey said that he had assured Page that there was absolutely no question about the British intervening in Mexico in opposition to the United States. He had also told the American Ambassador that at most England might send one or two ships to Mexico to protect British lives and property and to take off any refugees who made their way to the coast from the interior. In the event of United States intervention, Grey expressed the hope that everything possible would be done to protect British subjects. Page assured him that the United States would do what it

could.¹ Essentially the same information was sent Carden, but Grey told him that before he made any plans he would like to get Carden's view of the "situation in Mexico in the light of this decision by the United States Government."²

Carden replied at once that considerable opposition to Huerta had developed as a result of Huerta's interference in the elections, the political arrests, the financial difficulties, and the speculation going on in some of the government departments, particularly the War Department. But there was also renewed hope for a Federal victory over the Constitutionlists because of the recent successes in repelling the rebel raids at Chihuahua and Monterrey. Huerta also had a new tax plan, Carden reported, by which he expected to raise enough money to meet current expenses. Therefore, Carden concluded, Huerta would not submit to United States demands to resign, but rather such inter-

¹Grey to Spring-Rice, November 8, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO.

²Grey to Carden, November 8, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO. Just a few days previously Carden had notified the Foreign Office, "The question at issue with the United States Government, which seems to hinge directly and exclusively on the retirement of General Huerta from the Presidency, remains in statu [sic] quo. Nor does there appear to be any ground whatever for thinking that he contemplates acceding to the demands of President Wilson in this respect." Carden to Grey, November 5, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO. Grey did not receive this message until November 22. Huerta's obstinance on November 5, was a direct result of the publicity given Wilson's penultimatum of November 1.

ference would be resented by the country at large and would strengthen the Mexican President's determination to stay on. The British Minister was convinced that if the United States intervened, the Mexicans would revert to guerrilla warfare which would last for years.³

Almost immediately on the heels of this report, Carden sent a second message. He stated that he had seen Huerta the previous evening, November 9, and that the Mexican President was aware that the United States planned some action against him. Huerta was prepared, Carden reported, to do anything which did not reflect on the dignity or independence of his country to avoid a rupture with the United States. The General indicated to Carden that British mediation was desired. In view of President Wilson's request that Great Britain aid in securing Huerta's retirement, Carden asked for authorization to see if he could not find a solution to the problem that would avert war.⁴ Carden was unquestionably one of a very few people in Mexico who exercised any influence over the Mexican President.

Carden's friendliness with Huerta was a source of great irritation to Lind, who repeatedly condemned the British Minister in his reports to Bryan. On November 7,

³Carden to Grey, November 9, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO.

⁴Ibid., November 10, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

for example, Lind wrote that O'Shaughnessy had informed him that Carden was the only Minister in Mexico City who believed that Huerta would remain in office. The following day, Lind advised Bryan that Huerta was under Carden's absolute control, and that the British Minister was violently opposed to United States intervention or to the recognition of the belligerency of the Constitutionalists. Lind also stated that Carden had characterized as "bluff," the latest communication from the United States. Finally, on November 9, Lind wired that Carden had told him that no action on the United States request would be taken before the Mexican Congress convened.⁵ The Congress was expected to meet on November 15.

In view of Lind's messages, Bryan instructed Page to tell Grey that "Carden not only opposes the policy of this government but is even reported to have characterized our recent communication to Huerta as 'bluff.' Carden seems to be Huerta's chief reliance in opposing this government's demands. We cannot believe he is correctly representing his government's attitude."⁶ It was several days before Page answered this communication from the Secretary of State. The American Ambassador was reluctant

⁵Lind to Bryan, November 7, 1913, Wilson Papers; ibid., November 9, 1913, SDP. Lind was equally hostile to Lord Cowdray in his reports.

⁶Bryan to American Embassy (London), November 9, 1913, SDP.

to bring these latest complaints against Carden to the attention of the Foreign Office, stating that unsubstantiated charges by the late Ambassador Reid had been dismissed and Carden upheld. Page asked for some reliable information which the Foreign Office would be obliged to investigate, and which would help bring matters to a head. Bryan was asked by Page for authority to request Carden's removal on the grounds that he was exerting an unfriendly influence in Mexico. In this way, Page believed, the matter could best be handled, because he did not think Grey would take any action against Carden on hearsay evidence. The American Ambassador believed that "If we can silence or remove Carden I am sure the last cause of any possible misunderstanding will be removed." Page hesitated to reopen the Carden controversy because of the ground gained in securing British support for the President's request of November 7.⁷ However, he did inform Grey that public opinion in the United States distrusted Carden.

Although he had not received replies from Germany or France, Sir Edward met with Page on November 11 to give him an answer to the November 7 note. As he had advised both Spring-Rice and Carden, Grey declared that the British would not support Huerta in his dispute with the United States, but Grey was unwilling to take the initiative

⁷Page to Secretary of State, November 13, 1913, SDP.

in advising the General to retire as the United States had requested. Sir Edward would, however, inform the Mexican President that he could expect no aid from England if he showed by word or deed that he expected assistance. If during such a conference, "it should appear that a possible service may be rendered in enabling Huerta to retire with dignity he [Grey] asked if the United States would receive such a suggestion." Page was unable to give a definite answer, but told Grey that any help would undoubtedly be acceptable. In his report, Page asked the State Department to advise him on that point. Grey, in a very evasive fashion, had offered to mediate if the situation presented itself.

Shifting to the subject of concessions in Mexico, Grey said that Lord Cowdray had written him that he had not secured any economic favors from Huerta. But Page claimed that many observers believed that Cowdray was aiding Huerta financially. The British Foreign Secretary denied any knowledge of this, however, and added "with a smile that he should think such aid a bad investment."⁸ Grey's account of the meeting, as telegraphed to Spring-Rice, amplified considerably the remarks about Lord Cowdray, concessions in Mexico, and mediation.

⁸Ibid., November 11, 1913, Wilson Papers.

Grey had, for instance, informed Page that reports reaching him accused American financial interests, particularly the Standard Oil Company, of influencing United States policy in Mexico in anticipation of getting a monopoly of Mexican oil. Grey said he had dismissed such reports because he believed President Wilson above such a thing. The Foreign Secretary added that he was very sorry to hear that Bryan believed British policy was dictated by the desire for oil concessions in connection with the supply of oil for the British Navy and that Lord Cowdray, in order to secure such concessions, was helping Huerta financially. Grey favored a plan whereby concessions obtained during the turbulent state of affairs in Mexico would not be recognized as valid.⁹ He also put a different connotation on his mediation suggestion.

The negotiation offer was made as a result of Carden's statement of November 10, in which he suggested that he might be of service in working out a plan whereby war could be averted. Grey, however, had a somewhat different approach in mind. He wired both Spring-Rice and Carden that if Huerta should wish to discuss retirement arrangements "other Powers might possibly be of use

⁹Grey to Spring-Rice, November 11, 1913; Grey to Carden, November 11, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO. Grey's remarks about Bryan were in reference to Sir William Tyrrell's meeting with the American Secretary of State on November 8. Tyrrell was Grey's private secretary.

as intermediaries, and that was a point on which I would consult them." He also advised that his mediation offer to Page was made to insure that the United States would be ready to discuss terms. Sir Edward was convinced that the British should not volunteer to mediate unless asked to do so by both sides.¹⁰

Carden did not agree with Grey's proposal on joint mediation by the European powers. He notified the Foreign Secretary that Huerta would be more inclined to listen to proposals for his retirement from the British than he would be to suggestions from several nations acting on behalf of the United States. The British Minister again asked that he be authorized to discuss the question with Huerta unofficially. Grey was not convinced, and restated his beliefs that there were grave risks in British mediation without the cooperation of other countries. But he authorized Carden to report any proposals from Huerta. Carden called on O'Shaughnessy on November 13, and informed him that he was ready to lend his assistance in bringing about a settlement of the problem. O'Shaughnessy told Carden that the United States would be glad to have his help, knowing that he exerted a great influence with

¹⁰Ibid.; Grey to Spring-Rice, November 11, 1913, F.O. 371/1678; Grey to Carden, November 11, 1913, F.O. 209/421, PRO.

Huerta.¹¹ For some unknown reason Grey also reversed his decision and decided to take the initiative in advising Huerta that he could not expect British assistance.

In his instructions to Carden on November 11, the British Foreign Secretary stated, "I presume that Huerta knows that we cannot support him in any way against the U. S., but if not, you should make it clear to him."¹² The following day, Grey informed the Mexican Minister to Great Britain, when he called at the Foreign Office, that "it was a settled part of our policy not to intervene in the affairs of Central and South American Republics, and I could not intervene in support of General Huerta either inside or outside Mexico."¹³ Although Grey's statements did not find their way into the newspapers at this time, Sir Arthur Shirley Benn, a member of the British Parliament who was in the United States on business, was quoted as saying that the English government would not back Huerta against the United States.¹⁴

¹¹Carden to Grey, Number 139, November 12, 1913, on Foreign Office minute number 51579, November 13, 1913, no F.O. number, PRO; Grey to Carden, Number 160, November 13, 1913, no F.O. number, PRO; O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, November 13, 1913, SDP.

¹²Grey to Carden, November 11, 1913, F.O. 209/421, PRO.

¹³Ibid., November 12, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO, recounting his conversation with the Mexican Minister.

¹⁴New York Times, November 11, 1913, 2:4.

On November 14, three days after Grey's instructions were sent to Carden, the British Minister called on General Huerta and informed him that he could no longer count upon British support, and that it would be best for him to accept the proposals presented by the United States. The newspaper reports of this conference indicated that Huerta would resign in favor of Francisco Carbajal y Rosas, chief magistrate of the Mexican Supreme Court. It was anticipated that one of the first acts of the new Mexican Congress would be to accept Huerta's resignation. Huerta refused to commit himself.¹⁵

Bryan was unaware of Grey's instructions to Carden, and expressed regret that Grey would not take the initiative in notifying Huerta to retire. He advised Page that Grey's statements as reported by Page on November 11, seemed

¹⁵Ibid., November 15, 1913, 1:8. Carden's report of this meeting, indeed if there ever was one, could not be found in the Foreign Office Archives. Some historians imply that Carden's visit to Huerta on November 14 was prompted by a meeting between Tyrrell and President Wilson held on November 13. However, Tyrrell's report of this meeting was not sent until November 14, and Carden's conference with Huerta was held on the afternoon of the 14th. It would have been almost impossible for Tyrrell's report to the Foreign Office in London to have been received, studied, a decision made, and a message dispatched to Carden in Mexico City in time for him to have made the visit that same day. In addition, no record of instructions could be found in the Foreign Office Archives to Carden on November 14, advising him of the Tyrrell-Wilson meeting, or giving any other reason for Carden to make the pilgrimage to see President Huerta. There appears to be no valid argument for assuming that Carden's visit was due to any reason except Grey's instructions to him on November 11.

guarded. Page replied immediately, "The abbreviated dialogue of my telegram . . . I fear was misleading. Sir Edward Grey was definitely, positive, exceedingly friendly, even cordial, and he seemed to me to give all we asked." This satisfied Bryan.¹⁶ Grey was still negotiating with France and Germany for a common course of action in Mexico.

The British Foreign Secretary informed Germany that he had refused to ask Huerta to resign on the grounds that this would be intervening in Mexico's internal affairs. He suggested a common course of action for Great Britain, France, and Germany, but made no concrete proposals. The Germans agreed to Grey's recommendations in principle, and expressed a willingness to discuss specific steps to be undertaken with France and England. Sir William Tyrrell advised Count Johann Heinrich von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador to the United States, of Grey's action and told him in confidence that the English wished to avoid American intervention, which he feared would rob Mexico of its independence. Sir William also told the Count that Great Britain would under no circumstances undertake a separate course in Mexico because it was felt that only a unified approach by the European countries would have any effect.¹⁷

¹⁶Page to Secretary of State, November 13, 1913, SDP; Bryan to American Embassy (London), November 12, 1913, SDP.

¹⁷Foreign Office to Bernstorff, November 14, 1913, A22683; Bernstorff to Foreign Office, two dispatches,

Tyrrell's comments were forwarded to Berlin and, together with Grey's statements, appeared to have influenced the German decision on Wilson's November 7 request. The German reply to this note was quite similar to the British answer.

Germany was inclined to give the United States moral support, but showed a decided interest in responsible government in Mexico. The German Foreign Office was especially interested in knowing who was being substituted for Huerta. Once this was determined, then the European powers could discuss the proposed candidate. Germany's main concern was to insure that someone capable of maintaining law and order would step into the presidency without delay. If this was accomplished, the Germans were completely indifferent as to who was elected President. Germany added that Huerta was the man most qualified to deal with the disturbed state of affairs, an idea agreed upon by other European nations and by the previous United States Ambassador to Mexico as well. The British thought the German answer a good one.¹⁸

A22683 and A22765, November 14, 1913, Aktenband [Collected Documents], Mexico 1, XXXIX, German Foreign Office, Political Archives, Bonn, Germany (hereafter cited as German Archives).

¹⁸James W. Gerard, United States Ambassador to Germany, to the Secretary of State, November 8, 1913, SDP; Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador to Germany, to Grey, November 12, 1913, and Foreign Office minute number 51493, F.O. 371/1678, PRO. Goschen's report of Gerard's inter-

The French reaction to the British note and the request from the United States was little different from that of Germany. Stéphen Jean Marie Pichon, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, concurred with Sir Edward Grey's views as communicated to the French government on November 11. France would not interfere in the internal affairs of Mexico, although interested in seeing matters settled there. The French declined the role of intermediary between the United States and Mexico unless asked to do so by both sides.¹⁹

In discussions with Prince Hugo J.R.E.L. Radolin, the German Ambassador to France, Pichon indicated that France would welcome a common position with Germany towards Mexico. He believed that such a course would have to be a neutral and watchful one in the beginning, but later, as circumstances warranted, more decisive measures would call for unified action by Germany, France, and Great Britain. Pichon also told Radolin that France would not comply with the United States request to apply diplo-

view with the German Foreign Office is far more elaborate than the American Ambassador's report. The German's concern about Huerta's successor came up repeatedly during November. See J. B. Moore, Memorandum to the Secretary of State, November 19, 1913, SDP, relating the visit of Baron Kurt von Lersner, Secretary of the German Embassy, to the State Department on this question; Gerard to Secretary of State, November 27, 1913, SDP.

¹⁹Sir Francis Bertie, British Ambassador to France, to Grey, November 12, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO, relates the French attitude and replies.

matic pressure on Huerta. France was sympathetic, he stated, toward all efforts designed to restore peace in Mexico, but the French Foreign Minister was doubtful if the action by the United States would accomplish this objective. Pichon considered rumors that the United States would give support to the Constitutionalists as very dangerous.²⁰ France, Germany, and Great Britain had given almost uniform answers to President Wilson's request.

The three European nations while sympathizing with Wilson's policy, would not become involved in Mexico's internal affairs. To comply with the President's appeal to apply pressure against the Mexican President to force his resignation was more than they were willing to do. Mediation was also out unless requested by both Huerta and Wilson. These countries were interested in peace and order in Mexico, and to the European powers Huerta seemed like the man most able to provide such stability. Before they could sanction his removal, they wanted to know who was going to replace him. Great Britain was just as much dedicated to this position as France and Germany.

Sir Edward Grey had refused to take the initiative in advising Huerta that he could not expect British aid against the United States. Within a few days of this

²⁰German Ambassador to France, to Bethmann Hollweg [Sir Theobald Theodore Friedrich Alfred von Bethmann Hollweg], Imperial Chancellor, November 14, 1913, ACP 378, 75-122, No. 89-90, National Archives, Diplomatic, Legal and Fiscal Branch.

decision Grey had advised the Mexican Minister that Huerta could no longer count on British support, and Carden had been instructed to deliver a similar message to the Mexican President. Without formally accepting the role of mediator, Grey had also authorized Carden to report any proposals which Huerta should make regarding his retirement and compliance with President Wilson's demands. Great Britain had thus complied with all of the requests from the United States except to demand Huerta's resignation. Grey's action could best be classified as a reluctant willingness to cooperate with the United States, a situation encouraged by the very agreeable relations between Grey and Page. However, this condition was also brought about by Grey's private secretary, Sir William Tyrrell, who had been in the United States for several weeks.

CHAPTER VI

WILLIAM TYRRELL

Sir William George Tyrrell (1866-1947), entered the British Foreign Office in 1889. He was appointed private secretary to the permanent under secretary of state, Sir T. H. Sanderson, in 1896, and in 1903 was made secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence. His only foreign assignment before his appointment to Paris, was a short stint as acting second secretary at Rome. Returning from Italy in 1905, he was selected as précis-writer for Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary. In 1907, he became Grey's principal private secretary, a position he held for the next eight years.¹

Tyrrell was an old friend of Sir Cecil Arthur Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador to the United States, who had replaced Sir James Bryce in April 1913.² Sir

¹L. G. Wickham Legg and E. T. Williams (eds.), The Dictionary of National Biography (24 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1959), Supplement 1941-1950, 893-96 (hereafter cited as DNB); The Times (London), January 1, 1913, 8c, contains a sketch of Tyrrell at the time he was appointed to the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George. Tyrrell became Ambassador to France in 1928.

²New York Times, April 20, 1:2; April 28, 1913, 5:5.

William had planned to visit Spring-Rice in the summer of 1913, but was forced to advise him on July 30 that the fighting in the Balkans had ruined any prospect of his leaving England that summer. He hoped to make the trip in October.³ In the fall, Spring-Rice was stricken with Graves' disease, exophthalmic goiter, and left Washington to convalesce at a home he had leased in Dublin, New Hampshire.⁴

Even before his illness Sir Cecil noted the attention that the Mexican situation was getting in the press. In late summer he wrote Bryan about the alarming reports appearing in the newspapers, and expressed concern that any violent action by the United States would be harmful to British subjects in Mexico. He complained rather humorously to Henry Cabot Lodge on August 2 that the Mexicans "can no more distinguish between a Britisher and an American than between a crocodile and an alligator."⁵

Sir Cecil was out of the capital in October when the crisis between Washington and Mexico City was reached.

³Tyrrell to Spring-Rice, July 30, 1913, F.O. 1/247, PRO.

⁴Stephen Gwynn, The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice: A Record (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929), II, 194; New York Times, May 23, 1913, 1:7.

⁵Spring-Rice to Lodge, August 2, 1913, quoted in Gwynn, Spring Rice, II, 191. See also, Spring-Rice to Lodge, August 11, 13, 22, 1913, quoted in ibid., II, 192-95.

The Ambassador's absence from Washington was noticeable by mid-October, when Thomas Spring-Rice, third secretary of the embassy staff called on Colonel House for information on the Mexican and the Panama Canal tolls questions.⁶ Tyrrell's visit would prove to be of value to Spring-Rice and the Foreign Office as well.

Sir William left England on the SS Imperator, October 23, and docked at New York City on October 29. Shortly after Tyrrell's departure, Page wrote House and others about the impending visit. He advised them that while Sir William would go directly to Dublin to see Spring-Rice, he would be in the United States for some time and should be indoctrinated with the moral aspect of the Mexican problem at every opportunity. The British diplomat was characterized as a man of influence in the Foreign Office, and whatever he learned would go directly to Grey.⁷

⁶House Diary, October 16, 1913, Edward M. House Papers, Yale University Library (hereafter cited as House Diary). House recorded in his diary that young Spring-Rice, a relative of the Ambassador, was Chargé d'affaires, but the New York World, The World Almanac and Encyclopedia 1914 (New York: The Press Publishing Company, 1914), 497, lists Thomas Spring-Rice as third secretary.

⁷New York Times, October 26, 3:2; 29, 15:3; 30, 8:8, 1913; The Times (London), October 24, 13e; 30, 1913, 20b; Page to House, October 26, 1913, quoted in Burton K. Hendrick, The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page (3 vols.; New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1924-1926), I, 200-202; Page to Dudley Field Malone, Assistant Secretary of State, October 27, 1913, SDP. Page had written similar notes to the Secretary of Agriculture, David Franklin Houston and to President Wilson's private secretary, J. P. Tumulty.

Colonel House was ready to board the train for Washington when he received Page's cablegram about Tyrrell's arrival and missed meeting him. House called the British Embassy in Washington after reaching the capital and learned that Tyrrell was going directly to Dublin. During the Colonel's conversation with President Wilson the same day, he promised that he would get in touch with Sir William to feel him out on the Mexican situation. A few days later House received word that Tyrrell would like to see him, and would also like to meet the President.⁸

There has been a great deal of speculation as to whether Tyrrell was in the United States on a vacation or had been sent to handle matters during Spring-Rice's illness. House was under the impression that he was in the country personally to handle some of the complicated questions for the Foreign Office. On November 3 an article in the London Times, applauding Sir William's arrival to take charge of the delicate situation, was highly critical of the Foreign Office for Spring-Rice's long absence from Washington. During the critical negotiations between the United States and Great Britain the Embassy had been entrusted to a councillor and a first secretary who had themselves only been in the United States a short time.

⁸House Diary, October 30; November 3, 1913; House to Page, November 4, 1913, Hendrick, Page, I, 205-206.

The German Embassy in London, which kept well abreast of events noted the article in the Times on the third, and advised Berlin:

The trip of Sir William Tyrrell to the United States has nothing to do directly with the sickness of the ambassador and with the political situation since, as I know, it had been planned long before the worsening of the Mexican question. In any case, it will be valuable to Sir Edward Grey to be informed directly by his trusted political coworkers about the mood in America at the present moment of political differences of opinion.⁹

Tyrrell also denied that he was on any kind of a diplomatic mission, claiming that it was only a personal visit, not connected in any way with current events. Sir William expressed surprise at the reports which indicated a rift between the United States and Great Britain over the Mexican affair.¹⁰ Even so, Tyrrell showed his concern privately

⁹Herr Dr. Richard von Kühlmann, councillor of the Embassy (London), to Sir von Bethmann Hollweg, November 3, 1913, A22060, Collected Documents, England 86, XIV, German Archives. Tyrrell resented the accusations made in the Times article and subsequent investigation revealed that it had been written by a person who wanted to discredit Spring-Rice for personal reasons. Tyrrell to Hubert (not further identified), November 18, 1913, F.O. 800/82, PRO. See also House Diary, November 3, 1913; The Times (London), November 3, 1913, 8b.

¹⁰New York Times, November 4, 1913, 1:6. W. F. Bullock, the American correspondent for the London Daily Mail, after seeing Tyrrell's comments wired Secretary of State Bryan that, while British officials had denied any feelings of antagonism, no such denial had been made by the Americans. Bullock asked Bryan for a statement which he could put in the British press expressing an opinion on the British attitude toward the policy of the United States in Mexico. Bryan declined to comment. W. F. Bullock to W. J. Bryan, November 4, 1913, SDP.

at least about the American attitude toward England over Mexico.

One of the passengers who sailed with Tyrrell on the SS Emperor was his old friend Count Johann Heinrich von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador to the United States. During the voyage Sir William told the German Ambassador that he was concerned because it was being asserted in official circles that Huerta would have already resigned except for the support given him by the European countries, especially Great Britain. Tyrrell feared that if United States intervention became necessary, Great Britain would be blamed. He also told the Count that the British did not want to do anything which could be interpreted as opposition to American policy. In reporting this conversation, Bernstorff added that American intervention appeared nearer every day.¹¹

¹¹Bernstorff to the Foreign Office, November 10, 1913, A22406, Collected Documents, Mexico 1, XXXIX, German Archives. A penciled notation on this message apparently by someone in the German Foreign Office, if not Bethmann Hollweg himself, commented on Tyrrell's fears that Britain would be blamed if United States intervention in Mexico became necessary, "das wäre ja herrlich" [that would be splendid]. The Germans were obviously not interested in seeing a rapprochement between Great Britain and the United States. The outbreak of the World War was only nine months away. Bernstorff and Tyrrell, however, had been friends from the time Bernstorff was councillor and first secretary of the German Embassy in London, 1903-1905. Bernstorff to Bethmann Hollweg, November 30, 1913, A24453, Collected Documents, United States 17, IX, German Archives. Bernstorff reported his conversations with Tyrrell on the diplomatic developments to Berlin regularly. Interestingly enough, Tyrrell and Prince Hugo J.R.E.L. Radolin, the

After spending a short time at Dublin with Spring-Rice, Tyrrell journeyed to Boston where he remained for a few days. While there he received and accepted an invitation from Colonel House to dine with him in New York on November 6. During the dinner engagement Tyrrell met Mrs. Woodrow Wilson but had little opportunity for more than a few words with House, whose time was occupied primarily with the first lady. House was unable to place an estimate upon Sir William during this meeting, later recording, "Before I came in close touch with the heads of governments I imagined them made of superior clay. But they are very like the rest of us, neither better nor worse."¹² Before leaving for Washington the following day, Sir William wrote House to be sure and call him on his next trip to the capital city. The Colonel agreed to meet him there within the week.¹³

On November 8, the day after Tyrrell reached Washington, Bryan requested that Sir William be present at a

German Ambassador to France at this time, had married sisters. DNB, Supplement 1941-1950, 893-94; Herman A. L. Degener (ed.), Wer ist's? (Leipzig: H. A. Ludwig Degener, 1908), 1084.

¹²Tyrrell to House, November 3, 5, 1913, House Papers; House Diary, November 6, 1913. Of course, Tyrrell, as confidential secretary to the British Foreign Secretary, could hardly have been classified as a head of government. This kind of overstatement, however, apparently to feed his own ego, was characteristic of the Colonel.

¹³Tyrrell to House, November 7, 1913, House Papers; House to Page, November 7, 1913, Walter Hines Page Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

meeting which the Secretary of State had scheduled with Ernest Scott, First Secretary of the British Embassy. During this conference Tyrrell became convinced that Bryan suspected Carden of being responsible for the impasse with Mexico. In addition, Bryan accused the British of being influenced by the possibility of new oil concessions in Mexico which would provide an additional supply of fuel oil for the Royal Navy.¹⁴

Besides Bryan's diatribe against the British policy in Mexico, he told Tyrrell and Scott that the United States was dedicated to Huerta's elimination. Intervention, however, would be resorted to only if other means failed. The Secretary of State desired the cooperation of the European nations in withdrawing all support from the Mexican President. The British diplomats were asked to urge London

¹⁴Tyrrell to Grey, November 8, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO. The colorful account given in Hendrick, Page, I, 202-203, does not appear in Tyrrell's report, and may have been obtained from Tyrrell by Page after Sir William's return to England. Fuel oil for the British Navy had been basic to Admiralty policy ever since 1904, when Admiral John Arbuthnot Fisher became First Sea Lord. This included oil concessions in different parts of the world, the establishment of oil storage reserves, the construction of oil tankers, and the conversion of naval vessels from coal-burners to oil-burners. Lord Cowdray had a contract to furnish fuel oil for the Navy, and his Mexican Eagle Oil Company had large oil concessions in Mexico. Since Mexico, in 1913, was the third largest producer of crude oil in the world, Mexican oil was of great importance to the British. Bryan had been thoroughly primed by Lind, Henry Clay Pierce, and others. E. H. Davenport and Sidney Russell Cooks, The Oil Trusts and Anglo-American Relations (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924).

to inform Huerta that he could no longer rely on Great Britain. Tyrrell made no recommendations in his report of this meeting, but a day or two later he advised Grey that since the British did not want intervention the best course would be to remain absolutely neutral. Thus, Huerta would not be excited by any false hopes of British support.¹⁵ Spring-Rice, who had returned to Washington with Tyrrell, did not agree with this approach.

The British Ambassador felt that the time had arrived when the British must throw off their attitude of reserve and give the United States the cooperation it requested, and he advised Grey accordingly. Sir Cecil was afraid that unless Great Britain did so, and if United States intervention became a reality, the British would be blamed. Tyrrell had voiced a similar apprehension to Bernstorff. Spring-Rice's recommendations, like Bryan's admonitions, reinforced President Wilson's request for assistance in his circular note of November 7.¹⁶

Colonel House reached Washington on November 11. Bryan was waiting for him when he arrived and they discussed Page's telegram relating to Britain's reply to

¹⁵Tyrrell to Grey, November 8, 1913, F.O. 115/1742, PRO; ibid., November 9, 1913, F.O. 800/82, PRO.

¹⁶Spring-Rice to Grey, November 8, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO. See supra, pp. 99-100, for Wilson's note of November 7.

to the President's request. House thought it a satisfactory answer although he felt there were some points that were still not clear. After leaving the Secretary of State, House called on President Wilson. During their conversation the Colonel expressed his concern over the Mexican question, and gave the President a rather detailed report on Tyrrell. He explained that, "In talking to Sir William we were practically talking to Sir Edward Grey, and I thought it would be foolish not to exercise the opportunity in order to bring about a better understanding with England regarding Mexico." House mentioned his luncheon appointment with Tyrrell the next day, and suggested that if he had a free hand he might be able to accomplish something worthwhile. The President authorized House to speak as freely with Tyrrell as he believed advisable. Colonel House saw President Wilson again the next morning and told him that he would urge Tyrrell to encourage the British to use their influence with the other powers to pressure Huerta into stepping down. House promised to report his conversation with Sir William as soon as possible, provided there was anything of value to discuss.¹⁷

Colonel House lunched at the British Embassy at one o'clock that afternoon. Spring-Rice was still not

¹⁷House Diary, November 11, 12, 1913.

well enough to attend, and sent his regrets. After the meal, House and Tyrrell retired to discuss the two pressing problems: the Mexican question and the Panama Canal tolls controversy. Tyrrell showed the Colonel various dispatches from London and his replies. He told House that Lord Cowdray had not received any concessions from Huerta, and, even if he had, the British government would not recognize them as valid. Tyrrell believed that an effort was being made to involve Cowdray in the Mexican situation with the idea of encouraging United States intervention. Sir William also defended Carden, acknowledging his zealousness, but indicated the British Minister would follow his government's instructions. House replied that he was glad to hear a favorable report on Carden and Cowdray, because both President Wilson and Bryan held different views. After a brief discussion on the world armament race, they turned to the Panama Canal Act.¹⁸

The United States in August 1912 passed the Panama Canal Act which provided tolls exemption for American coastwise shipping through the canal. The British objected even before the bill became law, arguing that it violated the "equal treatment for all nations" clause of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901. After the passage of the measure, mild but formal protests were made by Great

¹⁸Ibid., November 12, 1913.

Britain. The British Ambassador to the United States, Sir James Bryce, remained in Washington beyond his scheduled departure date, hoping to work out a solution to the problem. Although a few noted Republicans agreed with the British, the Republican administration, through some rather ingenious interpretations of the wording of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, refused to agree to a revision of the Panama Canal Act. Since the Democrats had promised not to consider any legislation except the tariff and money bills during the special session of Congress, President Wilson would not jeopardize passage of those measures by any attempt to amend the tolls act.¹⁹ There matters stood when Tyrrell and House met.

Sir William said that the British were very much concerned about the tolls problem, and that "Sir Edward Grey's idea was that no possible good came to nations if either the letter or the spirit of a treaty was broken." House indicated that President Wilson was equally devoted to the inviolability of treaties, which he was sure the President would make clear to Sir William when they met. The Colonel suggested that Tyrrell and the President should get together as soon as possible, and

¹⁹ Arthur S. Link, Wilson The New Freedom (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 306-307. The Panama Canal was not officially opened to traffic until August 15, 1914, therefore, the tolls exemption provision did not have any practical consequence during 1913.

Sir William thought it an excellent idea.

Upon reaching the White House, the Colonel found the President was out and he was unable to see him until that evening. After dinner House gave the President a detailed description of his afternoon meeting with Tyrrell. The President was most interested in meeting Sir William, but since it was late he decided that it would be best to do so the following day. House telephoned the British Embassy and made an appointment for Tyrrell to see the President the next morning at 9:30.²⁰

The President met Tyrrell in the Blue Room of the White House. Their conversation began with the President's views on Central America. The imminent opening of the Panama Canal, he stated, had placed a great emphasis on the general need for good government in Central America. Bad government tended to create friction and might bring about another Venezuelan affair like that which had occurred under Cipriano Castro. In order to prevent a recurrence of such an incident it was necessary, the President believed, to bar men such as Castro and Huerta from office, and to insist that these countries select good rulers. He planned to make an example of Huerta by demanding his resignation. The President explained the plan by which he hoped to accomplish this.

²⁰House Diary, November 12, 1913.

Huerta would be requested to convene the twenty-sixth Congress which he had dissolved on October 10. Wilson did not consider the Congress elected on October 26 as a legal legislative body. Huerta would be required to proclaim a general amnesty for all of Mexico in order that the Constitutionalists could participate in a general election for a new president. The failure of the Constitutionalists to take part in such a plan would brand them as rebels, and the United States would treat them accordingly. If Huerta would accept these proposals, the President said, he would do whatever he could to permit him to save face. Wilson recognized the Mexican capacity for maladministration, and after Huerta resigned, he told Tyrrell, he did not plan to look too closely at what happened in Mexico. Huerta, however, had transcended permissible limits in undemocratic government and must be eliminated. The President was certain that the Mexican Congress could select a successor who would maintain law and order.²¹

Turning to the Panama Canal tolls problem, President Wilson informed Tyrrell that he agreed with Grey's interpretation. He was determined to overcome Senate opposition to a repeal of the tolls exemption clause due partly to the Hibernianism of some senators and the vanity of others. If necessary, the President said, he was pre-

²¹Ibid., November 13, 1913; Tyrrell to Grey, November 14, 1913; F.O. 371/1678, PRO.

pared to turn to the Republicans for support in pushing through the repeal legislation.²²

Tyrrell explained to Wilson that he was in the United States in a private capacity, but was at the same time helping Spring-Rice who desired him to stay in close, but unofficial, communication with the President. Wilson replied that this was a perfectly acceptable medium of exchanging information and suggested that Grey use it whenever he wished to convey his personal views. The President intimated that he did not want to use Bryan for that purpose. Sir William left the interview impressed with Wilson's "great sincerity and force of character: every one is agreed that he is a man of his word, and the only man who counts in the Administration."²³

²²The reference to Hibernian opposition referred primarily to Senator James Aloysius O'Gorman (D-NY). As early as January 1913, O'Gorman had been proposed by the Gaelic American, for a portfolio in the Wilson Cabinet, which was considered at the time a reaction against repeal of the Panama Canal Tolls Act. His subsequent appointment as chairman of the Senate Inter-oceanic Canal Committee gave notice that a fight over repeal was assured. The Times (London), January 21, 5e; March 17, 1913, 39d; House confirmed the anticipated fight with O'Gorman in December, 1913, in a conversation with Spring-Rice. Spring-Rice to Tyrrell, December 14, 1913, Gwynn, Spring Rice, II, 194-95. During the spring of 1914, when the repeal issue was before the Congress, hundreds of memorials were received from Irish-American societies protesting the surrender of the President to British demands. One outspoken member of the Clan-Na-Gael even declared, "If I was in Congress I would take steps to impeach him." New York Times, March 9, 11:1; March 23, 1914, 3:3.

²³Tyrrell to Grey, November 14, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO.

In his reports of the conversation with the President, Sir William stated that he believed Wilson's proposals on Mexico would create a de facto United States protectorate over Central America which the President did not seem to realize; others in Washington apparently did and were happy to see it come about. Tyrrell was forced to admit that in his opinion Great Britain had neither the purpose nor the power to obstruct the President's plan. He did feel that if intervention were delayed, it would take longer for Wilson's plans to mature. He told Grey that the President was anxious to receive any help that the British could provide.

The President approved Carden's proposal to see Huerta unofficially to work out some arrangement whereby the Mexican President could retire with dignity. Sir William also reported that the administration and the public had been favorably impressed by several recent events. These included the Prime Minister's Guildhall speech; Lord Cowdray's statement to the Foreign Office that he had received no concessions from Huerta; Cowdray's public denial of financial assistance to the Mexican President; and Grey's attitude about new concessions in Mexico. All of these, according to Tyrrell, had helped to overcome the suspicions aroused by the recent reports on

Carden and Lord Cowdray.²⁴

In his speech delivered at the Lord Mayor's banquet on November 10, Herbert Henry Asquith, the British Prime Minister, denied that English policy was designed to thwart United States plans in Mexico. He stated that the British decision to recognize Huerta was made before the United States' attitude was announced. The change of ministers in Mexico, the Prime Minister asserted, involved no change in the British position. He hoped the United States, whatever it decided to do in Mexico, would show a regard for legitimate foreign commercial interests there. Nothing was anticipated, he said, which would in anyway upset the friendly and sympathetic understanding that existed between the United States and Great Britain.²⁵

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵New York Times, November 11, 1913, 1:6; The Times (London), November 11, 1913, 10c-d, Page had already expressed his appreciation of the Prime Minister's speech to Grey. Page to Secretary of State, November 11, 1913, Wilson Papers; the British Embassy in Washington reported, "There can be no doubt that the Prime Minister's statement has been received with great satisfaction." Ernest Scott to Grey, November 13, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO. While the speech received plaudits in the United States, the Japanese saw in it a basic difference in policy between the two western nations. Asquith's speech was regarded there as a slap at the United States for interfering in Mexico's internal affairs, something which the Prime Minister indicated England would not do. Looked at in that light such an interpretation has some validity, but the Prime Minister certainly did not intend his remarks as a criticism of United States policy. The Japanese had their own reasons for hoping for a split between the United States and Great Britain. "England's Policy on Mexico," Gaikō jihō (Revue diplomatique), XVIII (December 1913), 1289-92, copy in Library of Congress, Orientalia Division.

Tyrrell had arrived at an opportune time. He was a personable diplomat who was well acquainted with his chief's policies. While there is no evidence to substantiate the argument that he was sent over to help, he was able to fill in for Spring-Rice at a rather crucial period in the United States-British negotiations. House was obviously impressed with him, and his reports to Wilson paved the way for an amicable meeting between the President and Tyrrell. The President seemed to enjoy this type of personal diplomacy. No doubt a better understanding on Mexico was reached, but the only concrete result of the meeting was Tyrrell's request that Grey permit Carden to go ahead with his efforts to work out something unofficially with Huerta.

As a result of the discussion of the Mexican problem and the Panama Canal tolls controversy at the November 13 meeting, accusations have been made that a "deal" was arranged between the President and Tyrrell. In return for British support of his Mexican policy, Wilson would push through repeal of the tolls exemption clause. Only an investigation of the President's attitude on the tolls problem can resolve this charge.

CHAPTER VII

WILSON AND THE PANAMA CANAL TOLLS EXEMPTION

In a speech at Gloucester, New Jersey, on August 15, 1912, Woodrow Wilson endorsed tolls exemption for American coastwise shipping and favored the Panama Canal bill which had just passed Congress. In so doing Wilson was supporting the Panama Canal tolls plank in the 1912 Democratic platform. The Panama Canal Act was approved by President Taft and became law on August 24, 1912.¹

The British protests had been to no avail, and Tyrrell advised Spring-Rice in December 1912 that he could not give him a definite date on which he could take up his new post in Washington because of the canal tolls problem. Even though the bill had been passed by a Republican Senate and signed by a Republican President, the British were supported by some Republicans who would

¹John Wells Davidson (ed.), A Crossroads of Freedom: The 1912 Campaign Speeches of Woodrow Wilson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), 43; Urey Woodson (comp.), Official Report of the Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention 1912 [Baltimore: n. p., 1912], 373-74; U. S., Statutes at Large, XXXVII, 560-69.

not agree with their party on the question.²

One of the leading Republicans to take a dissenting position on the issue was Senator Elihu Root of New York. Root, who had opposed the bill during its debate in the Senate in the summer of 1912, ran afoul of President Taft. Taft thought Root's opposition to the bill a "'defect' in his career." On January 14, 1913, the New York Senator introduced a bill in the Senate to repeal the exemption clause, but it was referred to the Committee on Inter-oceanic Canals and there the bill died. Root took the floor on January 21, and delivered a blistering attack on the law, asserting that it was not only a violation of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, but also of American's word and trust as well.³ Root was shortly to have an opportunity to enlighten Wilson on the matter.

²U. S., Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1912] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 457-89; ibid., Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1913] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 540-49; Tyrrell to Spring-Rice, December 7, 1912, F.O. 1/247, PRO; H. A. L. Fisher, James Bryce Viscount Bryce of Dechmont, O. M. (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), II, 72-74. J. M. Kennedy, "A Broken Treaty: The Panama Canal Tolls," The Fortnightly Review, XCV (May 1, 1914), 905-13, contains an objective discussion of the British side of the argument.

³Philip C. Jessup, Elihu Root (2 vols.; New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1938), II, 262-70; U. S., Congressional Record, 62d Cong., 3d Sess., 1482 (hereafter cited as CR). The Times (London), January 22, 1913, 6c.

During the fall and winter of 1912-1913, Wilson became convinced that the British interpretation was correct. On January 24, 1913, Colonel House and the President-elect discussed the question; "I [House] asked him concerning his views in regard to the Panama Canal tolls controversy with Great Britain. I was glad to find that he took the same view that I have, and that is that the clause should be repealed."⁴ A week later Wilson dined with Root and others in New York.

At a meeting of the Round Table Dining Club on January 31, Wilson listened to a discussion of tolls exemption by Root and Joseph H. Choate. Root had been Secretary of War in the Roosevelt cabinet and Choate was the United States Ambassador to Great Britain at the time the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty was negotiated. After hearing these two gentlemen expound their views, Wilson stated, "This has been an illuminating discussion. I knew very little about this subject, I think I now understand it and the principles that are involved. When the time comes for me to act, you may count upon my taking the right stand." None of the members doubted what Wilson intended to do. A month later an Associated Press report from Trenton claimed that Wilson favored passage of the Root bill,

⁴Charles Seymour, The Intimate Papers of Colonel House (4 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1926-1928), I, 193.

which was still pending before Congress.⁵

There were two ways in which the tolls question could be resolved: the passage of a bill repealing the exemption or by submitting the question to arbitration under the general Arbitration Treaty of 1908. Ex-President Theodore Roosevelt favored the latter course. The Arbitration Treaty had been passed during the last year of Roosevelt's second term, and he felt that the tolls controversy was a perfect problem for arbitration. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts preferred a repeal bill by Congress. Lodge wrote Spring-Rice on March 10, 1913, and told him that Wilson opposed tolls exemption. He said that the President had wanted Congress to repeal it during the last session, but Lodge admitted they had been unable to muster the required votes. Looking forward to the special session of Congress due to convene in a few weeks, Lodge stated, "We can repeal it now if he will simply say the word and I have strong hopes that he will say what is necessary."⁶ Immediate action

⁵Henry White, The Roster of the Round Table Dining Club (New York: Privately printed, 1926), 8, 23-25. The Times (London), March 1, 1913, 6e, quoting an Associated Press dispatch from Trenton, New Jersey.

⁶Theodore Roosevelt to Spring-Rice, undated, Lodge to Spring-Rice, March 10, 1913, Stephen Gwynn, The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice: A Record (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929), II, 185, 188-89. Root reintroduced a bill to amend the tolls act on April 7, 1913. CR., 63d Cong., 1st Sess., 53. The bill went to the Committee on Interoceanic Canals. The other

was not feasible for several reasons.

Before the Republicans left office they refused to submit the controversy to arbitration as requested by the British, but instead recommended a commission of inquiry which the British rejected. Unfortunately, the Arbitration Treaty of 1908, was coming up for renewal in June 1913.⁷ The matter was discussed at a cabinet meeting on April 15. After debating several alternatives, it was the general consensus that England would not agree to an extension until the tolls matter was settled. After hearing the various facets of the problem argued, Wilson, according to Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, stated that he "was inclined to think that under the treaty [Hay-Pauncefote] we had no right to charge tolls on English or other vessels more than our own coast-wise trade, and that it was a better economic idea also to take that position."⁸ The importance of the economic aspect was later made clear by Representative W. C. Adamson, Chairman of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce.

New York Senator, Democratic James A. O'Gorman, an ardent opponent of repeal, became chairman of that committee in March after the Democrats organized the Senate. A similar bill was introduced in the House on April 30, 1913. CR., 63d Cong., 1st Sess., 866. Neither bill was ever reported out of committee during the special session.

⁷The Times (London), March 1, 1913, 6e.

⁸Diary of Josephus Daniels, April 15, 1913, Box 1 (1913-1921), Josephus Daniels Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division (hereafter cited as Daniels Diary).

Adamson wrote Bryan that there were a number of congressmen who had originally favored exemption, who would dislike reversing themselves. On the other hand, it was believed that these same men would give their consent to a plan that would enable the canal to be self-sustaining. Adamson contended that if the United States went ahead under the current tolls act to exempt coast-wise shipping the revenues would be inadequate to maintain and operate the canal.

If gentlemen favoring the exemption can be made to realize that they could and would, with good grace, vote for a suspension of that exemption. I do not deem it wise to give prominence to the diplomatic side of the case. When we mention the treaty rights of England the jingoes go into action and inflame the popular mind to such an extent that the real question of domestic economy is entirely obscured and excluded from consideration.⁹

Under such reasoning the issue could be handled as an internal problem and not one involving any international dispute with Great Britain. But the diplomatic side could not be excluded that easily.

In mid-April Bryce had a long conference with Bryan about the problem. He asked that the new administration announce that, unless Congress repealed the objectionable clause, the question would be submitted to arbitration. Bryan argued that the Democrats were involved in a struggle over tariff revision, and he did not believe that the

⁹W. C. Adamson to Bryan, September 22, 1913, SDP.

President would risk taking up a question which might split his party. Bryan felt that the matter could be postponed because the canal would not be opened to traffic for at least another year, and the delay would give the President time to complete the tariff fight. Legislation or arbitration posed the same problems. Bryce countered by stating that under the circumstances England might refuse to continue the Arbitration Treaty. Bryan expressed surprise at this statement, feeling he had made a satisfactory explanation of the situation. The Ambassador said that while government leaders were able to understand the problem, the English people were not. Bryan related his conversation with Bryce at the cabinet meeting on April 18. After listening to Bryan's comments, the President said that he had talked the matter over with Bryce and that he [Wilson] would make no statement in regard to the problem which might in any way hinder passage of the tariff bill.¹⁰

The British concern over the violation of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty was based as much on principle as anything else. Grey's main worry was the Balkans, where the First and Second Balkan Wars were fought in 1912 and 1913. Treaties were made and broken with almost complete abandon,

¹⁰E. David Cronon (ed.), The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 1913-1921 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1963), 42-43.

and seemed to have no more effect than so many scraps of paper. Peace in Europe could not be maintained if treaties were disregarded whenever it was advantageous to do so. Under such conditions the major powers were expected to set a high example. The Panama Canal Act of 1912, which favored United States shipping, was almost universally hailed as a violation of the 1901 treaty with Great Britain. The honorable thing to do, if an agreement between the two nations could not be reached, was to submit it to arbitration. The failure of the Republicans or Democrats to settle the problem was, in the British opinion, setting a bad example. Thus, it was important to Great Britain that the United States take action at an early date.¹¹

Throughout the spring and summer, as the question of repeal was periodically raised, the British were informed that nothing could be done during the special session of Congress which was devoted to the tariff and currency bills.¹² Wilson's attitude, however, seemed perfectly clear. He did not approve of the tolls ex-

¹¹George Macaulay Trevelyan, Grey of Fallodon: The Life and Letters of Sir Edward Grey, afterwards Viscount Grey of Fallodon (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 206-207, 223-25.

¹²Page to Secretary of State, June 13, 1913, SDP; Bryan to American Embassy (London), July 19, 1913, SDP; Seymour, House, I, 196-97; Arthur S. Link, Wilson The New Freedom (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 306-307.

emption clause, and would support its repeal at the appropriate time. In a letter to Oscar S. Straus, the former ambassador to Turkey, he wrote, "I have had a great many very serious thoughts about the tolls exemption, and you may be sure that when the right time comes (at the regular session of Congress) I will try to find the wisest and most effective way of handling it."¹³

The President's most outspoken statement in favor of repeal came in early October. A ceremony had been prepared in Washington whereby Wilson by pressing a button would release a charge that would blast clear the final remaining obstacle between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans in the Panama Canal zone. Immediately after pushing the switch, the President stated, "it is with peculiar pleasure that I am able to announce that there is now every prospect of the victory of Great Britain's patient and logical diplomacy over the Panama tolls question." The report continued, "The President, after conferring

¹³ Woodrow Wilson to Oscar S. Straus, September 22, 1913, Box 13, Oscar S. Straus Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division. Lodge wrote Theodore Roosevelt the same day explaining that the path to repeal would not be a smooth one. Senator O'Gorman with the assistance of some West Coast senators was sitting on ten arbitration treaties which they were afraid to approve for fear it would lead to arbitration of the tolls question. Lodge was critical of Wilson and Bryan, however, for submitting the treaties and then turning their backs. Lodge to Roosevelt, September 22, 1913, quoted in Henry Cabot Lodge, Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918 (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), II, 439-40.

with Mr. Moore . . . announces that he is convinced of the correctness of the British contention that free tolls for American shipping are a violation of treaty obligations." While it was not certain just how or when this matter would be presented to Congress, confidence was expressed that repeal could be accomplished in face of the opposition against it.¹⁴ The statement touched a responsive chord.

Andrew Carnegie, the steel magnate, wired Wilson from Liverpool: "Greater far than your tariff victory, great as that is, greater than your banking bill if passed or both combined is your noble stand for equal tolls to all lands. This touches our country's honor, the people will support you, ensuring victory. Cordial congratulations."¹⁵

The Times announcement on October 11 also touched off a mild controversy. It put the President on the spot, but he refused to deny the statement which had been published exclusively in the London paper. Wilson merely commented that the correspondent was not authorized to speak for him. Officials in the administration as well as the press accepted the statement as a true expression of the President's views.¹⁶ Publication of the President's

¹⁴The Times (London), October 11, 1913, 8a.

¹⁵Andrew Carnegie to the President, October 11, 1913, Book 218, Andrew Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.

¹⁶The Times (London), October 13, 1913, 7b.

feelings, however, did not resolve the diplomatic problem.

The British sentiment about arbitration had not changed by the time Tyrrell arrived. In one of Sir William's conversations with Count Bernstorff he told the German diplomat that England had no intention of concluding a new arbitration treaty with the United States after the way it had treated the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty. Like Bryce, Tyrrell said that if England accepted a new treaty under such circumstances the English public would never understand. Spring-Rice later voiced the same argument.¹⁷ Unquestionably the British were greatly concerned about the arbitration treaty. But nothing could be accomplished on it until the tolls act was amended. The President was sympathetic but would not be moved until the regular session.

Even before Tyrrell met Wilson, he and House had discussed the tolls problem on November 12. House had informed Sir William that the President was opposed to the violation of treaties. The Colonel stated that Wilson would clear up any doubt on that when he and Tyrrell met, and this he did.¹⁸ The President explained to Sir William that he agreed with Grey's interpretation of the

¹⁷Bernstorff to Bethmann Hollweg, November 6, 1913, A23071, December 16, 1913, A25620, Collected Documents, Europe General 37, XV, German Archives.

¹⁸House Diary, November 12, 1913.

dispute, but that he anticipated trouble from certain Senators in getting a repeal bill through Congress. Nevertheless, Wilson was even willing to jump party lines and turn to the Republicans for support in getting the clause set aside.¹⁹ In the two reports of this meeting there was no indication of a trade or deal. The only charge that can be leveled is that the British for the first time had received directly from the President a clear understanding of where he stood on the matter. At least one close observer believed Wilson was incapable of making any such deal.

Josephus Daniels, who was in the Wilson cabinet for eight years, asserted that it was the opponents of repeal who charged that a bargain had been made. Daniels later wrote, "Wilson was incapable of making the trade suggested and Lord Grey emphatically denied in Parliament that there had been any trade, understanding, or agreement." Daniels, while corresponding with Ray Stannard Baker, who was working on his study of Wilson, claimed that Burton K. Hendrick's animosity toward Wilson caused him to give Page the credit for the President's attitude on the tolls repeal controversy. Daniels stated that long before Wilson ever thought of selecting Page for the London post, the President's attitude on canal tolls was well known and that it was only

¹⁹Tyrrell to Grey, November 14, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PR0.

Wilson's concern for the Tariff bill that delayed repeal.

"I know," Daniels wrote, "about this matter because I talked to him freely before he was inaugurated and afterwards."²⁰ George Macaulay Trevelyan, Sir Edward Grey's biographer, also made a tribute to Wilson's force of character; "On that issue [tolls repeal] his uncompromising rectitude fought its first and most successful battle with the Senate."²¹

The tolls exemption problem cropped up occasionally during the rest of November after the Tyrrell-Wilson meeting on the thirteenth, but nothing of consequence occurred.

²⁰ Josephus Daniels, The Wilson Era: Years of Peace, 1910-1917 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 209-19; Daniels to Ray Stannard Baker, June 21, 1926, July 14, August 8, 1927, Series I, Box 28, Ray Stannard Baker Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division. The President was not as confidential with other members of the cabinet. Baker later recorded a conversation he had with Lindley Miller Garrison, Secretary of War, March 1913-February 1916 (resigned), "At the outset Garrison bluntly confessed he never understood Woodrow Wilson, doesn't now, and doubts if anyone else can comprehend the real man. He was too complex to understand. Garrison says he never knew what the President was going to do. The Panama Canal tolls case was one in point. As the Secretary having jurisdiction over the canal, he studied the laws of the controversy and assured Wilson that there was good legal ground on which to justify the repeal of the tolls act. But the President went ahead and put the case on other grounds." Baker, Memorandum of Conversation with Mr. Lindley M. Garrison, November 30, 1928, Series I, Box 34, Baker Papers. Even in this exchange there was no indication that Wilson had any idea other than repeal of the exemption clause.

²¹ Trevelyan, Grey of Fallodon, 236-37. Trevelyan does add that Wilson would not have won the battle in the Senate had Grey not given in on Mexico.

In early December, House met Spring-Rice and told him that the President hoped to end the controversy by having Congress repeal the objectionable clause. But Wilson preferred to handle the matter as an internal problem and wished to avoid any further diplomatic negotiations over it. Senator O'Gorman of New York was classified as the main obstacle to repeal. His parents had been evicted from Ireland years before, and O'Gorman had no love for the English. Spring-Rice characterized the Irish distrust of the English quite aptly: "You know that an Irishman would refuse to go to Heaven if St. Peter were an Englishman." As a result of House's visit, Spring-Rice wrote Tyrrell and asked that the President's wishes be respected.²² At the same time the British Ambassador looked on Bryan as an ally in the tolls fight.

Spring-Rice implied that Bryan's vanity and egotism might be turned to good use in getting the tolls question to arbitration if other means failed:

Though public opinion in this country is probably at the present moment not so enamoured of peace propaganda as in the past, the popularity to be got through advocacy of Hague Conventions is still sufficient to spur such public men as Mr. Bryan into action, especially when it coincides with his own sincere zeal for "peace among the nations"; and the desire, which he probably entertains, to emulate Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Root as a candidate for the Nobel prize, may, perhaps, be of some weight in the future in securing a settlement of

²²Spring-Rice to Tyrrell, December 14, 1913, Gwynn, Spring Rice, II, 194-95.

the Canal question, which at present so seriously interferes with his aspirations.²³

Even though things looked brighter, by late December Spring-Rice wrote Tyrrell that they should be prepared to see the Panama Canal tolls bill receive an unfavorable reception in Congress.²⁴ Before the canal bill was permitted to come up for consideration by Congress, the administration tested its support in the Senate on another matter.

The first major foreign policy hurdle for Wilson came in February 1914, during the regular session of the sixth-third Congress. An extension of the 1908 Arbitration Agreement with Great Britain which was due to expire in June 1913, had been signed by Bryan and Spring-Rice on May 31, 1913. The treaty was then submitted to the Senate for ratification, where it remained without being acted upon until February 1914. In reality, eight arbitration treaties were involved, but the ones with Great Britain and Japan were causing the greatest problems. Some Senators opposed ratification of the treaties unless particular questions were excluded from arbitration, such as the Panama Canal tolls, Japanese immigration, and the Monroe Doctrine. But they all conceded that the treaties had to be identical; therefore, the questions to be ex-

²³Spring-Rice to Grey, December 12, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

²⁴Spring-Rice to Tyrrell, December 30, 1913, F.O. 1/247, PRO.

cluded had to be incorporated in all eight agreements. Thus, O'Gorman who opposed arbitration of the tolls dispute with Great Britain received assistance from West Coast Senators who wanted to exclude certain Japanese problems from the treaty with Japan. On the other hand, Republicans Root and Lodge, along with many Democrats felt no treaties were better than amended treaties.

On February 19 the treaties were debated for five hours by the Senate in closed session. The two main opponents were O'Gorman and Senator George Earle Chamberlain (D-Oregon). Chamberlain introduced an amendment which provided for the exclusion from arbitration of the acute questions. The Chamberlain Amendment was not brought to a vote until the next day, when it was defeated 40 to 13. This decisive administration victory was followed on February 21 by Senate approval of all eight agreements without amendment. Ratification was looked upon as a sure sign that the repeal of the tolls exemption clause would be accomplished without difficulty, and this measure was expected to be the next important foreign issue to be submitted to Congress.

The Senate action bolstered the President's confidence and he let it be known that he was committed to "out and out repeal of the tolls provision; that there could be no compromise in the situation in order that it might be signaled to the world that the United States

would stand firmly by its international obligations."²⁵

On March 5, the President addressed a joint session of Congress and called for amendment of the Panama Canal Act on the grounds that it was a violation of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901. He said: "We consented to the treaty; its language we accepted, if we did not originate; and we are too big, too powerful, too self-respecting a Nation to interpret with too strained or refined a reading the words of our own promises just because we have power enough to give us leave to read them as we please."²⁶

Page reported that the British had been favorably impressed with the President's stand. Heartened by this show of respect by the United States for its international commitments, Great Britain ratified the Arbitration Agreement on March 11, 1914.²⁷ A week later Page wrote Bryan that the ratification of the Arbitration Agreement by the Senate and the President's message to Congress on the canal act had paved the way for Bryan's General Peace

²⁵New York Times, February 20, 2:5; 21, 1:4; 22, 1914, 1:1; O'Gorman did not consider ratification an indication of the Senate's feelings on the tolls matter, ibid., February 22, 1914, 1:1; U. S., Statutes at Large, XXXVIII, 1767-68.

²⁶CR., 63d Cong., 2d Sess., 4312, 4346.

²⁷Page to Secretary of State, March 6, 1914, U. S., Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1914] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 318.

Treaty with Great Britain.²⁸ The way had also been cleared to push through the bill ending the long standing Anglo-American dispute.

The debates in Congress over the repeal bill during March brought charges that a deal had been made with Sir William Tyrrell--a free hand for Wilson in Mexico in return for the elimination of free tolls for American coastwise shipping. President Wilson immediately authorized publication of an official denial, and, in a newspaper conference, called the accusation "just the crowning insult of a number of insults which have been introduced into this debate." The President said that it reminded him of a story he used to enjoy telling

of a very effective debater . . . who sent a challenge down into a county very hostile to him to debate. The people down there did not like the job very much, but they put up the man they liked best and who was generally put up on such occasions, a great, big, husky fellow whom they all called Tom. The challenger was given the first hour of the two hours allotted to the debate, and he hadn't got more than half way through his speech when it became evident that he was convincing the audience, when one of Tom's partisans in the back of the room cried out, "Tom, Tom, call him a liar and make it a fight." That is the stage this has reached.²⁹

Grey also issued a denial of the charges calling

²⁸Page to Bryan, March 17, 1914, Box 29, Bryan Papers. The General Peace Treaty between the United States and Great Britain was consummated later in the year.

²⁹New York Times, March 31, 1914, 1:8.

the reports without any foundation whatsoever and saying that he was glad to have an early opportunity to clear up the misunderstanding. In Parliament, Leif Jones, M. P., asked the Foreign Office representative, Mr. Acland, if there was any foundation for the reports that were appearing in the press. Acland replied that absolutely no basis existed for the charges that any agreement had been made.³⁰ Despite the furor occasioned by these accusations they did not in any way alter the inevitable course of the bill.

The repeal of the tolls exemption clause was accomplished on June 15, 1914, but not without a determined fight from the Irish-Americans and those Democratic leaders in Congress who refused to support the bill because it violated the 1912 Democratic platform.³¹ The passage of the bill was a great victory for the Wilson administration.

During the heat of the Democratic campaign in 1912, Wilson had endorsed tolls exemption, but there was not one occasion after his election on which he again took that position. Rather, every reference to the issue indicated

³⁰Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), LX (1914), 822; New York Times, March 31, 1914, 2:3.

³¹U. S., Statutes at Large, XXXVIII, 385-86; Norman J. Padelford, The Panama Canal in Peace and War (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942), 40-43.

that he favored the British interpretation. The President was not willing, however, to jeopardize the tariff or money bills by taking up the tolls problem during 1913. The dispute could be handled in two ways: arbitration or repeal. It was decided that amending the 1912 Panama Canal Act would create fewer difficulties than arbitration. Pressure in the Balkans made the long delay an uneasy period for the British. Ratification of the Arbitration treaties would probably end West Coast opposition, although this would not still the Irish-American element nor those Democrats who believed repeal a violation of the 1912 platform. The treaties served as an excellent measure of administration support on foreign affairs, and repeal of the exemption clause was never in doubt after their approval.

President Wilson recognized as early as January 1913, before the Mexican problem ever presented itself, that Grey was correct. There was never any indication that Wilson would not do the right thing. He was as much dedicated to an honorable principle as the British Foreign Secretary. To charge that the President had been party to any trade is to completely misjudge him. Wilson's high moral policy in securing repeal of the exemption clause was another manifestation of the moral purpose of his Mexican policy, however diplomatically inept that policy might have been.

Wilson's primary concern in mid-November 1913 was not canal tolls, but Mexico. Tyrrell had told Grey that

the President would appreciate Carden's help in working out some solution with Huerta. The course of events for the next few weeks would be centered on definite plans to get rid of the Mexican President.

CHAPTER VIII

BRITISH MEDIATION

The negotiations between the Mexican President and the United States became exceedingly complex. Wilson worked through Lind and O'Shaughnessy to force Huerta's resignation, while Carden tried to find a common ground upon which the United States and Mexico could come to an agreement. Carden realized that Huerta would not meekly consent to ultimatums from the United States but would insist on a negotiated settlement which would permit him to retire in an honorable fashion. The General had pride, and Wilson's uncompromising attitude offended him.

Lind had been rebuffed by the Mexican government on several occasions. On November 7 he advised Bryan that a definite time should be set for Huerta to comply with the United States demands,¹ and Lind returned to Mexico City to seek a solution to the problem. Whereas President Wilson's notes of November 1 and 7 had emphasized Huerta's resignation, Lind now bargained to prevent convening of the new Congress. Lind's arrival was

¹Lind to Bryan, November 7, 1913, SDP.

heralded with much fanfare and publicity, spelling defeat for his mission no matter how generous or demanding his terms might be. He wired Bryan that Carden informed him that Huerta would not resign until after the new Mexican Congress met on November 15.²

Lind proceeded with his plans and outlined the details to Bryan on November 10. First, he suggested that the United States announce that the new Congress would not be recognized as a legal body, and any action by it would be held null and void. If, in spite of such warnings, the Congress should convene, then on that same day the United States would recognize the belligerency of the Constitutionalists in the North. Finally, the United States would establish a peaceful blockade of Mexico to prevent munitions from reaching Huerta. Bryan agreed with Lind's recommendations in regard to the Congress.³ Lind then issued a threat to the Mexican government. He declared that the meeting of the new Congress must be postponed within twelve hours, or he would leave Mexico City and

²Philip Holt Lowry, "The Mexican Policy of Woodrow Wilson" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of International Relations, Yale University, 1949), 71-72. Lowry points out that instructions to Lind from the President could not be found. Lind's actions can be pieced together from the various telegrams. Lind to Bryan, November 9, 1913, SDP.

³Lind to Bryan, November 10, 1913, Wilson Papers; Bryan to Lind, November 10, 1913, SDP.

return to Veracruz. The time passed and no announcement was forthcoming from the government, so Lind left as announced.⁴

Lind's "get tough" policy had failed for several reasons. The publicity accorded Lind's every move was anathema to his success, and Huerta had an intense personal dislike for him. As if that were not enough, the unreasonable twelve-hour ultimatum that Congress not meet was sure to mean failure. Lind may have feared that Congress would confer additional rich oil concessions upon Lord Cowdray. He had expressed such a concern on several occasions. But it was absolutely essential to Huerta that the new Congress hold its session.

Ever since the dissolution of the old Congress on October 10, Huerta had assumed powers that under the Mexican constitution belonged exclusively to the legislature. Therefore, the new body must either approve the executive usurpation of authority or hold him liable for prosecution. If Congress did not meet and Huerta's acts were not legislatively sanctioned, then he could be held accountable by any future Mexican government. Thus, to most observers

⁴Lind to Bryan, two dispatches dated November 12, 1913; O'Shaughnessy to Bryan, November 12, 1913; Bryan to Lind, November 12, 1913, SDP, authorized Lind to fix the time for his departure if Huerta did not consent to a dissolution of the Congress. Lowry, "The Mexican Policy of Woodrow Wilson," 72; The Times (London), November 14, 1913, 8e.

there was no question about whether Congress should convene or not--it must meet.⁵

The preliminary session of the Congress was held on November 15, although the formal opening was not scheduled until November 20. After much confusion the Chamber of Deputies was finally able to select a temporary president, a committee on credentials, and then adjourned. The Senate with only twenty-one members present, mostly army generals, did not have a quorum which required twenty-nine, and adjourned until the next day. None of the Catholic senators were present, and their failure to attend indicated the attitude of the Catholic party.⁶ Finally, on the seventeenth, organization of the Congress was completed when the upper house had a quorum.⁷ Thus, in spite of warnings from Lind and President Wilson the proscribed Congress was a fact, and General Huerta was scheduled to address the formal opening on November 20.

The question arose about attendance by the diplomatic corps. Grey advised Carden that he did not think

⁵New York Times, November 16, 1:8; 18, 1:6; 20, 2:1; 25, 2:3, 1913.

⁶Mexican Herald, November 16, 1913, 1:2; New York Times, November 16, 1913, II, 1:8. One report claimed formal organization was not completed until November 22. Ibid., November 23, 1913, III, 3:4.

⁷New York Times, November 18, 1913, 1:6.

Britain was obliged to recognize the new Congress officially, and thought it was better if Sir Lionel did not attend. Carden was instructed, however, to do whatever the other European representatives agreed upon, but Grey suggested that Sir Lionel try to get them all to follow a common course.⁸

As President Huerta entered the assembly hall one evening of the twentieth he was greeted by cries of "Long live the maintainer of our national integrity." The General's message was short and devoted principally to reasons for the dissolution of the old Congress and the necessity for his assumption of legislative power. Quoting Napoleon, he said, "the law is not violated when you save the fatherland." He believed that the action which he took was essential to prevent the collapse of governmental machinery. Such measures had been restricted, he related, to those absolutely necessary and were confined to the Departments of Finance, Interior, and War. Although he asked the new body to sanction his acts, Huerta accepted full responsibility for what he had done and said that he would abide by the decision of Congress. The speech was enthusiastically applauded by the members. Eduardo Tamariz, speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, replied by promising the full support of the Congress "in maintaining

⁸Grey to Carden, November 19, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO.

intact the national autonomy and integrity, which you have sustained thus far."⁹

All of the diplomats except O'Shaughnessy attended the opening, and reports indicated their action had strengthened Huerta's position. The tide was now swinging back in favor of the Mexican President after having reached its lowest ebb when the Congress had been dissolved.¹⁰

On November 13, O'Shaughnessy met with Huerta's private secretary and Manuel Garza Aldape, Minister of Gobernación. After advising them of the seriousness of the situation, he said that he would be willing to transmit to Washington any proposals Huerta would care to make. Garza Aldape drew from his pocket a memorandum prepared by him and signed by Huerta. It proposed that the Congress must convene to decide on the presidential election, but since the required number of polls were not in operation the only possible decision would be to annul the election. Congress would be expected to confirm the extraordinary powers vested in the President after the dissolution of the old Congress on October 10. In order to avoid the taint of unconstitutionality because the recent elections for Congress were called by the executive and not the

⁹Mexican Herald, November 21, 1913, 2:3-7; New York Times, November 20, 2:1; 22, 1913, 1:8; Carden to Grey, November 20, 1913, F.O. 371/1678; ibid., November 26, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

¹⁰New York Times, November 22, 1913, 1:8.

legislature, a new date would be set for elections for both branches of the government, and Congress would then be dissolved. It was further advised that if an acceptable interim government was installed and granted recognition by the United States, it would need no help in negotiation with the rebels because it would then be able to suppress the revolution. Later that day O'Shaughnessy suggested that as its first duty the new Congress declare itself unconstitutional and recall the old body. Thus legal continuity would be preserved.

Lind also received a copy of Huerta's proposals and immediately wired Bryan that in his opinion this was just another excuse for delay. He recommended that if the Mexican Congress was not dissolved by midnight of November 15, O'Shaughnessy should be instructed to ask for his passports. He believed whatever action was planned should be executed without delay. Lind undoubtedly expected intervention because he advised that he enjoyed the confidence of the Americans who were managing the Federal railroads terminating in Veracruz, and he could arrange to have considerable amount of rolling stock assembled for any anticipated needs.¹¹

Huerta's proposals were almost entirely disre-

¹¹O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, two dispatches dated November 13, 1913; Lind to Bryan, November 14, 1913, SDP.

garded by the United States. On the fourteenth Bryan instructed O'Shaughnessy to inform Huerta immediately that Congress should not convene and that he should resign as soon as an ad interim government acceptable to the United States was installed. Lind and O'Shaughnessy, in conjunction with Huerta or his representatives, were to agree on the new government. It would promptly be recognized by the United States, and an understanding with this government would be concluded for free elections to be held at an early date under the Constitution of 1857. O'Shaughnessy delivered Bryan's message to the Minister of Gobernación who was visibly shaken by it. Garza Aldape asked him to return the next morning for an answer.

When O'Shaughnessy called at the appointed hour, the Minister of Gobernación informed him that he had not yet delivered the message. O'Shaughnessy asked if he was afraid to do so, and Garza Aldape replied that he was but would do so later in the day. He asked that O'Shaughnessy return at 3 P.M. for Huerta's reply. Garza Aldape suggested that they be permitted to send a secret agent to Washington to negotiate the final terms, stating that no president publicly selected by the United States would ever enjoy the support of the Mexican people. Since Carranza, Chief of the Constitutionalists, had already refused mediation by the United States, Huerta could do no less. The Minister of Gobernación added that he would

give O'Shaughnessy a list of persons whom Huerta would accept as provisional president.

That afternoon, Garza Aldape delivered Huerta's reply. He completely rejected the terms tendered by the United States. For his courage in presenting the demands to the Mexican President, the Minister of Gobernación was shortly forced to resign, but he was subsequently appointed Minister to France.¹² The likelihood that Huerta would accept the conditions had been notably decreased several days earlier when the newspapers published President Wilson's six-point plan for Mexico.

This program called for Huerta's elimination. If necessary the United States would apply financial pressure to bankrupt the government, blockade the Mexican ports to cut off customs revenues and munitions shipments, or even

¹²Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), November 14, 1913; O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, three dispatches dated November 15, 1913; *ibid.*, November 16, 1913; Lind to Bryan, November 17, 1913, SDP. Arthur S. Link, Wilson The New Freedom (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 385, claims that "Huerta virtually surrendered during the morning of November 15, 1913, by promising O'Shaughnessy to submit a list of names for the provisional presidency. By the late afternoon of the same day, when the American Chargé returned to the Foreign Office to receive Huerta's final reply, however, the situation had changed completely." It should be pointed out that it was Garza Aldape and not Huerta who promised the list of candidates and that at this time Garza Aldape had not even shown Huerta the message because, as he told O'Shaughnessy, he was afraid to. Also, there was no indication that on the morning of the 15th, Huerta was in any more of a mood to accept Wilson's ultimatum than he was that afternoon.

resort to invasion to accomplish its purpose. After Huerta had been forced from power, steps would be taken to select a new provisional president, and new elections would subsequently be held for both president and Congress. Assurances were given that the United States would not acquire any new territory as a result of intervention.¹³

Publication of the President's plans caused Grey some anxiety. The principal problem was point four which provided for selection of Huerta's successor after he was eliminated. Great Britain, Germany, and France all refused to ask for the General's retirement until a replacement had been selected. Grey explained to Page that the European governments, especially Great Britain, could not urge Huerta to resign until they knew that someone capable of maintaining law and order was ready to take over. The interregnum might be a period of massacre and murder of foreigners even though Page replied that such things could occur while Huerta ruled. Grey acknowledged that this was true, but if Great Britain had not in any way intervened, it would not be held responsible. If Great Britain insisted on Huerta's elimination when no one was ready to accept the office and disorders followed, then the British could in a sense be held liable.¹⁴

¹³The Times (London), November 13, 1913, 8a; New York Times, November 13, 1913, 2:3.

¹⁴Grey to Spring-Rice, two dispatches dated November 13, 1913, Numbers 316 and 656, no. F.O. number, PRO, relating Grey's discussions with Page.

The constant crisis produced by Wilson's published statements and his private ultimatums to Huerta created a potentially dangerous situation in Mexico. Carden reported on November 15 that he had instructed the consular offices to warn British subjects to make preparations to take refuge in the large towns in the event of any action by the United States which might be cause for alarm. He would give them advance notice of such incidents if he had time. Carden recommended that Huerta remain in office until his successor had been chosen, or else he feared there would be a complete disintegration of the government. The legal heir, Querido Moheno, Minister for Foreign Affairs, was regarded as incompetent. Carden reported rumors that the United States would lift the arms embargo to the rebels, and he feared it would bring misery to large areas of Mexico. Lind, Carden remarked, had let it be known that unless Huerta accepted Wilson's proposals O'Shaughnessy would leave the country. Carden declined to believe the report, but it had created an adverse effect on the public.¹⁵

The next day Carden informed Grey that O'Shaughnessy

¹⁵Carden to Grey, November 16, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO. Similar reports were reaching London through private channels. Thomas J. Ryder, General Manager of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company, Mexico City, to Lord Cowdray, two dispatches dated November 14, 1913; A. E. Chambers, in charge of oil refining operations of Mexican Eagle Oil Company, Puerto México, to Lord Cowdray, November 15, 1913; Adams, Veracruz, to Lord Cowdray, November 16, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

had shown him a copy of the President's demands of November 14 which the Mexican President had rejected. Carden stated that he believed Huerta was willing to concede the essential points of the United States demands, "but he resents their general attitude and their disregard of the legal difficulties of conceding what they want as they want it. Personally, Mr. Lind also irritates him." The British Minister added that Huerta had sent word that he wanted to see him the following day, November 17, and intimated he desired to make a proposal through Grey. The Mexican President did not want to refer the matter to the diplomatic corps because of its delicate nature. He preferred to handle the negotiations in a confidential manner.

Grey noted an apparent disparity between Wilson's published six-point program of November 13 and the ultimatum sent Huerta on the fourteenth. The essential difference was that the note of the fourteenth provided for the selection of Huerta's successor before he left office, while the published demands required him to relinquish his position before a replacement was selected. Grey thought the conditions of the fourteenth were more favorable. Sir Edward told Carden to report any proposals Huerta should make, adding that the United States was now irrevocably committed to force him from office by whatever means necessary. Grey believed Huerta's only hope

lay in arranging terms with Washington.¹⁶

On the same day the British Foreign Secretary replied to Tyrrell's November 14 report of his meeting with President Wilson. Grey was gratified by the frank exchange of views between Wilson and Tyrrell. He furnished Sir William a copy of his instructions to Carden to report Huerta's proposals as requested by Wilson, but added "Object of securing better Government which President has set before him is one with which everyone should sympathise but I doubt whether there is any means by which President can carry it out except direct intervention." Grey asked Tyrrell to thank the President for his kind remarks, and to keep him informed on what the British were doing in Mexico.¹⁷

Sir William immediately contacted House in New York and told him he had an important communication from London regarding Mexico and wanted to relay it to the President. House called Wilson and arrangements were made for Sir William to see the President without delay or publicity. During their meeting on the eighteenth, Tyrrell read the messages from Grey and Carden to the President.¹⁸

¹⁶Carden to Grey, November 16, 1913; Grey to Carden, November 17, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

¹⁷Grey to Tyrrell, November 17, 1913, F.O. 1/247, PRO.

¹⁸House Diary, November 18, 1913; Message read to President Wilson by Sir W. Tyrrell, November 18, 1913,

President Wilson expressed his appreciation for communicating Grey's instructions to Carden. He informed Tyrrell that he would be very grateful to receive the communication which Huerta proposed to send through the Foreign Secretary. Wilson said that he realized "that premature leakage has handicapped Huerta and he assured me again that he would act with great patience."¹⁹

Carden was unable to see Huerta on November 17, and it was the twenty-first before he could get an audience. Huerta apologized for not having prepared a written statement, but the pressure of business had not permitted it. Carden thought, however, that the General preferred to find out what was expected of him before he committed himself to any specific plan. Carden told him that President Wilson desired him to do three things: retire from office, convoke the old Congress, and proclaim

copy in Moore Papers. Tyrrell while waiting to get his appointment wrote Grey, "I am very grateful for your telegram of yesterday about Mexico. I am trying to see the President to give him your message, but getting an audience without its getting known is a little difficult. In view of his relations with the Secretary of State I am very anxious to prevent its being known & so far I have succeeded which is rather a feat in this country of publicity." Tyrrell to Grey, November 18, 1913, F.O. 800/82, PRO. With the restrictions on the Moore Papers and the Foreign Office materials this visit is now for the first time known in detail.

¹⁹Tyrrell to Grey, November 18, 1913, F.O. 1/247, PRO, relating Sir William's meeting with the President on November 18.

a general amnesty so that all groups could participate in new elections. After discussing the matter quite thoroughly with Carden, Huerta authorized the British Minister to make the following statement:

1. Congress will at once proceed to revise returns of Presidential election, which is certain to be nullified, whereupon new election will be convoked. Huerta will then retire from the Presidency and devote himself entirely to pacification of the country, appointing substitute, who will offer necessary guarantees.

2. He explained that it was quite impracticable to recall the late Congress, which was so hostile to the Administration, many of its members being actually engaged in conspiring with northern rebels, as to render government impossible. After all, his Government was the only one in the country, and he was bound to maintain it, failing which the result would be chaos. He had no wish to act unconstitutionally, but was forced, for no other reason, to summon new Congress.

3. He could not offer general amnesty to rebels, for so many had been guilty of atrocious crimes, not only against Mexicans, but against foreign subjects as well, that he would incur serious responsibility with foreign Powers if he did so. Nor could he propose cessation of hostilities, which would be regarded as proof of weakness and would encourage rebels to further efforts. But if the States in revolution would take part in the election he would be willing to suspend operations in so far as necessary to enable them to do so. He was prepared to discuss means whereby this might be brought to the knowledge of rebel leaders.

Carden went on to report that if the conditions were acceptable as the basis for an agreement, he believed that details could be worked out to President Wilson's satisfaction. But Huerta insisted that he be permitted to draft the declaration and to submit it through the British Foreign Secretary. He would not accept "a direct agreement with United States Government." Carden suggested that the with-

drawal of the United States naval vessels at Veracruz would materially improve the chances of a settlement.²⁰

Grey forwarded the information obtained from Carden to Spring-Rice and directed that it be communicated to the United States. He advised the British Ambassador to state that the manner of handling the arrangements and the withdrawal of the United States ships were apparently impressions which Carden had received in his talks with Huerta and should be considered accordingly. Grey would not sanction the proposal for withdrawal of American ships explaining that "at a moment when we are told that danger to foreign lives and property might occur suddenly and force foreigners to take refuge at the ports, when we have asked United States ships to give protection if need be, and are ourselves sending two ships to Mexican ports, we cannot endorse any suggestion that United States vessels should be withdrawn from Mexican waters."²¹ A copy of Carden's message to Grey had also been sent to the British Embassy in Washington, and President Wilson was already appraised of the contents.

Tyrrell, again apparently through the good offices of Colonel House, met with President Wilson on November 23, to deliver Huerta's proposals. The President did not

²⁰Carden to Grey, November 21, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

²¹Grey to Spring-Rice, November 24, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO. The British request for American assistance and the sending of the two warships will be discussed later.

indicate to Sir William exactly what he would do about them, but he seemed to think that they were only a device by Huerta to gain time. Tyrrell avoided publicity on his second conference with the President but was unable to do so this time.

Some significance was attached to the meeting by the newspapers because Tyrrell had been received on a Sunday. It was Wilson's policy not to discuss business on Sundays except with the Cabinet and then only on very important issues. The press was unable to discover the subject of their talk as Sir William brushed questions aside by saying that the meeting had been personal and private and was not to be discussed. The New York Times on November 25 erroneously reported that Tyrrell's visit was to get the President to send a naval force to protect British interests at Tampico and Tuxpam, Mexico.²² At this point Carden decided to put his part in the negotiations in its proper perspective.

After O'Shaughnessy had shown Carden the United States' demands and Huerta's rejection of them on November 16, Carden believed the circumstances warranted immediate

²²House Diary, November 26, 1913; New York Times, November 24, 2:4; 25, 1913, 2:1; Memorandum of Tyrrell's visit with J. B. Moore on November 28, 1913, Colville Barclay, Councillor of the Embassy to W. J. Bryan, November 25, 1913, copy in Moore Papers, contains a formal statement embodying Grey's comments to the Secretary of State.

action. Even though he had been warned not to encourage Huerta to seek British mediation, Carden decided to see if he could help avert the impending crisis. In fact, Carden interpreted O'Shaughnessy's conversation as an indirect appeal for assistance. Therefore, the British Minister requested an interview with Huerta on November 17. Carden's report of the sixteenth stated that Huerta had sent word he wanted to see him the following day.

During this conference, Carden reported, Huerta was visibly incensed with the interference of the United States in Mexico's internal affairs, and he would not submit to Wilson's demands, even if it meant war. Efforts to force him from office, and the menace implied by the American flotilla in Mexican waters, merely strengthened his determination to resist Wilson's demands. After the two had talked for some time, the General began to take a more moderate tone. He seemed willing, Sir Lionel stated, to comply with some of President Wilson's requests. He stipulated, however, that it must be done in such a way that it would not imply "acquiescence in the right of the United States Government to dictate the policy which Mexico should follow." Carden was instructed to return for Huerta's statement, but it was not available until the twenty-first.²³ Carden had originally made it

²³Carden to Grey, November 26, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

appear that Huerta was requesting British assistance in arranging terms with the United States, when in reality Carden had been the instigator. There is nothing to indicate that this revelation effected subsequent events, nor could any reason be found to indicate why Carden decided to make the facts known.

On November 28 both Tyrrell and Colville Barclay, the recently arrived councillor of the British Embassy, contacted John Bassett Moore to see what the President had decided to do about Huerta's statement. In view of what the President had told Tyrrell on the twenty-third, Moore said that there would probably be no reply.

Carden was somewhat distressed to learn that in all probability no notice would be taken on the proposals. The plan called for Huerta's retirement and, Carden stated, he thought that was President Wilson's main concern. Unless future negotiations were conducted in such a way that they would not reflect on Mexico's national pride nor interfere in the right of self-government, the efforts would fail.²⁴ Huerta would resist and the country would support him.

Grey was involved now, and he thought it was only proper that some reply from the United States should be

²⁴Memorandum of Tyrrell's visit with J. B. Moore on November 28, 1913, Moore Papers; Carden to Grey, November 30, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

made. Spring-Rice was instructed to find out if the President had any counterproposals to make.²⁵ Barclay was sent to see the Secretary of State and he told Bryan that Grey felt obliged to make some kind of an answer.

Without hesitating a moment, Bryan "requested Mr. Barclay to say that the President considered General Huerta's proposals so 'absurd,' and merely calculated to gain time, that he did not deem them worthy of any reply whatever. He added that General Huerta knew quite well what was wanted of him, and the only thing that was left to him was to choose between going out 'on his feet or on his head.'" The Secretary of State then said that the policy of the United States was clearly defined in the President's message to Congress on December 2. The United States would be patient, and it was hoped that it would not be necessary to alter its policy of watchful waiting.²⁶ There was nothing left for Grey to do, and he advised Carden on December 3 to inform Huerta that the United States considered his "proposals so unacceptable that they do not intend to reply." He added, "His Majesty's Government can do no more" ²⁷

²⁵Grey to Spring-Rice, December 1, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

²⁶Spring-Rice to Grey, December 2, 10, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

²⁷Grey to Carden, December 3, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

Lind had failed to frighten Huerta with his ultimatum. The Congress had met and there was every indication it would validate the General's actions. Huerta had offered one plan, which was answered by a new ultimatum from Washington. Huerta rejected these demands and refused to acknowledge that the United States had any right to interfere in Mexico's internal affairs, even if it meant war. Carden was obviously upset by the sudden turn of events and injected himself into the controversy in spite of Grey's warnings to stay clear of it. The British Minister was able to get Huerta to make a formal statement of his position and to indicate how far he would go in complying with Wilson's demands. The essential point, so Carden believed, was Huerta's elimination and this was provided for, as well as an offer to work out some solution so that the Constitutionalists could participate in a general election. Thus, of the three requirements laid down by Wilson on November 14, the General had conceded two of them. One stumbling block, however, was the fact that even though Huerta resigned he would stay on to command the army in its efforts to pacify the country. He would not concede the third point, by cancelling the meeting of the new Congress, and explained the impracticability of recalling the old one. President Wilson insisted on all or nothing, and the United States continued the policy it had followed for months, "watchful waiting."

Grey had gone the extra mile with Wilson, and had reluctantly reversed himself on almost every issue. Carden had exceeded his authority in trying to work out a solution to the impasse between the United States and Mexico. The only thing the British had not done was to demand Huerta's resignation. As Grey had said, they could do no more. Wilson had been pointedly discourteous to the Mexican President by refusing to acknowledge Huerta's communications. The President had demonstrated his diplomatic ineptness. The General had offered far more than he could expect to receive.

Grey recognized that it was a problem the United States would have to solve. The British had investments and citizens that must be protected so two warships were ordered to the Mexican coast, and Great Britain asked the United States to protect British interests until they arrived.

CHAPTER IX

MEXICAN OIL

One of the major problems to confront the United States and Great Britain during the Mexican crisis was the protection of oil field operations in the state of Veracruz. The petroleum companies there found themselves in a very precarious position in November when the Constitutionalists began their campaign. One of the companies was the Mexican Eagle Oil Company whose major stockholder, Lord Cowdray, had been closely associated with the development of Mexico's oil industry.

Weetman Dickinson Pearson, the first Viscount Cowdray (1856-1927), joined the firm of contractors founded by his grandfather, Samuel Pearson in 1875. Young Pearson extended the field of operations of the company during the next few years to the United States and to Spain. Finally, in 1889 he went to Mexico, and there secured a number of very valuable contracts for the firm in such enterprises as drainage, waterworks, harbors, railways, and power.¹ During work on the Tehuantepec

¹J. R. H. Weaver (ed.), The Dictionary of National Biography (24 vols.; London: Oxford University Press,

Railway, shortly after the turn of the century, Pearson noted evidence of petroleum. Borings were made and oil was struck. This led him to send exploring parties to other parts of Mexico until the vast fields in northern Veracruz were discovered. He had in the meantime secured extensive oil concessions from the Mexican government. Pearson's oil operations brought him into direct competition with several American companies which by 1911 had culminated in a cutthroat price war with Henry Clay Pierce and the Waters-Pierce Company. Waters-Pierce was a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey until it was disaffiliated from the parent company in 1911.²

1937), Supplement 1922-1930, 660-61.

²Valentin R. Garfias, Petroleum Resources of the World (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1923), 26-33; Frederick A. A. Talbot, The Oil Conquest of the World (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1914), passim, contains an excellent but brief description of the development of the Mexican oil industry and the part played by Lord Cowdray; Ralph W. Hidy and Muriel E. Hidy, Pioneering in Big Business 1882-1911, Vol. I of History of Standard Oil Company (New Jersey) (2 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), I, 464, describes the Pierce-Pearson rivalry in Mexico; George Sweet Gibbs and Evelyn H. Knowlton, The Resurgent Years 1911-1927, Vol. II of History of Standard Oil Company (New Jersey) (2 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), II, 8, 19-20, 46-47, 84-85; Alfred Tischendorf, Great Britain and Mexico in the Era of Porfirio Díaz (Durham: Duke University Press, 1961), 124-25; David Pletcher, Rails, Mines and Progress (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958), 298; J. Fred Rippey, "English Investments in Mexico: A Story of Bonanzas and Heartbreaks," The Journal of Business of the University of Chicago, XXV (October 1952), 247-48, describes why Pearson was so successful in his dealings with General Díaz and Pearson's rivalry with Pierce.

In 1909 Pearson and certain members of Mexico's ruling clique formed the Mexican Eagle Oil Company. This firm was chartered by the Mexican government and was actually a Mexican enterprise. The overthrow of Díaz in 1910, it was reported, put the company in a precarious position. Claims were made that the Madero revolution was financed by some American oil companies who expected him to cancel Pearson's oil concessions, thus eliminating their British rival. During the Madero regime statements periodically appeared in the press that the validity of the English oil concessions was being questioned by the Mexican government. Rumors also abounded that the counter-revolution in February 1913 by Félix Díaz and Huerta was an effort by the British oil interests to install a government favorable to them. The Constitutionalist movement under Carranza in northern Mexico against Huerta was said to be inspired by American oil companies. Thus, the plots and counterplots between 1910 and 1913 were attributed by many persons to the war being waged by the rival oil companies.

The charges carried to their ultimate conclusion held that Lord Cowdray and the Mexican Eagle Oil Company stockholders were influencing British policy in Mexico. More specifically, Lord Cowdray was said to have influenced the British decision to recognize Huerta, secured Carden's appointment as Minister to Mexico to thwart United

States policies there, financed the Huerta government when it could not borrow funds on the world money markets in return for additional rich oil concessions, and in general to have been the sustaining influence which kept Huerta in power in defiance of President Wilson's efforts to force him out of office. Reports were circulated that the new Mexican Congress was expected to pass legislation beneficial to the Pearson interests. Such charges appeared in the press, magazine articles, and in letters to members of Congress, the President, and a host of other officials both public and private. However, no concrete evidence has been produced to substantiate these allegations.

On the contrary, Lord Cowdray repeatedly denied throughout 1913 that he or anyone connected with him had in any way been a party to such adventures. He did admit that in September he had subscribed to about three per cent of a loan being negotiated by the National Bank of Mexico. The oil concessions granted under the Díaz administration, he stated, had been validated by Madero, contrary to what might have appeared in the press. His company had not applied for any new oil leases nor extensions of their present ones. Although he had been offered a number of contracts for public works in Mexico, only one had been accepted and that was from the Madero government.³

³New York Times, November 13, 1913, 2:3-4; Tyrrell mentioned Cowdray's denials in his report of his meeting with Wilson on November 13; Lord Cowdray to the American

Lord Cowdray was convinced that Henry Clay Pierce was behind the efforts to discredit him. J. N. Galbraith, one of Pierce's associates in Mexico, had been filling Lind with anti-Cowdray propaganda ever since Lind's arrival in Mexico. In addition, Sherburne G. Hopkins, an attorney from Washington, D. C., had been employed by the Waters-Pierce Oil Company on several different occasions and as Hopkins later testified, "I tried to make it as hot as I could for Lord Cowdray and the Eagle Oil Company."⁴ Hopkins was also attorney for the Constitutionalists from April 1, 1913, to September 15, 1914, at which time Pierce was attempting to secure secret concessions from Carranza.⁵

The press attacks during October and November 1913 were especially irritating to Lord Cowdray. When informed that the reports were coming from Hopkins' office in Washington, Cowdray wrote, "Hopkins is at his old tricks."

Ambassador (Walter Hines Page), November 17, 1913, copy in Cowdray Papers; Page to Secretary of State, November 18, 1913, SDP, telling of Cowdray's visit to him on November 17; ibid., November 19, 1913, SDP, forwarding a copy of Cowdray's written denial.

⁴Hopkins openly admitted his part in the efforts to discredit Cowdray in testimony before the Fall Committee. U. S., Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Preliminary Report and Hearings, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 66th Cong., 2d Sess., 1920, Senate Doc. 285, 2 vols, II, 2411-19, 2520-74 (hereafter cited as Senate Doc. 285); Fred Adams to Lord Cowdray, received November 25, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

⁵Senate Doc. 285, II, 2411; Arthur S. Link, Wilson The New Freedom (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 372.

There is no statement, however unlikely, that he does not make if he deems it will have the effect of prejudicing the Aguila Co. in the eyes of the Constitutionalists. I assume he is acting for Henry Clay Pierce."⁶ Cowdray attributed Pierce's bitterness to his failure to be reelected to the board of the Mexican National Railways. Cowdray asserted that an editorial in the New York Herald charged him along with certain other New Yorkers with having prevented Pierce's reelection because he knew that they would never sanction sale of Cowdray's interest in the Tehuantepec Railroad to the Mexican National Railways. Cowdray stated he knew nothing about the election, nor had he in any way interfered with it. He was, however, determined to end these attacks.

On November 22 Cowdray cabled the company general manager in Mexico City, Thomas J. Ryder, and asked him to advise Galbraith that Pierce's campaign against him must stop. Ryder was to tell him that

we could not be fiends in Mexico and allow him-- Clay Pierce--to do his damndest [sic] to injure us throughout the States and with the Constitutionalists in particular. I also asked him to say that unless C. P. is prepared to be friends all round, we will break the arrangement now existing--which was made at his request--and go for as much of the Domestic Trade as it is possible for us to obtain, regardless of the price we may obtain, and Mr. C. Pierce is not, I consider, in a position at the

⁶ Lord Cowdray to Dr. Hayes and Mr. Ryder, Memorandum, November 25, 1913, copy in Cowdray Papers. The Aguila Company was the Mexican Eagle Oil Company.

present time to stand a rate war. It strikes me therefore that proper representations . . . to Mr. Galbraith may be very useful.⁷

The adverse effect of the anti-Cowdray propaganda on the Mexican Eagle Oil Company was clearly evident in the Constitutional campaign in the state of Veracruz during the fall and winter of 1913.

The loss of Torreón and the dissolution of the Mexican Congress led Cowdray in mid-October to express his anxiety "that the lives and properties of foreigners will be seriously jeopardised." He was confident, however, that such fears would not materialize unless the United States intervened, but he was also glad that the Mexican Eagle Oil Company's holdings were near the Gulf coast and could be protected in the event of trouble.⁸

The most important of the company properties were located in the northern part of the state of Veracruz in the vicinity of Tampico and Tuxpam. The northernmost area known as the Pánuco District was about twenty-five miles southwest of the port city, Tampico, and was centered on the Pánuco River. Oil reached the refinery, storage tanks, and loading facilities at Tampico by pipeline and barge. The other major area, the Dos Bocas-Alamo District, was a

⁷Ibid., in which Cowdray notes his cable to Ryder of November 22.

⁸Cowdray to Dr. C. W. Hayes, October 18, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

narrow belt, about one mile wide, that formed a crescent stretching some forty miles from Dos Bocas on the Tamiahua Lagoon to Alamo on the Tuxpam River about twenty miles west of the city of Tuxpam. Since the shoreline was so shallow in this region, pipelines were constructed from the fields to points a mile or more offshore where loading operations were conducted.⁹ Fighting in this region had been sporadic during the summer and early fall.¹⁰

The presence of large bands of rebels in the vicinity of Tuxpam, and reports of the movement of others south from Monterrey in late October prompted the Oil Fields of Mexico Company at Cobos, just across the river from Tuxpam, to request that a war vessel be sent to the area. Admiral Fletcher dispatched the USS Tacoma from Veracruz on October 23 to render assistance and protection to the Americans

⁹Garfias, Petroleum Resources, 26-33. In December 1913, the oil region was thus described: "Tampico-Tuxpam oil fields 2000 square miles, 120 million American and 105 million foreign capital, 41 companies, 13 large and numerous small camps, 103 producing oil wells, 52,000 barrels daily, 241 oil storage tanks in 20 localities and 250 miles pipe line." Admiral F. F. Fletcher, Commander Detached Squadron, Tampico, Mexico, to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 5, 1913, National Archives Record Group 45 (hereafter cited as NA RG 45).

¹⁰Juan Barragán Rodríguez, Historia del ejército y de la Revolución Constitucionalista (2 vols.; México: Talleres de la Editorial Stylo, 1946), I, 329-30; N. C. Twining, commanding USS Tacoma, Off Tuxpam, Mexico, to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), October 26, 1913, SDP, reported that no American property had been destroyed or endangered at Tuxpam since July 3, 1913, but a force of 700 rebels was reported about 25 miles from Tuxpam on October 26.

there, although it was shortly withdrawn when the immediate threat to that town seemed to pass.¹¹ Nevertheless, the revolutionary activity was particularly disturbing because it was feared that the oil tanks and plants at Tampico and Tuxpam belonging to several American companies, as well as those of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company, offered a great temptation to the rebels to set them afire. This would, of course, not only pose a threat to the oil fields but to the nearby cities as well.

Bryan decided that perhaps the best way to handle the problem would be to issue appropriate warnings to the Constitutionalist Chief. Therefore, he directed Frederick Simpich, the American consul at Nogales, to inform Carranza "that if the soldiers are acting under his direction we shall expect him to prevent such destruction of property. Willful damage of this kind would not only arouse indignation but might compel this Government to put forth special efforts to protect life and property that might be endangered." Carranza replied that he discredited reports

¹¹F. F. Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), October 23, 1913, SDP; Percy N. Furber, President of Oil Fields of Mexico Company, had requested O'Shaughnessy to apply for the vessel. Furber had also wired Lord Cowdray on October 20, asking that he request the United States to send a warship to Tuxpam on behalf of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company. He was advised that the matter should be taken up with Dr. Hayes, the company's representative in Mexico. See J. B. Body to Percy N. Furber, November 6, 1913, Cowdray Papers; Furber to Josephus Daniels, Secretary of Navy, November 10, 1913, Box 64, Daniels Papers.

that the Constitutionalists would set fire to the oil tanks but promised that he would instruct his forces in the area to afford adequate protection for Americans and their property.¹² Carranza's guarantee said nothing about foreign oil holdings.

The climax to the rebel buildup in the Dos Bocas-Alamo District came on the night of November 10, when the forces under the command of Constitutionalist General Candido Aguilar attacked Tuxpam. Admiral Fletcher in response to appeals from Arthur Payne, the American consular agent, sent the USS Wheeling and the USS Louisiana to Tuxpam on the same day to provide protection for the Americans there.¹³ Knowledge that the United States had sent ships to Tuxpam to assist Americans prompted the directors of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company to appeal to Ambassador Page for the protection of their property. Page informed them that the United States could not in any way be responsible

¹²Bryan to American Consul (Nogales), November 4, 1913; Wilbur J. Carr, State Department to Miller (Tampico), November 14, 1913, SDP.

¹³Admiral Fletcher to the Secretary of the Navy (Operations), November 13, 1913, SDP, is a summary of the situation in Mexico from October 30 to November 13, 1913. Candido Aguilar was a native of Córdoba, Veracruz. He had been a Maderista and was General of Division in the Constitutionalist army. After the triumph of the Constitutionalists he held several posts including that of Secretary of Foreign Relations and later governor of the state of Veracruz. See Francisco Naranjo, Diccionario Biográfico Revolucionario (México: Imprenta Editorial "Cosmos," 1935), 17.

for damage to British property in Mexico, but he said that he would forward the request to the State Department. Upon receipt of Page's wire, Bryan instructed Clarence A. Miller, the Consul at Tampico to do everything in his power to provide protection for the property of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company and for all other foreign property as well.¹⁴ Such instructions were merely in keeping with the policy which the United States had followed in regard to similar appeals for some months.

The outbreak of the revolution in Mexico City the previous February, had posed serious threats to foreigners all over Mexico. On February 12 Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson notified the Secretary of State that upon application he had instructed the consuls at ports where United States warships were located to afford protection for German citizens. Knox informed the Ambassador that assistance should be extended to all foreigners without restriction, and Wilson was told to modify his instructions to the consuls accordingly. Navy regulations at the time, however, did not provide for such a contingency, and special orders had to be issued to the naval officers in

¹⁴Page to Secretary of State, November 13, 1913; Bryan to American Consul (Tampico), November 15, 1913; Bryan to American Embassy (London), November 15, 1913; Edward Bell, Second Secretary of Embassy (London), to Lieutenant Colonel A. B. Bathurst, M. P., November 17, 1913, SDP, advising that his request for protection of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company's property had been granted.

Mexican waters. After this the United States, on numerous occasions throughout 1913 and 1914, offered to provide aid for foreigners in Mexico where possible.¹⁵

Aguilar's initial attacks upon Tuxpam failed to take the town, and within a few days Federal reinforcements from Veracruz forced him to withdraw his army and establish his headquarters at the Tanguijo camp of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company. He planned to control the oil fields and to collect the revenues which the companies were paying to the Mexican government. These firms were expected to make large advance payments, and were notified by the rebels that their properties would be destroyed if the demands were not met, or if they requested Federal troops. In addition, Aguilar hoped to stop delivery of oil to the railroads. Miller at Tampico was convinced that Aguilar could carry out his threats as he had several thousand men in the district and was soon expected to more than double his army. Bryan renewed his warning to Carranza about the destruction of the oil holdings, but in the meantime Aguilar attempted to blackmail the Mexican Eagle

¹⁵For the United States instructions for the protection of British, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish subjects and interests, see U. S., Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1913] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 896-923; ibid., Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States [1914] (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 784-900 (hereafter cited as Foreign Relations 1914).

Oil Company.¹⁶

The company was directed to make an advance war tax payment of two hundred thousand pesos and to agree not to deliver any more oil to the government railroads. It was also to pay twenty-five thousand pesos monthly and agree not to appeal for aid from the Mexican government. The company was given ten days in which to meet these demands, but until the negotiations were completed the company's pipelines would be shut down. Aguilar was represented as pretending to desire to protect American property, but he was said to be very bitter toward the British, and especially the Mexican Eagle Oil Company, because of his belief that the company had been instrumental in securing English recognition of the Huerta government.¹⁷ Even before Aguilar's threats were known to Lord Cowdray he had become very much concerned about the company's property in Mexico.

On November 13 Lord Cowdray sent an urgent message to Ryder asking him to ascertain conditions at Tampico and Tuxpam and to advise London. Ryder reported the following day "everything all right at Tuxpam Bar up to Wednesday

¹⁶William C. Canada, United States Consul (Veracruz), to Secretary of State, November 17, 1913; Bryan to American Consul (Tampico), November 18, 1913; ibid (Nogales), November 20, 1913, SDP.

¹⁷Canada to Secretary of State, November 17, 1913, SDP.

night [November 12], tankers being loaded and despatched by Customs now located at Bar. Tuxpam bankers and all money safe on ships at Bar. Federal reinforcements expected." He also forwarded a wire from Dr. Hayes, company vice-president, stating that two company employees had gone to the camp at Tanquijo to confer with Aguilar, who had demanded a meeting with company representatives. Hayes said that the rebels had ordered all the company operations suspended, including pumping stations and pipelines, and he urged that the Mexican government send at least one thousand troops immediately. Later in the day, Ryder advised that the lines connecting Mexico City with Tampico and Tuxpam had been cut and that communications with Tuxpam were available only through the United States battleships there. On November 16 another company employee, A. E. Chambers, cabled that the arrival of the United States warships had undoubtedly been a major factor in preventing rebel excesses against foreigners and their property.

Lind who had been watching the situation quite closely notified Bryan on November 14 that Lord Cowdray's representatives were appealing for assistance and that he had suggested that they call on Carden if they wanted quick and efficient help. This they did and Carden, who had delayed his request for British warships as long as he thought advisable, asked the Foreign Office to send

two, one for Tampico and the other for Puerto México.¹⁸

It would, however, take several days before the Admiralty could get the ships to Mexico since they were being sent from the British West Indies. As before, the British again turned to the United States.

Grey wired Spring-Rice and asked that he inform the United States government that the ships were enroute, but until their arrival it was hoped that the American vessels would extend such protection as possible to British subjects. Spring-Rice was also to impress upon the United States the importance of timely notice in the event of American intervention so that persons living in outlying areas could reach safety. The British Embassy forwarded a memorandum to this effect to the State Department on November 19, and John Bassett Moore advised that the communication would be sent to the President. He gave assurances that in the absence of the British ships the United States would continue its policy of safeguarding British citizens. Moore said that adequate notice to warn persons would be given if possible, but no one knew exactly what was going to happen at the present time. The British request was forwarded to the President, who

¹⁸Thomas J. Ryder to Lord Cowdray, cable, November 14, 1913, and letter, November 14, 1913; A. E. Chambers to Lord Cowdray, November 16, 1913, Cowdray Papers; Lind to Bryan, November 14, 1913, SDP; Carden to Grey, November 17, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO.

endorsed Moore's course of action.¹⁹

Lind who was continually critical of Carden attempted to further prejudice Bryan and the President about the British request for assistance. He wired on November 19 that if Carden had his way he would prefer at least three months advance notice of any action contemplated by the United States. Lind was of the opinion that Carden "has had ample notice if he chose to understand what I said in our last conversation." From all appearances Lind was convinced that United States intervention would take place momentarily. No doubt he had intimated as much because a few days later Carden told O'Shaughnessy that the American ships at Tampico had orders to land marines. Lind, on the other hand, did not approve of the idea that the British might land forces upon the arrival of their warships and he suggested to Bryan that the American naval commanders be given adequate orders to preclude such

¹⁹Carden to Grey, November 17, 1913, F.O. 204/419; Grey to Spring-Rice, November 18, 1913, F.O. 371/1678; Spring-Rice to Grey, November 19, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO; British Embassy, Washington, Memorandum, November 19, 1913, SDP, interestingly enough this memorandum is dated November 19, but is date stamped in Moore's office, November 18; A condensed version of the British memorandum is included in Foreign Relations 1914, 840-41; John Bassett Moore to the President, November 19, 1913, copy in Moore Papers; Woodrow Wilson to John Bassett Moore, November 21, 1913, copy in Letterbooks 8 and 9, Wilson Papers, Firestone Library, Princeton University. British Embassy to State Department, November 26, 1913, SDP, thanking the United States for the assurances given.

a possibility.²⁰ Later on the same day, Lind tried to build an even tighter case against Carden.

He forwarded a verbatim report made to the Associated Press at Veracruz by a local citizen. When two of the brothers of the late President Madero recently had been arrested and thrown in the dungeon at Veracruz, a highly respected Englishman, whose sister had married one of the Madero brothers, called on Carden to get the British to intercede on their behalf. They were, the Englishman told Carden, guilty of no offense against the Huerta government, but he feared for their lives. Carden informed him that because of the political situation and the relationship between Great Britain and Mexico he would not intervene on behalf of a Mexican citizen. But, the report continued, a new condition had arisen and it would be interesting to see if Carden would continue this neutral policy. Now the property of Lord Cowdray's Mexican Eagle Oil Company was threatened by the rebels. "Will Carden continue to say that the relations between his Government and the present Government of Mexico are such that he cannot make any representations in behalf of a Mexican citizen when the relations of that citizen to Englishmen is one of

²⁰Lind to Secretary of State, November 19, 1913, Wilson Papers; O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, November 23, 1913; Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), November 24, 1913, SDP; Bryan denied in his message of November 24 that any order had been given to land marines.

pounds and shillings and not one of . . . blood? . . . Will he solve it?" Lind hardly needed to add the postscript to the story.²¹ On the very day that this report was received, Sir Edward Grey made a second request of President Wilson.

The British Foreign Secretary informed Spring-Rice that he had been besieged with urgent requests from both British and Canadian concessionaires with forty million pounds or more invested in various enterprises in Mexico. The investors, Grey said, wanted two things: that the United States government make it clear that they would see things through in Mexico and not merely starve Huerta out without intending to insure that Mexico eventually receives better government, and that property will be protected. Grey had informed the investors that he understood the entire purpose of the United States actions in Mexico was to bring about better government there. But, Grey believed, a public announcement by the United States that it intended to see things through "would undoubtedly help credit and enable some of these commercial interests, which are of most legitimate character and old standing, to survive through the bad times." Grey's earlier request for protection of British property was also re-

²¹Lind to the Secretary of State, November 19, 1913, Wilson Papers.

peated.²² Sir William Tyrrell forwarded this request to Wilson by letter on November 21.

The President replied on November 22, indicating a willingness to do what Grey desired, but he was hesitant because such announcements were invariably met with de-finance or irritation by Huerta and Carranza. Thus, whatever negotiations were underway were usually handicapped. Wilson was adamant in regard to Huerta's retirement, which he thought would enable Mexico to secure better government. Business would be safer than ever as a result. He then reiterated the promises already made to safeguard all foreigners in Mexico when possible, and even quoted a statement from Aguilar guaranteeing the protection of all domestic and foreign oil properties. Sir Edward was authorized to inform those concerned about the President's views.²³ Wilson's reply was cabled to Grey on November 23.²⁴

Grey's message, along with a request from Germany that it be informed of what he planned to do, prompted

²² Grey to Spring-Rice, November 19, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

²³ Woodrow Wilson to Sir William Tyrrell, November 22, 1913, Wilson Papers. A copy of Tyrrell's letter to the President, November 21, 1913, has to this writer's knowledge never been uncovered. The references to Wilson's letter of November 22 to Tyrrell have invariably set this letter in entirely the wrong context.

²⁴ Spring-Rice to Grey, November 23, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO; Tyrrell to President Wilson, November 26, 1913, Wilson Papers.

President Wilson to make his most definitive policy statement in regard to Mexico. It will be recalled that the President had promised some such announcement even before the October 26 Mexican elections. Statements made between then and November 24 were usually quoted as interim pending publication of the formal policy announcement. The declaration was entitled "Our purposes in Mexico," and was sent to most of the major countries in the world.

The statement held that it was the purpose of the United States to secure orderly and peaceful self-government in Central America. Usurpers fostered lawlessness which jeopardized lives, business, and credit. The United States was determined to stamp out such usurpations. Wilson hoped to isolate Huerta by cutting off all foreign and domestic aid to him and thus force his resignation. If this did not work, other means would be used. Should it become necessary, the United States would give advance notice of its intentions, although nothing on this order was presently contemplated. It was believed that if this plan was followed whenever such instances occurred, that it would tend to discourage future usurpations. The United States did not intend to secure any special privileges for its own citizens in Mexico or anywhere else, but would instead be a "consistent champion of the Open Door." It would within the limits of circumstances do

whatever was possible to protect the lives and property of all foreigners, as if they belonged to the United States.²⁵ There were not, of course, any significant new sentiments expressed. Huerta was still to be eliminated, and the United States did not plan to profit by intervention if that became necessary. Foreign reaction was somewhat indifferent, the tune had a familiar ring.

While the official negotiations between Grey and Wilson were underway, Lord Cowdray made a direct appeal to Ambassador Page on behalf of the threatened oil properties. Page wired Bryan on November 19, informing him about Aguilar's threats and the rumors that rebel destruction of British property would not be severely condemned by the United States. Cowdray, Page said, asked that United States ships be notified to warn the rebels that such acts would not be condoned.²⁶ As a result,

²⁵Bryan to all embassies, except Turkey and Mexico, and to European legations, Belgium, Netherland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal, November 24, 1913, SDP. Page's copy came by way of Paris and was received in London on November 26; Page to Grey, November 26, 1913, SDP, forwarded a copy to the British Foreign Secretary. This policy statement of November 24, parallels many of Wilson's remarks to Tyrrell on November 13. Tyrrell to Grey, November 14, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO.

²⁶Page to Secretary of State, November 19, 1913, SDP; the message from the British consul at Tampico had been transmitted from the USS Rhode Island at Veracruz to Sir Lionel Carden in Mexico City on November 14, see Admiral Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 5, 1913, NA RG 45. This no doubt prompted Carden to ask for the two British ships, one for Tampico area and the other for Puerto México. Carden to Grey, November 17, 1913, F.O. 204/419, PRO.

Admiral Fletcher was instructed to inform Aguilar that "destruction of these great foreign industrial properties wantonly or in revenge could not be regarded by us with indifference, and cannot fail to be attended with the most unfortunate results."²⁷

Aguilar received the Department's instructions by telephone on November 20, and that evening replied that "I am governing on a constitutional basis my attitude being to guarantee the interests of all foreign and domestic oil corporations existing in the region I occupy fulfilling in this manner the demands of civilization and not being governed in my acts by caprice or vengeance."²⁸ However, the Mexican Eagle Oil Company was not taking any

²⁷Blue [Rear Admiral Victor Blue] to Flag Officer [Admiral Fletcher], USS Rhode Island, November 19, 1913, NA RG 45; Bryan to American Embassy (London), November 19, 1913, SDP, advising Page that appropriate instructions to the Navy had been sent; Walter H. Page to Lord Cowdray, November 20, 1913, Cowdray Papers, informing him of the action by the United States government; that the Navy was a stickler for detail was noted when the request from the State Department arrived without signature. Although the action requested was taken, the following day the Navy Department sent a letter to the Secretary of State, "In order that the official records showing the reasons for these important instructions should be complete and authentic, it is requested that a signed confirmation of the note under acknowledgment be transmitted to this Department," Franklin D. Roosevelt, Acting Secretary of the Navy, to the Secretary of State, November 20, 1913, SDP. The note was duly confirmed, J. B. Moore, State Department Counselor to the Secretary of Navy, November 26, 1913, SDP.

²⁸Admiral Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 5, 1913, NA RG 45, this report is a summary of the situation in Mexico from November 13 to December 5, 1913.

chances.

While the company was unwilling to make any payments not absolutely necessary, it did pay the rebels ten thousand pesos which was undoubtedly a condition upon which it was permitted to return to work. On November 20 the company by agreement with General Aguilar resumed operations until the 24th, which was the deadline for conclusion of the negotiations. Miller, the consul at Tampico, advised the company to refuse further payments, and sent the rebel commander word that Admiral Fletcher had ten warships and complete authority to use them to protect foreign lives and property if necessary. He also told Aguilar that he had informed the company to remain absolutely neutral and not to pay any more war taxes. When Dr. Hayes notified Lord Cowdray of the consul's advice, Cowdray replied that it was appreciated but it was better to pay than risk destruction of the company property.²⁹

On November 23, the Navy Department directed Admiral Fletcher to go to Tuxpam and Tampico and to evalu-

²⁹Canada to Secretary of State, November 21, two dispatches dated November 22, 1913, SDP. Admiral Fletcher reported the amount paid as 12,000 pesos. Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 5, 1913, NA RG 45. Dr. Hayes to Lord Cowdray, November 23, 1913; Lord Cowdray's reply is undated but attached to Hayes' wire; A. Nicolaus, Pearson agent in Veracruz, to Lord Cowdray, November 25, 1913, forwarding Hayes' message of November 24, Cowdray Papers.

ate the situation personally. He was accompanied by Governor Lind. After a brief stop at Tuxpam, he reached Tampico early on the morning of November 26. That afternoon he met with Miller and Hayes. Aguilar's insistence that no oil be furnished the Mexican railroads, the demand of 200,000 pesos in war taxes, and his warning that the company was not to request Federal troops were discussed. After Aguilar had received Miller's and Fletcher's warnings he agreed to defer the payment of the war tax, but insisted that the two other requirements must be met. Fletcher considered these immaterial. In consequence of this meeting the Admiral cabled Washington that, while the presence of the rebels was a disturbing factor, all of the oil plants were back in operation. He was, Fletcher said, pretty well assured that Aguilar would not carry out his threats against the oil companies, although he might make an attempt to take Tampico. In such an event, the Admiral reported, he had worked out the steps he would take with the local Federal Commander, General Ignacio Morelos Zaragoza to protect life and foreign property.³⁰

In the meantime, Carranza answered Bryan's repre-

³⁰Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 5, 1913, NA RG 45. The Admiral's reports refer to the Federal commander at Tampico as General Zaragoza; It should be Morelos Zaragoza, see Robert E. Quirk, An Affair of Honor: Woodrow Wilson and the Occupation of Veracruz (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1962), 7.

sentations in regard to the foreign oil holdings. The Constitutionalist acknowledged receipt of the complaints made to the United States government by the English oil company. It stated that the Constitutionalist commanders had been instructed to make provision for the protection of the property and lives of all foreigners, but the rebel chief refused to permit the delivery of any oil to the railroads. It was imperative to the successful conduct of the war, the answer stated, to prevent such resources from reaching the Federals. The Constitutionalist agreed, however, to recognize any proven losses suffered by the oil companies. Therefore, they were instructed to prepare damage claims to be presented at the appropriate time. But it was stipulated that only those claims arising from United States citizens should be submitted through the United States government. Suits from other foreigners should be forwarded through their respective governments.³¹ The only real problem then was for the companies to promise not to deliver oil to the railroads.

Dr. Hayes wired Lord Cowdray on November 27 that

³¹Frederick Simpich, American Consul (Nogales), to the Secretary of State, November 22, 1913, SDP. The Constitutionalist replies were made by Francisco Escudero, the Secretary of Foreign Relations, two dispatches dated November 21, 1913, SDP, in answer to Bryan's messages of November 17, 18, 20, 1913, SDP. Escudero's replies in Spanish and the English translations are in the SDP.

the rebels had agreed to permit the company to continue operating if it would guarantee not to furnish fuel oil to any Mexican railway as long as the rebels controlled the oil fields. Cowdray replied that such a guarantee should be made without hesitation, and the Mexican Railway office was informed that because of the Constitutionalist's demands deliveries would be discontinued.³²

To relieve the tension in the oil fields Admiral Fletcher, Miller, and Hayes, agreed to send an intermediary to see General Aguilar and to request him to withdraw his soldiers from the immediate vicinity of the oil camps. During the subsequent conference the Constitutionalist General's demands were adjusted to the satisfaction of the company, and he again gave assurances that no oil properties would be injured. By December 3 practically all of the rebel troops had been withdrawn from the camps proper, although they remained nearby. Admiral Fletcher reported, however, that Aguilar was still trying to get the companies to make payments.³³

A few days later Miller notified the State Department that Aguilar had withdrawn his demands for payment of a war tax, but was insisting that he needed money to pay his troops. The requests for this purpose were being made verbally to the oil companies, particularly the

³²T. J. Ryder to Lord Cowdray, November 28, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

³³Fletcher to the Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 5, 1913, NA RG 45.

Mexican Eagle Oil Company with instructions that they should not notify the American consul, Admiral Fletcher, or Governor Lind. Miller believed that in spite of the companies' denials, they were actually making some payments, and would probably continue to do so as long as Aguilar was able to pressure them.³⁴ But the major threat to the oil fields seemed over. Huerta was, however, still President of Mexico in spite of Wilson's announced determination to force him out.

On December 2, after his ultimatums to Huerta had proved ineffective, Wilson went before Congress and in his annual message said, in part, that Huerta;

has forfeited the respect and the moral support even of those who were at one time willing to see him succeed. Little by little he has been completely isolated. By a little every day his power and prestige are crumbling and the collapse is not far away. We shall not, I believe, be obliged to alter our policy of watchful waiting. And then, when the end comes, we shall hope to see constitutional order restored in distressed Mexico by the concert and energy of such of her leaders as prefer the liberty of their people to their own ambitions.³⁵

This announcement did not comport with his stated intention to Grey of forcing the Mexican President from office. It merely confirmed the fears of those businessmen who had appealed to Grey in the first place. Wilson was going to

³⁴Canada to Secretary of State, December 6, 1913, SDP.

³⁵U. S., Congressional Record, 63d Cong., 2d Sess., 44.

starve Huerta out. In an interview with Page, Cowdray showed his distress about the situation, explaining that "things could not be allowed to drift as they were."³⁶

The rebels remained in nominal control of the area throughout December and January, although they were unable to completely shut off the supply of fuel oil to the railroads. By early December the Federal garrisons at Tampico and Tuxpam had been strengthened and they were able to hold out against the Constitutionalist efforts to take them. When Tampico finally fell in April 1914, it was to United States forces and not to the rebels.

Lord Cowdray's success in the oil industry in Mexico had made him and the Mexican Eagle Oil Company the targets of a vicious propaganda campaign. One result of this effort was to discredit him in the eyes of the Constitutionalist. For the rebels, however, revenge was perhaps the least important reason for their activities in northern Veracruz. Control of the oil fields, stoppage of fuel oil to the Federal railroads, and money were Aguilar's major objectives. The General's efforts were seriously handicapped by the presence of a sizeable fleet of United States warships charged with protecting the oil properties. Conditions appeared so bad that the British

³⁶ Lord Cowdray, Memorandum of conversation with Ambassador Page, marked "strictly private and confidential," January 9, 1914, Cowdray Papers.

finally decided to send their own ships to Mexican waters. Grey had attempted to get Wilson to commit himself publicly to a firm policy that would end the Mexican imbroglio without a long period of anarchy. Seemingly the President was determined to follow through on his threat to force Huerta out, if not by peaceful means then by whatever measures were required. But by December 2 his resolve to take forcible action had melted, and he was content to play a waiting game. Lord Cowdray no doubt reflected the general attitude of the foreign businessmen in his frustration at this policy of "watchful drifting."

Wilson proved to be his own worst enemy. He threatened and then did nothing. His policy of containing the rebel offensive in the oil fields was very helpful to Huerta's forces. It permitted the Federals to strengthen their garrisons in Tuxpam and Tampico and unquestionably saved those two key cities from rebel occupation. The loss of Tampico, an important oil center, with its port facilities and customs houses would have been a severe blow to Huerta. Thus, Wilson's concern for the protection of foreign properties had helped defeat his major objective, Huerta's elimination. He had rejected Huerta's offer through Carden of a negotiated retirement, and Huerta had done the same to Wilson's demands. All that was left was intervention. But the President could not bring himself to make this decision, at least not without greater provo-

cation.

Before the year 1913 came to a close, another diplomatic encounter between the United States and Great Britain was to ensue. This one would involve the recently arrived Rear Admiral, Sir Christopher George Francis Maurice Cradock, who commanded the British Fourth Cruiser Squadron.

CHAPTER X

FLETCHER VERSUS CRADOCK

The dispatch of the two British cruisers under the command of Rear Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock presaged a new round of diplomatic controversy between the United States and Great Britain. The HMS Berwich was directed to Puerto México, south of Veracruz, while the HMS Suffolk flying the flag of Rear Admiral Cradock arrived at Tampico on November 26, just a few hours after Admiral Fletcher and Governor Lind reached there from Tuxpam.

Fletcher sent his Flag Lieutenant to the HMS Suffolk to arrange for official calls and salutes. Both Fletcher and Cradock were rear admirals, but Cradock having the earlier date of rank was the senior officer. According to British Admiralty regulations it was Fletcher's place to fire the first salute and make the first call. But according to United States naval regulations since Fletcher was first in port and of the same rank, it was Cradock's responsibility to do the honors. Cradock conceded and during their conversations he brought up the point of his seniority. He informed Fletcher that

compromise was out of the question, "he must be senior in all things or in none." It was customary that when a fleet composed of the naval vessels of different countries operated together they did so under the senior officer. The situation could have been embarrassing to the United States if Cradock assumed command, but he agreed to waive his seniority. After that Fletcher expected no difficulty unless other foreign officers refused to accept his leadership or if the British Admiralty disapproved of Cradock's action. Fletcher was of the opinion that the other naval commanders would follow his orders.¹ Temporarily at least that problem was amicably resolved, although the situation had again aroused Lind's suspicions of British policy in Mexico.

The governor reminded Bryan that he had asked him some time earlier to give the American naval officers sufficient instructions that would preclude the landing of marines by the British. He was convinced that England planned to take the initiative in that respect, if it became necessary to land troops. The sending of an officer senior to the American admiral was, in his opinion, no

¹Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 5, 1913, National Archives Record Group 45 (hereafter cited as NA RG 45); Capehart, USS Michigan, to Secretary of the Navy, November 26, 1913, SDP, forwarding a copy of Fletcher's report of same date. Cradock was promoted to rear admiral September 5, 1910, Fletcher on October 17, 1911.

mistake especially after Cradock immediately raised the question of his seniority. It was, he believed, England's intention to control the naval operations there. Lind gave Fletcher credit for tactfully getting Cradock to yield, but he did not attend the conference "for obvious reasons." Having just received a copy of President Wilson's November 24 statement of purpose Lind concluded that the pronouncement gave Fletcher whatever right he needed to demand that the British admiral yield anyway.² The seniority question, according to Colonel House, resulted in the only unpleasant incident in Tyrrell's visit to the United States.

On November 30, just a few days before Tyrrell left to return to England, he met Harry Payne Whitney, a New York financier and businessman. Whitney was particularly offensive in his comments about Cradock's having waived his seniority to Admiral Fletcher. "It was," House recorded, "an act of courtesy upon the British Admiral's part, and was probably suggested by his Government, all of which made Whitney's remarks the more discourteous."³

²Canada to Secretary of State, November 27, 1913, SDP, relaying Lind's message to Bryan of November 26. Lind to Bryan, December 14, 1913, Wilson Papers; George M. Stephenson, John Lind of Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1935), 248-50.

³House Diary, December 2, 1913. House was not correct in his surmise that the British government had suggested that Cradock place himself second in command to Fletcher as will be noted subsequently.

The experience in no way effected Tyrrell's apparent high regard for the United States.

During Cradock's short stay at Tampico, an incident occurred which showed how sensitive he was about minor matters. Dr. Hayes, of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company, paid a visit to Admiral Fletcher on November 26, but failed to call on Admiral Cradock. Later during a conversation with Fred Adams, an engineer with the company, Cradock brought up the slight by Hayes. He asked Adams if the company looked to him or to the United States for protection. Adams was advised by the home office that the company looked to both the British and American admirals for protection. Their personnel, he was reminded, were more American than British, but the property was more British than American. Therefore, it was expected that both navies would assume such responsibility. Privately, Adams was informed that the Foreign Office stated that the British ships had definite instructions to protect British lives and property to the fullest extent.⁴

Cradock sailed for Veracruz and arrived there on November 28, where he reported that he had received a most cordial welcome from the Mexican authorities. In his report to the Admiralty he briefly referred to the United States, "American policy vague. America un-

⁴Adams to Lord Cowdray, December 1, 1913; J. B. Body to Fred Adams, December 2, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

popular but am working in full accord with American Admiral. . . ." ⁵ The lull in the fighting gave the admiral an opportunity to make a trip to Mexico City to visit Carden, but he did not plan to remain more than a couple of days. He reached Mexico City on the last day of November.

The first two days were spent calling on the ministers of the various countries, and on December 2, accompanied by Carden, he was officially received by President Huerta. The reception lasted for an hour and a half and Cradock seemed pleased at its extremely cordial nature. During the conversation the President

spoke much of England's past and present greatness, and dwelt on the great possibilities of his own country. Politics were not touched upon, with the exception that he frequently expressed a wish that the present trouble would come to an end and the country could be at rest. . . . Without my expressing any political views or opinions whatever, one could not get away from the quite apparent delight at the arrival of a British admiral in Mexican waters and at his presence in their capital. ⁶

That afternoon Carden and Cradock visited the United States Chargé d'affaires, Nelson O'Shaughnessy.

Their call was brief and formal, and if the Chargé

⁵Cradock to Admiralty, November 29, 1913, F.O. 371/1678, PRO; Canada to Secretary of State, November 28, 1913, SDP, reporting the arrival of the HMS Suffolk.

⁶Cradock to Admiralty, December 3, 1913, F.O. 371/2025, PRO.

was not impressed by the British Admiral and his aide in full uniform, Edith O'Shaughnessy, his wife, certainly was. She later recorded:

Yesterday, at four o'clock, Sir Lionel and Sir Christopher Cradock were announced. When I went downstairs, a few minutes later, I found my drawing-room a blaze of afternoon sun, setting off to perfection twice six feet or more of Royal British navy--Sir Christopher and his aide, Cavendish, resplendent in full uniform. They had just come from calling on Huerta in state, at the Palace. I was really dazzled for the first moment. Sir Christopher is a singularly handsome man, regular of feature, and of distinguished bearing. His aide, equally tall and slender, a younger silhouette of himself, was standing by his side. Britannia re-splendens! Sir Christopher was evidently very interested in seeing, at first hand, the situation he is to 'observe' from the vantage of Vera Cruz. After a lively half-hour he was borne off by Sir L. for visits at the legations, and comparative darkness fell upon the room.⁷

Nelson O'Shaughnessy was not as influenced as his wife, but was a little suspicious of the fact that the Admiral and the British Minister had just called on General Huerta in full uniform, making it a very formal occasion.⁸

That evening Cradock and O'Shaughnessy sat next to each other at a dinner given by the German Minister, Paul von Hintze. According to the Admiral, O'Shaughnessy expressed himself quite freely on the Mexican situation.

⁷Edith O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1916), 72. She gives a rather complete rundown on Cradock's social activities during his visit to the capital, 72-75.

⁸O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, December 2, 1913, SDP.

He indicated a desire to pay Cradock an official visit at Veracruz, although he would have to make the trip down and back the same day. The Admiral was of the opinion that this somewhat unusual offer was intended to show the Mexican people that Great Britain was in full accord with and favored the American policy. The Chargé appeared not to be impressed by the Mexicans fighting ability, and told Cradock: "Anyhow, Admiral, the Anglo-Saxon race will muddle through somehow."

The next afternoon after having spent nearly four days in the capital, Cradock reported his views on what he had heard and seen there. The information which he forwarded to London was gleaned from conversations with the diplomats in Mexico City, particularly the European and Japanese officials. Cradock stated:

To me the situation appears absolutely "without light," and beyond the generally-expressed hope that something may turn up, there appears to be no definite point of aim. The undefined American policy of "waiting" (apparently to serve their own aims with the view to possible occupation of the country some day), and their inexplicit, wordy, and, I may almost say, blustering attitude, is doing manifest incalculable damage to Mexico, which is "standing still." I do not think there is any immediate danger to life here or in the coast towns, unless through American action it becomes necessary for Huerta to withdraw his troops from the capital. Should this occur, it would probably go hard with Mexico city, inaccessibly situated as it is 250 miles from the coast, with a destroyed railway.⁹

⁹Cradock to Admiralty, December 3, 1913, F.O. 371/2025, PRO.

Before returning to Veracruz, Cradock discussed the matter of local defense with the foreign colony. If necessity required a wireless radio link between Mexico City and Veracruz would be established, and arrangements were made so that on the slightest pretext a Maxim gun and ammunition could be sent to the British legation. Cradock reported that he had no intention of landing any men unless a real emergency threatened. He said that he overheard Huerta's private secretary talking to one of the European ministers, and it was intimated that the General would not object to the landing of men by any of the European countries, but such action by the United States might lead to serious consequences. The Admiral felt that now that he had become acquainted with Carden's views, he hoped to be able to perform his mission with greater dispatch.¹⁰

O'Shaughnessy reported that Cradock's visit had given the Huerta government the feeling that the situation was not hopeless. He stated that he had proposed the trip to Veracruz to call on Cradock to offset the impression that the foreign nations were sending their warships to Mexico in protest to the presence of the United States fleet in Mexican territorial waters in spite of the desire of the Huerta administration that it be recalled.

¹⁰Ibid.

O'Shaughnessy indicated that the press was constantly playing up the "courtesy" calls of the foreign warships, and the difference in the attitude toward such vessels and those of the United States was very marked. His official reception by the entire foreign fleet anchored at Veracruz, he believed, would help overcome the "illusion which is being exploited to the detriment of our policy here."¹¹ Cradock had divined O'Shaughnessy's purpose accurately.

A few days later, Carden in talking with O'Shaughnessy verged on the insulting in discussing O'Shaughnessy's official status in Mexico. Carden told him that he wanted to pose an official question. O'Shaughnessy readily consented, and the British Minister asked, "Are you really *Chargé d'Affaires* of the United States?" O'Shaughnessy was astonished by the question. He immediately replied that he was, and that Carden had called upon him in that capacity. Even the Mexican government recognized him as such. Carden tried to pass the matter off by stating that Admiral Cradock was a stickler about protocol and it was necessary to be absolutely certain just exactly what O'Shaughnessy's capacity was. The American *Chargé*, however, would not permit the subject to be dropped so lightly and informed Carden that he would

¹¹O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, December 8, 1913, SDP.

have to report the matter to the United States government. In addition, if he did go to Veracruz to see Cradock he must be received in his role as a representative of the United States with the required honors and courtesies tendered by the visiting warships. After O'Shaughnessy had taken exception to Carden's question, the British Minister said, "Oh! Well, of course, you are *Chargé d'Affaires* and it was stupid of me to have brought up the question but, you know these Navy men are very exact in such matters. . . ." ¹²

Cradock's visit to Mexico City in full uniform had one immediate effect. When Lieutenant Colonel Moreton Foley Gage, the British Military attache from Washington reached the Mexican capital after being summoned there by Sir Lionel Carden, he attended a reception given by President Huerta on December 18. Gage wore a morning coat,

¹² Ibid. The O'Shaughnessys did not make their official call at Veracruz until after Lind returned from his conference with President Wilson at Pass Christian, Mississippi, in early January 1914. They left Mexico City on January 7, and did not return until January 11. During the visit O'Shaughnessy was received with the full honors entitled him as *Chargé d'affaires* by the vessels of the foreign powers anchored there. He and his wife were graciously received by Admiral Cradock on his flagship HMS Suffolk, and their departure was thus described by her. "We left about three o'clock. The English use black powder for their salutes and the thirteen guns made a very imposing effect. The ship was enveloped in smoke, a sort of Turneresque effect, making one think of 'Trafalgar,' while the shots reverberated through the harbor." O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 130-41.

having "purposely not brought his uniform, being wary at touching the official note, which might re-echo too loudly in Washington."¹³

By December 9, Cradock had returned to Tampico where defense preparations were underway in expectation of the efforts by the Constitutionlists to take that port city. The British and the German naval commanders were able to charter vessels for the evacuation of their nationals from Tampico should the occasion arise, but no American ships were available for that purpose. As a result, Admiral Fletcher was forced to improvise plans for the protection of Americans in the event of an attack.

He and Miller, the American consul, decided that if it became necessary they would call the Americans into an area around the Customs House which was located near the dock. The USS Tacoma would then be moored alongside to provide what protection possible. Fletcher acknowledged that there were no accommodations and hardly any shelter in the area and that the Americans resented the idea of leaving their houses and hotels. But there was little in the way of an alternative as the American battleships were prevented from entering the river because of the weather.

Both Admiral Cradock and the German Captain Seebohm

¹³O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 85, 101.

seemed anxious to land consular guards, but Fletcher pointed out to them that this might be interpreted as a violation of Mexican territory and could lead to complications. The two foreign naval officers subsequently decided against landing any troops, although Fletcher thought that they might have received such instructions from their governments.

On December 10 Admiral Fletcher sent a letter to both the Federal and Constitutionalist generals stating that the United States forces intended to remain absolutely neutral. In the event of fighting in the city proper he expected ample notice to be given for the evacuation of foreigners. He further informed them of the area near the dock where the Americans would gather if necessary. He expected both sides to respect this area as a neutral zone. Only in the event that civil and military authority broke down would he land troops, and then only to protect the foreign colony from mob action. Fletcher stressed the concern which he felt in regard to the oil properties, and the opposing forces were warned not to direct their artillery fire in the direction of these facilities.

General J. O. Arzamandi, the Federal commander, expressed his satisfaction with Fletcher's promise of neutrality, but stated that since he would easily defeat the rebel forces there was no need for the establishment

of a neutral zone. The reply from J. C. Castro, the rebel general, posed several problems.

Castro confirmed his intention of protecting foreign property, even if the belligerency of the Constitutionalists had not been formally recognized by the United States. However, Castro raised the question of whether or not Fletcher's letter implied de facto recognition because it had invoked the provisions of the Hague Conference. It was, the rebel general contended, his understanding that the belligerency was recognized if they entered into an agreement to abide by the rules laid down by the Hague Conference. As for the neutral zone, Castro wrote, one of the Federal officers was housed in that area and it could only be respected if he was dislodged from his home. Fletcher apparently dodged the question of recognition by not answering Castro's inquiry, since no mention of it was made in the Admiral's report of the incident.¹⁴

When Cradock learned that Fletcher had been in touch with the rebel forces, he considered the action ill-advised. On December 13, after the Constitutionalist threat had subsided momentarily, Cradock reported that "In reply to one of my questions the American admiral ad-

¹⁴Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 16, 1913, NA RG 45. This twenty-one page report is a summary of the situation in Mexico from December 8 to 15, 1913, the various letters and replies referred to are reproduced in this summary.

mitted that he had illegally negotiated direct with rebel leaders. Such action seems illogical, and considering that Tampico is restored to order it is to be regretted. The American admiral seems to desire to land men."¹⁵ Fletcher, however, seemed determined not to send a party ashore if it could be prevented.

Dr. Hayes who had called on Fletcher several times was not at all satisfied with the arrangements to protect the employees of the Mexican Eagle Oil Company in Tampico. The company occupied a large building in town and Hayes had made preparations to barricade and defend the property if circumstances required it. About two hundred people were housed there, some eighty men and a large supply of rifles and ammunition were available. In the event of trouble, Hayes did not like the idea of evacuating the building and moving to the neutral zone specified by Fletcher. He informed the Admiral that if the marines would not be landed to protect the Americans then they would defend themselves. Fletcher reported that as Hayes "showed some feeling I deferred the conversation." Later, the Admiral advised him of the seriousness of civilians engaging armed troops. He admitted that the arrangements were not all that could be desired, but that the American ships would take aboard everybody possible and the rest

¹⁵Cradock to Admiralty, December 13, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO.

would be under the protection of the vessels moored at the dock. If worse came to worst he would send men ashore to protect those in the neutral area.¹⁶ Hayes' disappointment with the situation was quite evident in a wire sent to Mexico City, "Expect no protection foreigners or property from American or British Navy."¹⁷

When Hayes' telegram was shown to Sir Ralph Paget in the Foreign Office, he called it preposterous. The British warships, Paget said, were there to protect lives and had already done so when the SS Logician was chartered and used as a refuge for foreigners. Property was another matter he admitted, but he thought it would receive adequate protection too. The problem arose from the fact that the British did not want to be the first to land marines, precedence there would be given to the United States.¹⁸ Fortunately, that matter was not put to the test although Fletcher on one occasion virtually threatened Cradock that he would send his men ashore.

Cradock had moved the chartered ship, the SS Logician, into a position at the dock which commanded the bridge and all of the approaches to the neutral zone as-

¹⁶Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 16, 1913, NA RG 45.

¹⁷Hayes to Ryder, December 17, 1913. This message is repeated in part in a memorandum by J. B. Body, December 23, 1913, Cowdray Papers.

¹⁸Ibid.

signed by Fletcher for the protection of Americans. Fletcher asked Cradock to move the ship so that he could dock the USS Tacoma and thus, provide some protection for those persons that could not be accommodated aboard the vessels. Cradock replied that he was holding that berth for the HMS Hermoine which would arrive shortly. Since all of the British were already aboard the steamship and it was not possible to bring all of the Americans on board, Fletcher stated that he needed that particular berth to protect those that must remain on shore. If it was not moved, the American Admiral said, it would necessitate his landing marines. Cradock ordered the ship moved and the USS Tacoma took its place. Thus, the British Admiral's accusation that Fletcher appeared to want to land troops probably stemmed from this encounter.¹⁹

Interestingly enough, rumors soon began to circulate in Tampico that Admiral Fletcher had intended to land marines and had ordered the evacuation of all Americans from the city "for a purpose unfriendly to the Federals." It was further asserted that Admiral Cradock had forbidden Fletcher to land the troops by exercising his authority as the senior officer. These allegations, it was reported, had been made by Admiral Cradock to certain Mexicans in

¹⁹Cradock to Admiralty, December 13, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO; Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 16, 1913, NA RG 45.

high official positions in order to show them that he was their friend. Even Miller, the American consul confirmed the fact that these tales were being widely circulated. When informed of them, Fletcher forwarded the stories to Washington, and added that he had no comment about Craddock's efforts "to make friends with the Federals other than to say that the temptation to do so may have appeared attractive to him and the opportunity favorable. It seems incredible that he could have made the statements attributed to him."²⁰ This, however, was only the beginning. The differences between the two admirals would shortly touch both seats of government.

It was reported that both the Federals and the rebels were shooting prisoners. On the afternoon of February 12 it was noted that the bodies of several men were seen hanging from telegraph poles on a prominent ridge just west of the city. The German Captain and Admiral Fletcher decided to file a joint protest and they went to see Admiral Craddock. The following day, Craddock's aide brought Fletcher a document to be signed which stated that the German Captain had seen the bodies hanging in plain sight, and that the three naval commanders made a

²⁰N. C. Twining, commanding the USS Tacoma, Memorandum, December 15, 1913, recording his conversation with Manuel Leon, a resident of Tampico. Clarence A. Miller to Admiral Fletcher, December 15, 1913; Fletcher to the Secretary of the Navy, December 18, 1913, SDP.

formal protest against such practices. Fletcher refused to sign it on the grounds that it did not mention that the spectacle had also been noted by several American ships, that a document of this nature should be prepared only after a conference among the signers, and that Cradock had signed the instrument as the senior member. This last part was not in accordance with the agreement arrived at on November 26 between the two officers.

At the conference which ensued Cradock stated that he could not waive his rank on matters touching international problems. Their previous accord had referred only to personal matters. When Fletcher reminded him that he had stated at the earlier meeting that he must be senior in all or nothing, Cradock denied having made such a comment. As a result of this meeting, Cradock agreed that he would not act without informing Fletcher but that he would act independently. Joint action would be resorted to only after instructions from their respective governments. They would, however, continue to hold regular conferences and keep each other informed. Fletcher registered his protest against the hangings in a letter to the Federal general. His report to Washington over the seniority problem promptly brought a response from President Wilson.²¹

²¹Fletcher to Secretary of the Navy (Operations), December 12, 1913, Wilson Papers; ibid., December 16, 1913, NA RG 45.

Bryan wired Page in London on the day Fletcher's report was received and instructed him to take up the matter of precedence with the two admirals with the Foreign Office. He was to say that because of the particular relationship of the United States to the problem in Mexico, the President would appreciate instructions to Admiral Cradock for him to yield his seniority to the American Admiral. Page asked for full details on the controversy which were forwarded immediately.²² In the meantime, Page had requested Commander Powers Symington, the American naval attache in London, to contact the Admiralty about the request.

Symington discussed the matter with the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Sir John R. Jellicoe, who expressed some irritation that the United States did not take the obvious step of promoting the American admiral, or of sending a naval officer to Mexico who outranked Cradock. It was, Jellicoe said, impossible to get a British admiral to waive his rank, all that could be done was to have Cradock absent himself from the scene whenever joint action appeared imminent, thus making Fletcher the senior officer present. However, it was pointed out that the British

²²Bryan to Tumulty, December 13, 1913, Wilson Papers, asking for the President's opinion on the rank problem. Bryan to American Embassy (London), December 13, 15, 1913, SDP; Page to Secretary of State, December 15, 1913, Wilson Papers.

had sent a naval force to Mexican waters to afford protection for their citizens and property, now the United States was asking that in the event that action was necessary, the British officer withdraw and permit the American navy do the work that the British had been sent there to do in the first place. In his report of this meeting, Symington suggested that the request was improper and unreasonable, and that the United States was requesting something which it had no right to do. He recommended that the government create new grades above that of rear admiral and avoid such complications in the future.²³

In spite of the reluctance on the part of the Admiralty, the British government instructed Admiral Cradock that in the event a landing became necessary he would proceed to Veracruz leaving Fletcher as the senior officer.²⁴

²³Naval Attache [Commander Powers Symington] to the Ambassador [Page], Memorandum, December 17, 1913, SDP. At that time the highest rank that an American naval officer could hold on active duty was rear admiral. There were at least three higher naval ranks, vice admiral, admiral, and admiral of the fleet. As a result, the naval officers of foreign countries quite frequently outranked the American officers, and this situation held true for nations whose navies were far inferior in size to that of the United States.

²⁴Admiralty to Foreign Office, December 16, 1913, F.O. 414/235, PRO; Page to Secretary of State, December 16, 17, 1913, Wilson Papers; *ibid.*, December 19, 1913, SDP. In this last report Page told Bryan that he had seen Admiral Jellicoe and had thanked him for his kind consideration. The Admiral had answered that it was a shame that the United States did not give to its naval officers the rank that such circumstances warranted. Page wired that "the Admiralty were not really pleased at the

As if the rank controversy was not enough, on December 13, the New York World published what was purported to be a copy of Cradock's report to the Admiralty in which he had made several statements highly critical of United States policy in Mexico, and complimentary to Huerta. O'Shaughnessy was directed to contact the World reporter to verify the story, and Lind was queried to see if he had heard any news about it.²⁵ O'Shaughnessy replied that the correspondent told him that the story was obtained from Cradock's stenographer, and the American Chargé was of the opinion that the statement was indicative of Cradock's views. He would, however, check further to see what else he could uncover.²⁶ Within a matter of hours, O'Shaughnessy was able to secure a nearly verbatim copy of Cradock's report of December 3, in which he had stated how pleased President Huerta

request and that the Government in a sense forced their consent because they are just now eager to show us even unusual consideration touching our Mexican policy."

²⁵Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), December 13, 1913; Bryan to Lind, December 13, 1913, SDP. The report referred to was Cradock to Admiralty, December 3, 1913, F.O. 371/2025, PRO. See supra, p. 218.

²⁶O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, December 13, 1913, SDP; ibid., December 14, 1913, Wilson Papers. O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 93, wrote, "The confidential report of Admiral Cradock to his government was filched by the press. The typewriter who made the copy was paid \$200 for it. In it, it appears, he quotes Nelson as saying that the 'most sacred international relationship in the world is that between England and the United States.' Most annoying for Sir Christopher!"

seemed to be to see a British Admiral in full dress, and his comments that the situation appeared "without light." The copy was obtained from a lady stenographer, an American citizen, who O'Shaughnessy said, had done so "as an act of patriotism, she stating that she holds her country above professional secrecy." He also said that the report which had appeared in the World was largely invented and was not based on the report itself. However, he concluded that the original was serious enough.²⁷

Lind's reply to Bryan's wire kicked off another round of inquiries about Carden. The Governor advised Bryan that he had no reason to doubt the World's report. Cradock's visit to the capital had been made the occasion for a holiday. He was certain that if the Admiral needed any prompting Carden had no doubt supplied the inspiration. Lind reported, "Carden is more vicious than ever. He is becoming so offensive that both the English Consul at Torreón and Fred Adams have apologized for his expressions and conduct to me. Their statements to me were, however, personal and confidential in a measure." Again on December 14 he cabled:

²⁷O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, December 15, 1913, Wilson Papers; ibid., December 15, 1913, SDP. These are two different dispatches. A comparison of O'Shaughnessy's copy and the original document from the Public Record Office confirms that he had received an accurate transcription of the report.

England may talk fair in Washington but I tell you that in Mexico she is maneuvering every moment to get the advantage and to place us in an embarrassing light before the foreign interests and before the world so as to justify such steps as she is meditating to maintain her political supremacy in the government of Mexico. The sending of a naval commander outranking any American officer in Mexican waters was not an accident. She expected control of naval operations here but failed at least in part in that respect. The constant ridicule by Carden of the American Government and American policies and American military power has its baneful influence.²⁸

Lind's attack shifted the odium from Cradock to Carden.

Bryan was immediately interested in getting some concrete evidence against the British Minister, but his memory was apparently still fresh from his early bouts with the Foreign Office over Carden, and he advised that they could not do anything about him "unless we have direct and positive evidence as to his words and deeds." Both O'Shaughnessy and Lind had to admit that they had no such examples which would hold up in a court of law.²⁹ Nor during the remainder of Carden's stay in Mexico could such evidence be uncovered.

Perhaps Sir William Tyrrell's characterization of Cradock and Carden came the closest of all to hitting the mark. Writing to his good friend Sir Cecil Spring-Rice

²⁸Lind to Bryan, December 13, 1913, Wilson Papers; ibid., December 14, 1913, SDP; Stephenson, Lind, 250.

²⁹Bryan to American Embassy (Mexico City), December 16, 1913; O'Shaughnessy to Secretary of State, December 18, 1913; Lind to Bryan, December 17, 1913, SDP.

he remarked, "The Admiral has been cautioned, but both his and Carden's obtruseness nearly make me despair: it is a true instance of English pigheadedness and shortsightedness."³⁰

In early 1914 Grey finally became convinced that moving Carden to a new post was probably best for everyone concerned. Unfortunately, the story that broke in the newspapers credited United States complaints with the Minister's transfer. This delayed Grey's plans, although Carden was called to London for consultation, leaving Mexico in late February 1914. On April 17, Sir Lionel's appointment as the new minister to Brazil was announced. He did, however, return to Mexico for several months and was in that country when General Victoriano Huerta with his back to the wall finally resigned and left his native country in July 1914. The new Mexican leader, Carranza, was not sympathetically inclined toward those foreign representatives whose governments had recognized Huerta. The Constitutionalist Chief would have expelled Carden as persona non grata, but was finally persuaded that there was nothing to gain from twisting the Lion's tail. Carden voluntarily left Mexico in September

³⁰ Tyrrell to Spring-Rice, January 21, 1914, F.O. 1/247, PRO. This letter was inadvertantly dated 1913 by Tyrrell, but since the month is January of the new year such was easily understandable.

1914.³¹

Admiral Cradock remained in Mexican waters until July 30, 1914, when the threat of World War caused his recall. Even though he and Admiral Fletcher differed on a number of points still there was a good deal of co-operation between the two officers. Cradock served in western waters during the early months of the war. On October 1, 1914, in an engagement with a superior German squadron under the command of Admiral Count Maximilian von Spee, off Coronel, Chile, Sir Christopher Cradock went down with his flagship, the HMS Good Hope, her colors flying.³²

Great Britain saw the need for their own naval units in Mexican waters and sent Admiral Cradock to protect British lives and property. After his arrival complications set in because of the seniority problem. He quickly came under the influence of the British Minister, although there was every indication that his criticism of United States policy in Mexico needed no prompting from

³¹Burton K. Hendrick, The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page (3 vols.; New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1924-1926), I, 219-31; The Times (London), Weekly edition, March 6, 189d-190a; 20, 233b; April 17, 1913, 309c. New York Times, many articles on Carden between January and August 1914; Robert E. Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 1914-1915 (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1960), 61.

³²New York Times, July 31, 1914, 3:7; H. W. C. Davis and J. R. H. Weaver, The Dictionary of National Biography (24 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1927), Supplement 1912-1921, 131-33.

Carden. Cradock's actions at Mexico City, his differences with Fletcher over the rank situation, the rumors attributed to him at Tampico, and the publicity given to his rather uncomplimentary reports about the United States, quickly brought him into disfavor with Washington. The United States was too far committed to permit a foreign naval officer, especially a critical one, to call the signals in the event of trouble in Mexico, and was able to get the British to promise to move him to prevent such a possibility. Thus, if action was required Admiral Fletcher would be in command.

The United States could have prevented some of the trouble it found itself in if it would have promoted Fletcher to vice admiral, or if it had sent a rear admiral to replace him who outranked Cradock. The administration did neither, and thus found itself in the position of asking the British to have Cradock waive his seniority. It was obvious that Admiral Cradock was extremely sensitive, and a less able person than Admiral Fletcher might well have created a major incident. As it was Fletcher was able to work with Cradock even though he did not necessarily agree with him on some matters. Cradock's criticism of the United States was not as severe as it might have been. Much of it was no doubt a reflection of the views he had heard expressed by the foreign representatives in Mexico. As a military officer he probably

sympathized with Huerta who was beset from all sides from within the country, and found his neighbor giving moral support, if not something more substantial, to his enemy. At the same time, there is no evidence to substantiate Lind's accusations that sending Cradock was part of Britain's grand design for Mexico. He was the ranking British officer in the area and was the natural choice. Lind and O'Shaughnessy were no doubt right about Carden's attitude toward the United States. He had disagreed with its policy ever since he left England, and he had attempted to help work out some solution to the problem which Wilson had rejected without even so much as a "by your leave." Few people besides the Wilson coterie could see anything except anarchy in the policy which he had adopted. The Cradock episode was just the last in a series of diplomatic controversies over Mexico between the United States and Great Britain in 1913.

CHAPTER XI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

One of the major side effects of the Mexican Revolution during 1913 was the diplomatic entanglement between the United States and Great Britain. The Republicans were in their last days in office when Madero was overthrown. Ambassador Wilson was obviously pleased with the prospects that Huerta would restore order in the Republic, and with his British colleague, William F. Stronge, accepted the legality of the new administration and recommended recognition. Both governments delayed action--Great Britain until the diplomatic formalities could be correctly handled, and the United States because it at first hoped to use recognition as a lever to settle some of the outstanding problems with Mexico.

When Woodrow Wilson became President on March 4, 1913, he brought to the White House a philosophy of international affairs based on moral principles. This was a highly ethical approach but from the British point of view it was not a very practical one. Ambassador Wilson was of the commercial imperialistic school, and like the

British never understood or appreciated the new diplomacy. British recognition soon followed while the United States marked time. The American Ambassador pleaded with Washington to recognize Huerta, but to no avail. He schemed in almost open collusion with the British Minister and the Mexican President to win his case, and was so obviously out of sympathy with the new administration that he was finally called home. The Ambassador had disagreed with the President. The rolls contain the names of several public servants who fell into disfavor with President Wilson because they opposed him, or attempted to offer him advice. To this list can be added the name of Henry Lane Wilson.

The President was assisted by Great Britain when he sent Governor John Lind to Mexico. Lind would probably have waited much longer before he talked with Mexican officialdom, if it had not been for Stronge's intercession on his behalf. But the publicity surrounding the mission, and Lind's actions in Mexico were enough to spell defeat. Had the Governor been from any other country except the United States he would have been asked to leave. Lind was never able to negotiate any settlement with the Huerta government. He was constantly sending Bryan long harangues about the British machinations in Mexico. Cowdray and Carden were his principal targets, although Cradock came in for some criticism too. The evidence indicates that

Lind was right to a considerable degree in his evaluations of Carden and Cradock. They both thought Wilson's policy was unenlightened and impractical. Lord Cowdray can not be classified in the same category. He showed the same interest in his property that anyone would whose multi-million dollar investment was threatened. He could certainly not be blamed for wanting it protected. Accusations have been made, but no evidence has come to light to prove that Lord Cowdray influenced British foreign policy. Nevertheless, Henry Clay Pierce through Galbraith convinced Lind that black gold meant more to Britain than United States policies. The administration reflected Lind's attitude.

Sir Lionel Carden came to Mexico in October with every intention of helping Huerta stay in power. His objectives were laid out in considerable detail before he left England, but he arrived at an inopportune time. After the Mexican Congress was dissolved he presented his credentials, and if this was not enough his open consort with the Mexican President brought charges that he was serving as an unofficial adviser. He and the Foreign Office agreed that Huerta was the only person in sight who might restore order. But Carden was not content to merely work behind the scenes, his criticisms of President Wilson's policies were published for all to see. Such action brought an official denial from London, although most people agreed

he had made the statements attributed to him. He either helped plan, agreed, or knew that the presidential elections of October 26 would be a farce and that Huerta would remain in office.

The evidence is unmistakable that Huerta intended to remain president of Mexico. Either the elections would be voided because an insufficient number of polls were in operation and he would stay on until new elections could be convoked perhaps in six months or a year, or he would receive a majority of those ballots cast in which event he might even be declared the new legal president of the Republic. Even before Woodrow Wilson knew the election results he was convinced that Huerta would not be displaced, and he requested the European countries in particular to withhold recognition of the results until the United States had decided on a policy. Great Britain and other nations reluctantly agreed. In his notes of November 1 and 7, President Wilson declared his intention of forcing Huerta from office, and in the later message asked the foreign powers to use their influence to get the General to resign. Not one of those countries would do so until they knew who was going to take his place.

Great Britain, France, and Germany, sympathized with Wilson's policy toward Mexico, although they thought it was too idealistic and impractical. If foreigners in Mexico were to be protected the country needed a strong

man at the helm. They certainly agreed that asking Huerta to resign without having some capable person to take over immediately was to invite trouble. Such action on their part would be interfering in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation, and they did not relish that idea. Nonetheless, Great Britain finally decided to advise Huerta that he could no longer rely on British support in his dispute with the United States, but Grey was hesitant to go any further.

What had caused this slight but definite change in the British policy? Ambassador Page believed that his efforts to convince the Foreign Office of the righteousness of President Wilson's new moral philosophy toward foreign affairs was finally being understood and appreciated. But perhaps closer to the truth was the fact that the British were convinced that the United States would not stop short of Huerta's removal even if it meant intervention. It was a matter of choice--Mexico or the United States. With the situation in the Balkans, Great Britain could not chance alienating the United States. The British must drop Huerta and at least not openly oppose Wilson. But a second factor was the better understanding which resulted from Sir William Tyrrell's visit to the United States.

Tyrrell charmed House and the President. Wilson liked this kind of personal diplomacy. After talking with

Sir William, the President was apparently convinced that the British were not opposing him in Mexico. Tyrrell was sure that Wilson was dedicated to a policy which would make Mexico a protectorate of the United States, but he admitted that Britain did not have the capability of doing anything about it. Under the circumstances it was better politics to cooperate with the United States. There was no indication of a "deal," in which the British would support Wilson's Mexican policy in return for repeal of the exemption clause in the Panama Canal Act. The President was committed to repeal, and Britain recognized the futility of opposing Wilson's Mexican policy. A policy the British could do nothing about anyway. Great Britain hardly liked the new situation, but it was the only practical approach open.

Although cautioned on several occasions by Grey about offering his services, Carden was so certain that the United States was going to intervene that he decided to take matters into his own hands. Lind's ultimatum in regard to the dissolution of the newly elected Congress and President Wilson's threat of November 14 were the danger signals which moved the British Minister. Carden's influence with Huerta was quite evident when he got him to agree to at least two of Wilson's demands, retirement and a general election in which all Mexicans could participate. This was more than Huerta had been willing to do in re-

sponse to the ultimatums and demands made upon him by Lind and the President. But Wilson rejected Huerta's counterproposals and would not even dignify them with an answer. The British had attempted mediation and had been rebuffed. Grey was now convinced that they could do no more.

Unfortunately, Wilson and Bryan, for a time anyway, thought that British policy in Mexico was motivated by oil. Lord Cowdray, the major stockholder in the Mexican Eagle Oil Company, was suspected of having influenced the Foreign Office in its decision to recognize Huerta. Then, when things looked bad in the summer, he was thought to have advocated sending Carden to Mexico to inaugurate a program to strengthen the Mexican President. Cowdray was concerned about the petroleum properties, and to have done otherwise would have been unnatural. No evidence has been uncovered to indicate that he influenced British policy in Mexico. The diplomatic situation became further complicated when the Constitutionalists began their campaign in Veracruz to control the oil fields. American and British interests were so closely related geographically that a threat to one was a threat to the other.

The American navy had been in Mexican waters for months and Admiral Fletcher was directed to provide protection for the holdings of both American and British companies. The Mexican Eagle Oil Company had come in for

its share of grief because the Constitutionalists believed the charges that they had influenced British recognition of Huerta. More important to them was the possibility of collecting a war tax and of stopping the delivery of fuel oil to the Federal railroads. But, the Constitutionalists could not carry out their threats without running afoul of the United States, and they did not want to lose the friendship of their northern neighbor. Recognition of the belligerency and lifting the arms embargo were two possibilities that they did not want to forfeit.

The arrival of Admiral Cradock to protect British property presaged a new controversy. He was the ranking officer and would command the international fleet if it was required to send marines ashore. Fletcher was able to get him to yield his seniority for a few weeks, but his rather sensitive feelings caused him to reverse his earlier decision. The Admiralty was not pleased by the United States request that Cradock give way and instead made arrangements for him to absent himself in case of trouble. The rank problem and Cradock's criticism of United States policy created a temporary furor, but like other such incidents it soon blew over.

Wilson's threats grew more menacing as time passed. Foreigners prepared for intervention, but it did not come when expected. The fears of British investors were confirmed when the President announced on December 2, that he

would continue his policy of "watchful waiting." Huerta would now be starved out. The civil war was sure to be intensified and the danger to property interests and the lives of foreigners increased. Huerta would not resign, and the United States would not intervene. Great Britain was caught in the middle.

The British were far more involved than has previously been suspected. Grey was not unaware that when Carden went to Mexico he intended to give Huerta all the support possible. This was not, however, a change in policy. Britain had recognized Huerta and had given him the normal assistance expected while Stronge was Minister. No one else was in sight in Mexico who could take Huerta's place and still provide some assurance that foreigners and their property would be protected. The only logical thing was to keep Huerta in office until a suitable replacement could be found. Hence, Carden's assignment. The actions of the new minister were quite open. Lind and O'Shaughnessy both complained about him but were never able to produce any evidence to prove that he was actually working to thwart United States policies in Mexico. But by mid-November, the Foreign Office was certain that Wilson intended to eliminate Huerta even if it meant intervention. If then elected a neutral position; not to support Huerta and not to mediate. Carden feared intervention would mean the destruction of British

property. Perhaps he could get Huerta to resign and thus avoid the possible destruction of commercial interests. His activities went beyond the neutral position that the Foreign Office preferred, and he actually served as a mediator. The proposals submitted through the Foreign Office provided for Huerta's resignation. But they were not an unconditional surrender to the demands of the United States. Huerta would step down but not very far, and he proposed to remain on in order to quell the rebellion. But compromise was out of the question for Wilson. There was no compelling reason why he should negotiate as he was forced to do years later at the Paris Peace conference. Wilson was sure that he could keep the stranglehold on the Mexican President long enough to force him out. After Grey had somewhat unwillingly gone along with Carden's efforts to negotiate with Wilson, the British returned to a neutral position. They could not support Huerta against the United States nor could they insist on his retirement. The British position was not an enviable one, but Great Britain could not afford to alienate the United States.

Accepting the state of affairs in Mexico was not in the immediate best interest of Great Britain. The Constitutionalists were obviously annoyed with the British recognition of Huerta, and a Federal victory would eliminate this threat to British property. But, the acquiescence of Great Britain to United States policies in Mexico was a

reflection of a larger and, for the British, a far more dangerous and pressing problem.

By 1913 Europe was once again divided into two camps, the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy, and the Triple Entente of Great Britain, France, and Russia. The Anglo-German colonial, commercial and naval rivalry had grown in intensity since the turn of the century. The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 had been a direct threat to European peace. Under the circumstances the British did not want to lose the friendship of the most powerful country in the western hemisphere.

The evidence is also unmistakable that Great Britain had been withdrawing from Latin America, particularly Central America, ever since 1850. British willingness to negotiate the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901, which permitted the United States to build and fortify an isthmian canal, is accepted as an indication of their loss of interest in the area.

Thus, concern for a threatening situation in Europe, and diminished interest and strength in Central America were significant reasons for Great Britain to seek a rapprochement with the United States over Mexico.

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