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The Diplomatic Career of Henry Lane Wilson in Latin America.

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In Latin America

The Diplomatic Career of Henry Clay Vilson
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to show that the much-criticized diplomacy of Henry Lane Wilson in Mexico was, in reality, largely approved until President Woodrow Wilson reversed the traditional recognition policy of the United States by refusing to accept Victoriano Huerta as the constitutional president of Mexico. It was then that (H. L.) Wilson fell a victim to political circumstances.

Through his brother's influence, (H. L.) Wilson was appointed Minister to Chile in 1897. He labored to increase political and commercial intercourse between the United States and Chile; and when his service in Chile ended in 1905, there had been a noticeable improvement in this respect, attributed, in large part, to the attitude and energy of the American Minister.

Recognition of Wilson's hard work at such an insignificant post led President Theodore Roosevelt to transfer him to Belgium, a more comfortable post. Contact with royalty and association with European diplomats helped to broaden his experience.

Wilson was appointed Ambassador to Mexico by President Taft and he took up his duties at that post in 1910, the true representative of a "dollar diplomacy" administration. The
immense volume of American business investments in Mexico
gave Wilson more importance than he had ever enjoyed; he
fancied himself a special guardian of private enterprises in
which citizens of the United States were interested, and was
naturally disturbed when the dictatorship regime of Perfilio
Díaz began to crumble before the onslaught of a revolution
headed by Francisco I. Madero.

As Madero swept into power in 1911, Wilson became ever
more apprehensive of the future; especially so when Madero
refused to court the favor of the American Ambassador.
Madero's sensitiveness to Mexican needs was interpreted by
Wilson as anti-Americanism, while Wilson's impatience with
the unstable condition of Mexico caused Madero to regard the
American Ambassador as a dangerous enemy.

Taft and Secretary of State Knox were cognizant, at all
times, of conditions in Mexico and policy was formulated
with an eye to stabilizing conditions in that country. This
policy included the probability of armed intervention in the
not too distant future.

In February, 1913, Madero was suddenly faced with a sec-
ond uprising under Félix Díaz. Victoriano Huerta, the com-
mander-in-chief of the army, deposed Madero during the
ensuing siege of Mexico City and then signed a pact with Díaz
by which Huerta became Provisional President. These circum-
stances were actively encouraged by Henry Lane Wilson as
measures to end the fighting in the city. Wilson had the
support of the most influential members of the Diplomatic Corps. The pact between Huerta and Díaz was signed in the American Embassy.

Two days after his resignation, Madero was assassinated under mysterious circumstances, an act which hindered Ambassador Wilson's plan to secure the recognition of Huerta by the United States. Woodrow Wilson, who became President of the United States in March, ignored his Ambassador to Mexico and refused to recognize Huerta. (W.) Wilson's demand that Huerta step down drew the United States into a unique position as recognition had been traditionally extended on a de facto basis after international commitments were satisfied.

Although (H. L.) Wilson was not allowed to resign, agents were sent to Mexico to investigate conditions. On the basis of their reports, which were unfavorable to the Ambassador, he was suddenly recalled in July, 1913, and dismissed from the service after sixteen years as a career diplomat.
INTRODUCTION

The role of Henry Lane Wilson in Latin American diplomacy has so often been the subject of a few lines or paragraphs in studies of the history of the United States and Latin America, particularly Mexico, that it has been judged useful to attempt a more specialised treatise on the subject. It is the author's contention that the part played by this man who, was the Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Mexico during the initial phases of the Mexican Revolution, cannot be explained or thoroughly understood while his personal and professional background is neglected.

The question of the recognition of General Huerta, who overthrew the Madero government in Mexico, was as perplexing in its way as similar questions of recognition today. It is hoped that this account of the conduct of diplomatic affairs may add, at least in modest degree, to the growing body of knowledge about the aims, objectives and practices of twentieth-century American diplomacy in Latin America.

The author makes no apologies for the limitations in source material that are frankly admitted to exist. Final conclusions are rejected in those matters where the sources are silent or are not yet available. The personal papers of
Henry Lane Wilson have not been placed at the disposal of the author and he does not believe that they will be available for examination for some time to come. Wilson did, however, publish his memoirs and the National Archives of the United States furnished a wealth of information. The author has examined these carefully and compared the information they contain with the personal papers of such important figures as McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, Knox, Woodrow Wilson and Bryan and with pertinent secondary accounts. In spite of the limitations in source material, this account is more complete than has been given of Henry Lane Wilson's diplomatic career.

Wilson's service as a diplomat spanned that era known in the United States as "Progressivism." It was an age of both internal reform and external expansion. "Dollar Diplomacy" found its most natural expression in Latin America and to men such as Wilson it simply meant the understanding and acceptance of Latin American psychology while fostering the expansion of the American profit system to the region "south of the border." Wilson's training, reinforced with experiences in that area, led him to form a concept of his field of usefulness in the cultivation of the upper classes as junior partners in the world of business expansion. Not personally wealthy, he undoubtedly felt a sense of triumph as the representative of a country with great economic power endeavoring to find fertile fields for investments abroad.
He made an earnest effort to serve the interests of the party of Big Business in the United States while at the same time observing the standards of American diplomacy. He sought to attain the ideal status of one who served his own people well while commanding the respect of those in political positions in the countries to which he was accredited.

Wilson was thoroughly initiated in diplomacy at a Latin American post while serving his first eight years in Chile. From there he was transferred to Belgium as a step toward promotion in rank. When an experienced diplomat was needed for the Mexican Embassy, he was raised in rank and sent to this more active post. His career might have continued for several more years had the election of 1912 in the United States not brought a change of administration.

Until recently, Wilson was customarily blamed for the overthrow of Francisco Madero and for misleading the Taft administration. It is gratifying to note that a few scholars are now less ready to accept uncritically the condemnations of Wilson which were made by those with a definite axe to grind and repeated by sounder historians for lack of evidence. It must be admitted that these earlier views of Wilson were not altogether erroneous. His basic political philosophy was, indeed, interpreted in a fairly correct way. Sweeping conclusions based upon such interpretation have, however, led to an exaggerated portrayal of his weak points. That there were varying shades of gray instead of all black
or white is only now being recognized as respects the role of Wilson in Mexico. The writer humbly submits that a better understanding of Wilson's actions and viewpoints in the 1913 crisis in Mexico can be gained by a more complete study of his service in Latin America as a representative of the United States in a Republican Party era.
BACKGROUND AND TRAINING

Henry Lane Wilson was born on November 3, 1857, at Crawfordsville, Indiana. His father, James Wilson, was of Scotch-Irish ancestry. The Wilson family had moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania from Ulster in the 1730's and later settled in a place just north of Lexington, Virginia, in the Shenandoah Valley. After a residence of some hundred years in Virginia, the descendants moved first to Kentucky and then across the Ohio River into southern Indiana. Although slave owners, the family was Whig in politics.

James Wilson, the father of Henry Lane, married Emma Ingersoll of Connecticut. He served his country in both the Mexican and Civil Wars having been in General Scott's command in the former. He later became a United States Congressman from Indiana, serving in that capacity from 1857 to 1861. Upon the outbreak of the Civil War he resigned from Congress to join an Indiana regiment with the rank of major. Two brothers were killed at Gettysburg and Wilson, himself, was severely wounded. His grandson stated that the appointment of his grandfather to the diplomatic post in Venezuela following the war was made ostensibly to allow him to recover his health but actually because of his liberal views on the South. However that may be, James Wilson died at his post in Venezuela having bequeathed to his sons the precedent of a
career in the service of his country.

His son, Henry Lane Wilson, attended public school in Indiana and was graduated from Wabash College at Crawfordsville in 1879. He studied law under Benjamin Harrison and later entered the newspaper business as a publisher of the Lafayette Journal from 1882-1885. In 1884, he married Alice Vajan of Indiana. She was a graduate of Wesleyan Female College of Cincinnati, Ohio. Mrs. Wilson remained by the side of her husband in every crisis. She was remembered as a kindly and gracious woman.¹

In 1885, Wilson began a business career in a new location, the Territory of Washington, soon to become a new state in the Union. His brother, John L. Wilson, was already active in the politics of that region and appears to have

¹ Information about the family ancestry was supplied by Warden McKee Wilson, one of Henry Lane Wilson's sons who presented this data in a letter to the writer dated October 12, 1950. The writer also enjoyed the hospitality of this man and his family in a visit to his home where he was shown photographs and portraits and supplied with documentary material in his possession. A silver tray presented to Mrs. Henry Lane Wilson for her acts of humanity during the Pecos Tragedy in Mexico was also admired during this visit. Among the documentary items supplied the writer for his use was a volume of correspondence carried on by Henry Lane Wilson's sons in protesting an unwarranted statement about their father by Time magazine in 1940. Letters of protest to Time brought a direct retraction of the statement in question. In spite of such unpleasant incidents in connection with his father's service in Mexico, Warden Wilson has corresponded regularly with the writer and given him encouragement in his project. See n. 2, Chapter VIII.
been giving assistance to his brother. Henry Lane entered the investment and real estate business in the Territory and later worked for the election of his brother to Congress. The panic of 1893 caused his failure in business and in 1895, we find him managing John's campaign for the Senate. He was thus gradually drawn into politics and his brother un-

2John L. Wilson was born at Crawfordsville, Indiana on August 7, 1850, and graduated from Wabash College in 1874. He was appointed a clerk in the pension bureau in Washington, D.C. but resigned after a few months, saying that he was going west and would come back a Congressman. He studied law in his father's office and was elected representative to the Indiana legislature in 1880 from Montgomery County. He was appointed receiver of the land office at Colfax, Territory of Washington some time afterward. This office was later moved to Spokane. After four years and four months of service there, he was elected the first representative to Congress from the new State of Washington in 1889. He retained this office until February 18, 1895, when he resigned to become Senator. He later purchased and published the Seattle Post Intelligencer while remaining active in politics in the State. See the Washington Post, November 7, 1912, and Dictionary of American Biography, XX Vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), XIX, 338-339.

It may be noted that Henry Lane Wilson was offered his father's old post at Caracas in 1889, but rejected it. He may have been following John's advice in this as in many other instances.

3In a letter to the author dated August 24, 1949, from Grace Kirkpatrick, Publicity Writer of the Spokane, Washington Chamber of Commerce, the following information was given:

"Henry Lane Wilson is listed in the city directory for 1891. He was then associated with H. Bolster & Co., a firm which had offices in the Eagle Block and which engaged in real estate transactions. Henry Bolster of the firm is also listed as President of the Street Railway Company.

"Mr. Wilson's address in 1891 is given as 2416 - 2nd Ave., while in 1892 he lived at 1219 - 5th Ave. He is not listed in the 1893 directory."

4"Henry Lane Wilson" by E. Wilder Spaulding, D.A.B., XIX, 325.
doubtedly sought a rewarding position for him.

Washington was now a State in the Union and Henry Lane Wilson was among the obscure workers for the Republican Party ready to make himself useful in any way that would bring him to the notice of those who controlled patronage. He served on the committee to notify President McKinley of the latter's nomination and opens his memoirs with an account of McKinley's victory. This was not his first acquaintance with McKinley for he had worked with him to some extent in Indiana during the Blaine campaign and at the recent convention in St. Louis he had served as a delegate-at-large.

Among those who visited McKinley at Canton in search of patronage was Henry Lane Wilson who placed before the future President his desire to enter the diplomatic service. He was given no firm assurance but understood, or chose to understand, that he had been promised a post. He was unable, due to illness, to attend the inaugural. He was hospitalized in Washington, D.C., during the ceremonies and the President soon sent him word that he had decided to appoint him to Japan. Such arrangements were, however, being made by Mark Hanna and not by the President. Visiting Hanna a short time later, Wilson learned that McKinley had not consulted Hanna. The Japanese Post was already promised to someone else.

Wilson chose to leave Washington while the matter was being decided. He soon heard from the President that during
the early part of the campaign his managers had promised the Japanese post to someone else and that he was bound to abide by this promise. McKinley left it to Wilson to say whether he was to be held to this promise. Although Wilson must have felt keen disappointment he graciously replied that the President might have a free hand to do as he pleased. Undoubtedly Wilson still hoped for some position and the President felt bound to do something for him. Although important for Wilson, this whole affair was only a minute segment of the long line of patronage appointments that take place in every change of administrations.

Minor diplomatic posts were still open and party men could still be rewarded but many of these posts were in Europe and Asia where expenses of a personal nature would be required. Wilson's brother John realized this and after it had been agreed that he would do better in some post in South America, Chile was decided upon as the most ideal country from the standpoint of such things as climate and expenses.

His welcome to the State Department was not, however, full of promise. Mr. William R. Day, acting Secretary for John Sherman, interviewed him and then turned him over to lesser officials for routine briefings and instructions. He joined the other products of the spoils system who were in the process of being thoroughly deflated by those officers of the Department who had had years of professional training.
and who deplored the wreckage that must surely be done by a new crop of spoilees. Wilson, of course, resented this disparagement and felt that more would have been accomplished by spending time in outlining the exact nature of his new duties. The humbling process must have been similar to that undergone by a new recruit in the military service. It did not last long, however; and, after a customary visit to the President, the new diplomat gathered his family and took ship for his new post.\(^5\)

Wilson's initial impression of South American habits was gained when the ship on which he was sailing stopped for a few days in Callao Bay in Peru. He was mistaken for the new minister to Peru who was expected to arrive at about the same time. The story is best told in his own words:

The government's tugboat came off the steamer and a gorgeously arrayed official presented himself at my cabin, addressing me in Spanish with profound bows and great deference. I returned the bows in kind and even amplified their impressiveness. But I was totally unable to respond. So, in the absence of explanations, I was taken on shore with my family in the government's tug and a private car to Lima was assigned to me. Before we arrived in Lima, however, the mistake had been discovered, resulting in a considerable cooling of official courtesy.\(^6\)

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\(^5\)Henry Lane Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile* (New York: Doubleday Page and Company, 1927), 1-6. Hereafter cited as *Diplomatic Episodes*.

\(^6\)Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 13.
The Minister and his family arrived in Santiago on September 5, 1897, and were soon welcomed with a banquet by the American colony. His first official duty was, of course, to present his credentials to Don Federico Errásuris, the President of Chile. Throughout the attendant ceremonies, Wilson was careful not to make any reference to the Baltimore affair, a subject that would have been highly distasteful to any loyal Chilean and one best forgotten if friendly relations were to continue between the two countries.

In this connection a few words as to the relative importance of the Chilean post will not be inappropriate. It was not considered an important legation and was located in an undesirable residential section far from the center of governmental activity. It was equipped only with the bare essentials. The serious lack of physical facilities existing in most diplomatic posts of the United States was glaringly evident. Wilson's efforts to improve the appearance of the building and its furnishings met with only partial success and he was forced to make some personal expenditures out of his salary to accomplish even this.

The truth was that Chile had not had very close relations with the United States and, with one exception, the Baltimore incident, the conduct of diplomatic affairs had
been a dull and routine matter. The incident referred to took place shortly after the Chilean Civil War in 1891, when tempers were still hot and the attitude of Chileans toward the United States was one of suspicion and distrust. During the civil strife the American Minister, Patrick Egan, had given every evidence of partial feeling for the presidential side, even giving shelter in the Legation to some members of the defeated party. The American government, acting to insure the observance of strict neutrality, had also tried to prevent the shipment of arms from the United States to the congressionalist side. As this was the side that eventually emerged victorious, an air of hostility toward the United States was encouraged.

While tempers were still hot and the Chilean people were pondering recent events, an American naval vessel, the Baltimore, put in at Valparaiso; and her commander, W. S. Schley, unwisely allowed his crew shore leave. A fight ensued and some of the sailors were killed and wounded. Investigations of the affair led to entirely different versions

7The prestige of the United States in Chile had, at times, been affected by the character of some of the men chosen for the post throughout the 19th century. Some of the occupants of the post had been men of brilliance, tactfulness and finesse. Others had engaged in acts destined to arouse distrust and contempt. Following the American Civil War a number of men were appointed to the post in return for service to their country in war or to their party in politics. Wilson, of course, falls in the category of the latter. For a fuller discussion of the subject see Henry Clay Evans, Chile and its Relations with the United States (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1927).
on the part of each government concerned and the United States demanded apologies and indemnities. Even after the smaller Republic had decided to make amends, a stern ultimatum came from President Harrison and Chile had to eat humble pie. This incident occurred six years before Wilson took up his residence in Chile but it was still fresh in the minds of the populace. When the Minister later found it his unpleasant duty to call upon the Chilean government to extradite an alleged embassador who had fled to Chile from Boston he met with delays and a hostile press. While the courts proceeded to try the case instead of handing over the accused, the people, inflamed by press notices, looked upon this matter as constituting revenge for the humiliation of the Baltimore affair.


Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 47 in the Archives of the United States, Wilson to John Hay, Secretary of State, March 19, 1900. Citations of diplomatic correspondence represent records in the National Archives of the United States unless otherwise noted.

In the absence of a treaty of extradition, Wilson had to request the return of the man as an act of courtesy. This case pointed up the sore need for such a treaty and Wilson was authorised to negotiate one. He signed it for the United States on April 17, 1900, and it was approved by the Chilean government in January of 1902.
Wilson could find little to criticise in the conduct of the office by Edward H. Strobel, his predecessor, other than the latter's retention of a legation secretary who, in Wilson's estimation, did little more than serve as a glorified bartender. The new Minister was sorry that the government of the United States "... does not pay enough attention to the selection of legation secretaries. ..." Strobel turned over his office to Wilson with the belief that he (Strobel) had won much respect for the United States.

Wilson cultivated the most respectable elements of the American colony in Santiago and made friends among the prominent Chilean families as well. His high regard for the amenities of polite society and his attentiveness to Chilean customs were matched only by his insistence that equal respect be shown to his own country in matters of protocol.

10 Records of the United States Legation in Chile; Consular and Miscellaneous Communications Sent, Volume 7-121; Wilson to C. G. Green, U.S. Vice-Consul at Antofogasta, Province of Arica, May 23, 1898.

11 Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 45; Strobel to John Sherman, Secretary of State, August 10, 1897. Strobel wrote Sherman that "The influence of a minister to Chile materially depends upon his social position and his style of living. A minister with a term of four years can, to a certain extent, recoup the great expense necessary to a suitable establishment; but in two years and a half I have not had the opportunity of doing so. I therefore feel no humiliation in saying that I am retiring from the diplomatic service in conditions in which even the salary of a few weeks is a matter of consequence to me."
He found a predominately conservative government in office in Chile, one which was constantly harassed by the embryonic radical forces destined later to become an organised reform party. The slightest issue was often the occasion for a ministerial shift under the parliamentary system that had prevailed since the Civil War. The inexperienced Minister from the United States viewed each tremor, at first, as a governmental earthquake of such proportions that the State Department, he thought, must be informed at once. Of course he had been instructed to report such changes as they occurred but in time he learned that it was not necessary to use the fastest means of communication. He decided that the "...slower medium of the mails would serve."12

The foreign diplomatic corps with whom he was associated did not make much of an impression on him. The South American diplomats were changed so frequently and all were of so much the same pattern of courtesy and good humored indolence that he could remember only a few amusing incidents concern-them.13 Although two or three serious problems arose during his eight years as Minister to Chile, there was time for extended visits to the United States and elsewhere. The Chilean post was far overshadowed with events in other places.

12Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 44.
13Ibid., 33-34. The Brazilian diplomat, for instance, had drunk a bottle of ink in childhood and could eat no solid food.
When war broke out between the United States and Spain over Cuba in the early part of 1898, the preservation of Chilean neutrality became Wilson's first major diplomatic problem. The Chilean government, of course, expressed at all times an official desire to remain strictly neutral. However, remembrance of the Baltimore affair, among other things, contributed to a noticeable coolness on the part of the press and people of Chile. The American Minister had some cause to wonder if Chile would be able to preserve actual neutrality. He was not expected merely to insure neutrality; it was important that Latin American countries understand the action of the United States and sympathise with her problems. The Chilean people had to be convinced that the United States was acting honorably and that it had no evil designs on the free republics of Latin America. News of the explosion of the battleship Maine evoked notes of sympathy from the Chilean Minister in Washington, but Wilson received only stiff, formal and correct words from the Foreign Office. He realised that the time for a test of Chile-American friendship was at hand.

On April 22nd, he received instructions from the State Department to notify the Chilean government of military measures being taken by the United States. The abruptness of his instructions left him without the necessary explanations
and he hesitated to transmit the bare information contained in his instructions. There was no other course open, so he merely accompanied his transmission of the note with an explanation that the aims of the United States would be forthcoming in time. Dutifully he proceeded to give the Department his opinion of Chile's attitude:

Sir: It is my unpleasant, but none the less necessary duty to inform . . . that . . . , the sentiment of the people of Chile is strongly and overwhelmingly in sympathy with Spain. The duty . . . is the more unpleasant in that the actual state of public opinion here is contrary to what might naturally have been expected, having in view the long and friendly relations which have been maintained between the United States and this country, and the jealous concern which our government has always shown for the welfare of Chile in common with other republics of this hemisphere.

The Department was probably not surprised at all to hear that among the reasons for Chilean antipathy toward the United States was the Baltimore incident, an evidence to Chileans of the "...intermeddling, grasping and unjust

1Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to J. J. Latorre, Chilean Minister of Foreign Relations, April 22, 1898; enclosure in Wilson to Sherman, April 26, 1898.

2Ibid.; Wilson to Sherman, May 20, 1898. He could not believe that racial and religious ties between Spain and Chile explained satisfactorily the attitude he observed, though he reported that the Roman Catholic Clergy (many of them directly from Spain) was united in opposition to an American policy in Chile.
policy of the United States. For a time, Americans in Chile had to endure strong press attacks upon the United States, popular demonstrations on the streets, and some risk to personal safety.

The State Department was anxious to prevent possible reinforcement of the Spanish navy. Chile, faced with the constant possibility of war with her neighbors, had been amassing a modern navy for some time, most of the vessels having been constructed in British shipyards. Among those under construction at the time was the O'Higgins, a powerful steel vessel. Upon the receipt of rumors early in March, 1897, that Chile planned to sell the O'Higgins to Spain, the Department forthwith instructed its Minister to look into the matter. Before the latter had time to finish his investigation and reply, he was further instructed to inquire of the Chilean government if it would accept bids from the United States. The Chilean Foreign Minister offered the explanation that Spain had, indeed, made offers for three battleships, the O'Higgins included. Chile had refused to

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3 Ibid.
4 Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 48-49.
5 The Times, London, March 17, 1897.
6 Records of the United States Legation in Chile; Instructions from the State Department, Volume 12; Sherman to Wilson, March 7, 1898.
7 Ibid., March 9, 1898.
sell. Wilson explained to the Department that Chile would be hindered in national defense by such a sale. The Department, unsatisfied, required a more definite statement to the effect that Chile had neither sold nor would consider selling the vessel to Spain.

Ordinarily this would have closed the whole affair; but toward the end of June the State Department received word from England to the effect that the sale had been completed. On the evening of June 25th, too late for any official business, Wilson was presented with the whole exasperating and delicate question once more. He was ordered to take any steps necessary to prevent delivery of the vessel and to protest the action as a violation of neutral rights - for by this time the war had begun. He was reluctant to reopen the case as he had accepted the Foreign Minister's word, but he was left no alternative. He decided, however, to have an informal talk with the Foreign Minister to whom an hour later he stated the substance of the telegram, warning that without prompt disavowal of such negotiation he would be forced to enter a formal complaint.

To this Latorre, the Foreign Minister, stated that it was "the desire of Chile to maintain and strengthen the

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6 Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 45; Wilson to Sherman, March 11, 1898.

9 Ibid., March 16, 1898.
cordial and friendly relations . . . between the governments of Chile and the United States; that the government. . . understood such a sale . . . would be an unfriendly act to the . . . United States; and that such . . . had not at any time been contemplated." Asked to put this in writing, he refused on two counts: he could not do so without conferring with his colleagues, and the United States ought to consider an oral statement sufficient. There is no doubt but that Wilson agreed with him; but he was aware by this time that the Department thought it had reasonable grounds for suspicion, and would accept nothing less than a formal statement of disavowal from the Chilean government. His explanation of the conversation with the Minister resulted in instructions the following day to register a formal complaint. This was something Wilson had been bending every effort to avoid in view of the unfavorable character of public opinion in Chile toward the war. These instructions arrived too late for immediate action since the Chilean Minister had closed his office and gone away for the weekend. Consequently Wilson addressed a formal note to him and delivered it in person on Monday morning of the 27th to the Government building the moment it opened. The answer, received the same day, was a stiff reminder to the United States that

10Ibid., Volume 46; Wilson to William R. Day, Acting Secretary of State, July 9, 1898.
Chile needed no instructions as to how a neutral should conduct its affairs. The United States Minister, completely out of patience with his own government, was bold enough to question in rather strong terms the wisdom of the State Department in pursuing a course obviously based on spurious information. The only reason he had not protested before, he wrote, was that he had no knowledge of the Department's source of information. 11 The Department explained that "... repeated reports of our Naval Attaché at London as to the alleged sale were so positive and circumstantial, and apparently fully warranted by offers of sale made to himself, that the Department was not at liberty to take chances."12

Latorre's rather spiteful reply to Wilson's note was not altogether due to pique over the O'Higgins affair. Fear that Spain might resort to privateering in the war led the State Department to warn its consuls and ministers to be especially watchful for any suspicious outfitting of armed vessels in neutral ports. 13 The American Envoy in Chile took his responsibilities seriously and relayed his instructions, with some embellishment, to the consuls under

11 Ibid.
12 Instructions from the State Department, Volume 12; Day to Wilson, August 15, 1898.
13 Ibid., Volume 12; Sherman to Wilson, April 15, 1898.
under his jurisdiction. He kept a vigilant personal watch himself, even formulating a special code system for secret communications with them. To an admonition by the United States that Chile observe certain well known rules of neutral conduct, Latorrê had already replied by a simple acknowledgement, refraining from expressing his government's real attitude toward this unusual display of suspicion. He felt it unnecessary to give repeated assurances of neutrality on the part of his government.

The enthusiasm with which Wilson sought to protect American interests during the Spanish-American War is best illustrated by his careful vigilance whenever ships of the United States Navy happened to be in the vicinity of Chile. The consul at Valparaíso, John F. Caples, with whom he was on quite friendly terms, reported intense feeling over the news of the expected arrival of the United States battleship Oregon in that port. The Minister considered this information important enough to merit personal investigation. He therefore immediately boarded a train to Valparaíso for a personal conference with Caples. The latter informed him

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14Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to U.S. Consuls in Chile; enclosure in Wilson to Sherman, April 23, 1898.

15Ibid.; Wilson to Sherman, April 26, 1898. The United States required that Chile observe the principles of the Declaration of 1856.
that certain men "whose names were known all over Chile," had warned him of a secret plot to destroy the American vessel. As this was a holiday, Caples and Wilson could not get in touch with the Foreign Office, but they did go to see the Intendant of Valparaíso, Don J. M. Cabeson Jordan. Jordan was not immediately alarmed over their story. He promised, however, that proper precautions would be taken to see that no harm came to the ship, and immediately set his men to work. By the next day he was able to report that such a plot did indeed exist. He brought the matter to the attention of the President of Chile at once, and received instructions to throw a cordon of police boats around the harbor allowing none but their own or boats belonging to American ships (the United States gunboat Marietta was also expected) to go near the foreign vessels.

But at nine o'clock the following morning the gunboat arrived alone. The Oregon had received advance notice of the hostile attitude of Chilean port cities and had continued on to Punta Arenas for coaling. It was later joined there by the Marietta. While the Marietta was in port at Valparaíso a rigid control system was exercised by the Chilean police, and cordial exchanges took place between the Chilean and American officials.

Wilson considered it necessary, upon returning to Santiago, to apologise to the Foreign Minister for his (Wilson's) irregular action, and to assure him that the Amer-
ican government would be highly pleased with the cooperative attitude shown by Chilean officials in the whole affair. Latorrée approved his precautionary measures whole-heartedly.\textsuperscript{16} The State Department, as Wilson had predicted, was pleased.\textsuperscript{17} It was this ability to act vigorously and according to good judgement that distinguished him in Theodore Roosevelt's mind from the "pink-tea" variety of diplomats.\textsuperscript{18}

Not all Chileans were hostile or apathetic toward the United States. A small nucleus of liberals sympathized with the American policy. A portion of the press upheld the Americans; and, while \textit{El Ferrocarril}, a journal with a reputation for fairness, remained neutral, its publishers were, as Wilson reported, "warmly in favor of the United States." The Minister had no doubts that the government would follow a politely neutral policy,\textsuperscript{19} but he never received the impression, as did the American Minister at Montevideo (from the Chilean Minister there) that the government of Chile was

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., April 11, 1898.

\textsuperscript{17}Instructions from the State Department, Volume 12; Day to Wilson, May 17, 1898.

\textsuperscript{18}See n. 24, Chapter III.

\textsuperscript{19}Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Sherman, May 20, 1898.
Gradually the sympathies of the intellectuals in Chile turned against Spain to such an extent that, as Wilson later recalled, "...many Chileans were claiming descent from Araucanian Indians in preference to Spanish grandees."21

One promising young Chilean writer produced a forty-two page pamphlet setting forth the problems which had brought the United States into war with Spain. He praised the course taken by the United States and deemed its action "worthy of the successors of Washington." His book was lauded highly by that portion of the press which was in sympathy with the McKinley policies. Even the more conservative newspapers called it "interesting."22

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20 Records of the United States Legation in Chile; Consular and Miscellaneous Communications Received, Volume 2; W. R. Finch, U.S. Minister to Uruguay to Wilson, June 2, 1899.

21 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 51.

22 Belisario García, Caracteres de la Guerra Hispano-Americana Pelote de Actualidad Internacional, "Juicios de la Prensa," by Alberto Prado Martínez (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta de La Leal, 1898). García later wrote several works dealing chiefly with Chilean economy and colonisation. The general tenor of this work is best illustrated by the following statement appearing on page 20: "All the world knows that the Antilles lie adjacent to the ports of the United States, and that the acts of barbarism, the unusual crimes, and the persecution of the foreign element during the struggle between Spain and the Revolution, has been effected with evident disregard of civilisation and of the material interests of the bordering nations.

"We do not recount these deeds to injure Spain, but to recognise a true international doctrine." A copy of this work appears in Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Day, June 11, 1899. Translation of the above excerpt is by the author.
A more friendly attitude toward the United States was also evidenced by the popularity of the American Embassy on the Fourth of July, the tender of congratulations by the Society of American Union (opposing colonialism) and even by the attitude of Minister Latorré who expressed his government's "sincere congratulations" in cordial terms.

It is possible that Wilson exaggerated the danger of Chilean aid to Spain, but he certainly did not invent the O'Higgins question or the plot at Valparaiso. Throughout the war he followed a firm, judicious and tactful course of action. By cooperating with the Chilean government to prevent hostile activity toward the United States he had a small part in the American victory, and at the same time played a major role in preserving the friendship and understanding of one South American republic.

There had been some cause for worry on the part of the United States that Spain might receive additions to her navy from sympathetic Latin countries. The most logical country to render such aid would be Chile as that republic depended on her navy as the first and main line of defense. Furthermore, Chile's international relations with her neighbors, especially Argentina, had led her to make vast

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23Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Day, July 6, 1898.

24Ibid.; Latorré to Wilson, August 13, 1898; enclosure in Wilson to Day, September 8, 1898.
increases in orders for naval vessels of the latest type. The boundary quarrel with Argentina stepped up the defense program until Chile was brought to the brink of financial ruin.

Chile and Argentina had been involved in negotiations for fixing the boundary between the two countries at various times during the past fifty years. After numerous attempts to arrive at a settlement the question had been allowed to drop but had been revived in 1876. Since that time negotiations had been carried on to the accompaniment of frayed tempers with little hope of settlement. In fact, this question of the line between the two countries presented at the time the greatest potential threat to peace in South America. By a treaty of 1861, the line was defined to follow "the highest peaks that divide the waters" along the Andean range between Chile and Argentina. This ambiguous phraseology was interpreted by each country as best suited its interest as it was soon discovered that the highest peaks were not always identical with those which constituted the watershed. A compromise was the only possible means of settling the issue; but the two countries continued to wrangle until the turn of the century. An expert from each government was appointed to work on the problem and in 1895, British arbitration was accepted. The efforts of both countries to influence the decision, however, hindered a solution and the dispute was reaching alarming proportions...
when Wilson arrived in Chile. 25 The Chilean army and navy were kept in top condition in preparation for any aggressive measures on the part of Argentina. 26

If the government of Chile was endeavoring to avert hostile action, the average citizen did not seem to reflect such calmness. Fear and resentment were evident to the American Minister on every hand. In January, 1898, Chilean emotion was stirred when an Argentine expert assigned to work on the boundary published a book that disclosed a national bias. The controversy now became a public affair. Newspapers reserved all available editorial space for discussion of the subject. The undercurrent of muttering observed on every hand in the latter part of 1897 had swelled into a wave of unbridled jingoism. Late in January mass meetings occurred in the larger cities where patriotic speeches were heatedly delivered and resolutions calling for a strict enforcement of treaty obligations upon Argentina were passed. The meeting which was convoked on January 24th in the city of Santiago, under the shadow of the O'Higgins statue on the main boulevard, was attended by an excited but orderly mob of four thousand people.

25 Galdames, History of Chile, 405. See also Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 45; Wilson to Sherman, January 25, 1898.

26 Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 45; Wilson to Sherman, October 6, 1897.
President Errásuris sought to pacify his people but the National Guard was increased to wartime proportions and a full training program was initiated. Congress had sat in extraordinary session since November, 1897, trying to save the country from bankruptcy in the face of preparedness. It was now dissolved, supposedly to give the Executive a freer hand with the boundary problem. Wilson did not feel that the government could hold a check rein on its subjects. Preparation for a shooting war continued and even the conservative section of the Chilean press joined in the clamor for action. Banks froze assets and business came almost to a standstill as all eyes turned upon the government for some hint of the direction in which it would go. The American Minister's fear that an ultimatum might be delivered to Argentina was well grounded, but fortunately, an attitude of discretion prevailed. Walker Martínez, the special envoy to the Argentine government for the purpose of dealing with the boundary dispute, gave an interview to the press pledging the Ministry's unyielding efforts to settle the question peacefully but warning that Chile should

27Ibid., January 25, 1898. "A brief way of putting the situation," wrote Wilson, "is that the people are for war and the Government for peace, if peace can be maintained without the sacrifice of national honor or the territories of the Republic."

28Ibid., March 7, 1898.
not meanwhile disarm. The American Minister concluded from this that the time for finding a diplomatic solution was growing extremely short.

The development of such an unusual crisis led to a startling departure from Chile's traditional financial structure. Unlike most rising young states, Chile's wealthy, landholding minority generally favored inflation since this class could profit from foreign trade while not suffering from internal depression of the economy. Inflation, however, was severe in its operation on the masses of the workers. It became necessary therefore to convince the Chilean people that a policy of "soft money" was necessary in the present emergency. A financial analyst discussing Chile's problems at this time believed that the

29Martínez warned that Chile would neglect no detail of national preparedness adding that he would gladly sign, if necessary a mortgage on the Plaza de Armas. "It will be all the better," he affirmed, "if, on the day of the definite treaty and sincere embrace, the occasion is solemnized by a parade of two hundred thousand soldiers before the olive branch." La Tarde, Santiago, Chile, May 11, 1898.

30"The failure of diplomacy to find a remedy for the situation within the next two months," he wrote Sherman, "will in my judgement, bring the government to the point of believing that which perhaps the majority of the people here believe, i.e. that the question between the two countries can only be settled by an appeal to arms." Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Sherman, May 19, 1898.

31Frank W. Fetter, Monetary Inflation in Chile (Princeton, New Jersey, 1931), 107-108.
underlying cause of the cry for paper money was the belief on the part of many upper class Chileans that the gold standard was the real cause of depression. They were proud of Chile's foreign credit but did not mind dropping the gold standard in time of peace if "someone else" should start the movement. No individual was willing to risk disapproval by proposing it.

War fever reached a high pitch in Chile in June of 1898 as the boundary crisis grew hopeless of settlement. Senate sessions were held daily in secret and this caused uncertainty in the minds of the people as to what financial measures the government might take. Thus it was within the realm of probability that Chile might seek a way out of her financial difficulties by disposing of a costly naval vessel or two on the ways in England at wartime prices. As we have seen, no such sale was made, either because it was never seriously considered or else the risk of incurring the enmity of the United States was too great. At any rate, attention seems to have been centered more on financial manipulations by cabinet members and legislators as they made the decision to issue paper money. News of these manipulations leaking to the public helped to start a run on

\[\text{32 Ibid., 109.}\]
\[\text{33 Ibid., 106-107.}\]
the Bank of Chile. This financial collapse was followed by a four day bank holiday proclaimed by President Errázuris on July 6, 1898, and on July 11th by a thirty day moratorium declared by Congress. The causes and effects of this financial crisis were keenly observed by the American Minister and reported in a long dispatch in which he gave a lucid analysis of the financial condition of the country, showing its effect upon business and foreign trade and relating it to the prospect of war with Argentina.

Meanwhile, the boundary commission made up of experts from both countries continued with new vigor to try to reach an agreement. Its report was not expected until around the latter part of August, or the first part of September. No complete diplomatic break would take place until that time. Wilson believed that when the commission had finished its work, each government would accept the report of its own commissioner, and that Chile would then demand that the question be submitted for arbitration, supposedly to the

34Ibid., 107.

35Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Day, August 19, 1898. When one considers that Wilson had no consular staff or body of experts such as are furnished even small foreign establishments abroad today, the statistics and their interpretation given in this dispatch reflect hard work and skill on the part of the American Minister.
British government. The State Department tendered good offices through Wilson, though the latter was confident that the offer would be rejected. In fact, the American Minister was being drawn more and more closely toward the Chilean side of the question as is revealed in his dispatches from this point on. The attitude of Argentina toward the work of the commission may have influenced his thinking.

Argentina agreed to submit the southern part of the line to the arbitration of the British government but refused to include the matter of the Puna de Atacama claiming that it was not a subject on which a compromise was possible. In the face of this virtual ultimatum the Chilean National Guard was further reinforced while regular troops were hastily dispatched to points along the boundary. Wilson was given permission by the Department to correspond directly with William I. Buchanan, the head of the United States Legation in Argentina, in an effort to help find a way of settlement. The former believed now that the real Argentine

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36 Ibid., September 16, 1896.
37 Ibid., August 8, 1896.
38 The Puna de Atacama is a high plateau containing valuable salt deposits known as salars. It lies just north of the 26th parallel of southern latitude where the Andean range is divided up to about the 25th parallel to form a high valley. This complete division of the range, combined with the far greater value of the region, presented more considerable difficulties than those encountered in fixing the southern boundary.
attitude "uncloaked of diplomacy" was as follows:

First: That any arbitration under the existing treaties will result in the affirmation of the correctness of the Chilean contentions.

Second: That if arbitration can be avoided, Chile, in her present financial straits, will be unable to make effective armed resistance to the demands of the Argentine.

Third: That by evading arbitration, she will ultimately gain that which she would ultimately probably lose by accepting it.™

The full extent of Wilson's intervention in the dispute at this point is difficult to ascertain. He believed that it was chiefly upon his recommendation that Buchanan was chosen to arbitrate the Puna de Atacama boundary. The need for good offices was pressing. War feeling was at the exploding point; only the British Minister and the President of Chile were able to restrain Martínez from publishing an

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39Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Day, August 8, 1898.

40Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 59. "Intervening quietly," said Wilson, "in this delicate situation, I suggested - whether under instruction or not I do not recall - that the differences in the event of the failure of the two governments to come to an agreement, should be submitted to the arbitration of a commission headed by . . . Buchanan . . . . After numerous diplomatic exchanges and consultation, the Chilean government, with some misgivings, I think, accepted this plan of settlement and Mr. Buchanan . . . immediately entered upon his duties . . . ."

Wilson's recommendation of Buchanan was not improper provided the recommendation originated with one of the two governments. See Instructions from the State Department, Volume 46; Day to Wilson, July 26, 1898.
ultimatum he had drawn up for presentation to the Argentine government. 41

At this moment the Chilean Foreign Minister sought an interview with Wilson during the course of which he suggested that Buchanan might be acceptable as an arbitrator on the Puna de Atacama boundary. The American Minister, in reporting this conversation, does not even hint that such a suggestion on the part of the Foreign Minister came as a result of any prodding on his part. He simply replied that his government would be pleased to hear of this willingness to accept the offices of the United States, and that he could recommend Buchanan highly. 42

Buchanan proved acceptable to both governments and succeeded, if not in winning the affection of either, at least in fixing the Puna boundary once and for all. In most cases his decisions were compromises between the Chilean and Argentine claims. The commission, slated to meet December 1, 1898, did not begin its work until March of 1899.

41Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Day, October 31, 1898.

42When, almost a year later, the Chilean press attacked Buchanan for having supposedly initiated a proposal made to the Chilean government by Argentina to remunerate him for his services with a sum of twenty thousand pounds, Wilson complained that since he had been "in some measure responsible for Buchanan's selection" his own position, "had been in some measure affected by the disagreeable publicity given to the proposal." For his report to the Department on the effect of the proposal upon Chilean public opinion see Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Hay, August 9, 1898, and the enclosed press clippings.
The bitter attacks upon the American arbitrator by the press of both countries was convincing evidence to his colleague in Chile that a "fair and impartial series of compromises" had been handed down. Hostilities were averted for the present and the meeting of the presidents of the two countries in the Straits of Magellan gave assurance of more cordial relations in the future. But the people on each side were not satisfied. Each country tried to discredit the other in the eyes of the British arbitrator on the southern boundary. In Wilson's opinion, the intervention of the United States in the dispute had been successful only in preventing an immediate war. Hoping for a promotion and transfer to another post, he took leave of absence early in 1901, and sailed with his family to the States only to be directed by President McKinley to return quickly to Chile. This dispute had grown worse. He never saw McKinley again and the removal of the President by an assassin's bullet destroyed a great deal of Wilson's influence at Washington. He halfway expected that his diplomatic career would shortly be at an end. His business-like procedure and devotion to

43 Ibid., April 11, 1898.
44 Galdames, History of Chile, 406.
45 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 59.
46 Ibid., 59-60.
duty was becoming a part of his record, however, and his usefulness in Chile at this time was undisputed.
III

THE FRUITS OF DIPLOMACY IN CHILE

The American Minister to Chile had made many friendships in that country and he had developed a more than average respect for this small, but courageous, Latin American republic. His desire for a transfer was not based on dislike of the country to which he was accredited but on personal reasons. Nevertheless, his acquaintance with affairs in Chile decreed that he be returned there at least for the present.

Returning to Santiago, he found war fever at a new high. Both Chile and Argentina were spending exorbitant sums of money in a race for military supremacy and, although the financial crisis had passed, Chile could scarcely hope to attain financial stability in the face of a threatened outbreak of hostilities. The most practical aid that could be rendered by bystanders was to edge both countries toward a peaceful settlement. The precedent had been set by peaceful solutions on other parts of the boundary.

The American Minister was by now lauded for his representation of Chile's position to his superiors in Washington as reported in the American press. The Chileans wanted to express their gratitude in a concrete way and a costly banquet was arranged; but Wilson soon discovered other rea-
sons for his popularity. He was approached almost immedi-
ately by the President of the Republic in person on the
possibility of purchasing two war ships from the United
States. Wilson countered with the advice that Chile adopt
a more peaceful attitude. Tension along the border, however,
made the only alternative to war a rapid and constructive
modus vivendi and Wilson engaged in active efforts to assist
the British Minister, Gerald Lowther, in bringing it about.
Wilson himself would not have been acceptable as an arbi-
trator since his views of sympathy for Chile were too well
known. He does not, however, appear to have been guilty of
any public statement during the affair that could have been
termed unfriendly to Argentina. He did take advantage of
the respect accorded him by the Chilean government to advise
peaceful measures in the developing crisis. His son told
the author that he suggested the "Christ of the Andes," a
statue which was later erected on the boundary. This may
not have originated with him and there is no reference to it
in his dispatches or memoirs but it was his duty to be a
peacemaker and he certainly would have given every encoura-
gement to the establishment of a lasting peace between the two
countries. He could not help showing, however, his personal
leaning toward Chile's contentions. His official attitude
was strict and proper, but his reports to the State Depart-
ment leave no doubt as to his real convictions. It was
almost inevitable that this partiality in feeling would lead
him into embarrassment. He finally had to explain an attitude which he had never officially expressed.

On the 31st of December, El Mercurio published the report of a conference between the American Secretary of State, John Hay, and the Chilean Minister in Washington. It was asserted that a telegram from Wilson to the State Department had confirmed the statements of the Chilean representative to the effect that Chile rejected the new "modifications" made by Argentina in the protocols, that the Argentines were "enemies of peace," and that a satisfactory arrangement became "more remote every day." Wilson promptly denied the report, calling it a "false telegram," and asserting in an interview with El Mercurio that he had never interpreted Argentine motives in his correspondence with the State Department. He realized that it was not his duty to do so; this was in the province of the United States Minister to Argentina. By way of further exoneration of himself he then reviewed the contents of his last telegram to the Department which reported what he believed to be the favorable termination of the dispute. El Mercurio printed his statements along with those of the "false telegram" but it was probably the latter that made the most lasting impression on public opinion.

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1El Mercurio, Santiago, Chile, December 31, 1901.
It may be interesting to examine this little incident in some detail, since Wilson's entire diplomatic career was marked by indignant denials of press stories unfavorable toward his actions or motives. He could never see the validity of public judgement of his conduct in moral terms as long as he could stand on technical correctness. Not one single telegram of Wilson's to the Department contained phraseology on which to base all of the statements alleged to have been contained in the "false telegram." All of his messages on the subject, taken as a whole, summed up reasonably well the opinion actually held by the American Minister. It was unfair to attribute to him a message which he did not send even though the views expressed therein actually represented his own; but if these views had not been known, there would have been no basis for a "false telegram."

Let us analyse his telegrams to the Department during this period. The first one in question was sent on November 27th. After summarising the events leading up to the new disputes, it said:

The situation between Chile and the Argentine Republic difficult but not dangerous necessarily. Chile desires peace. Negotiations proceeding amicably.²

It would appear that the "false telegram" was a distortion of the wording of this message, especially the phrase "Chile desires peace." The obvious insinuation was that Argentina

²Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 48; Wilson to Hay, November 27, 1901.
was aggressive. As the dispute developed over the phraseology of protocol, Wilson dispatched a second communication on December 9th, informing the Department that Chile would accept the good offices of the United States. Some two weeks later, negotiations still proceeding, the differences had been amplified and war seemed imminent. Wilson's report of December 22nd, read: "Argentine minister about to retire from Chile. Government of the Argentine Republic alleging diplomacy exhausted." But instead, an agreement was reached on the following day establishing a modus vivendi pending the arbitral decision of Great Britain. The negotiators were still far apart but a complete break had been prevented. The Argentine Minister's attempt to have parts of the agreement changed, in accord with the "modifications" referred to in the "false telegram," met with no success. Wilson did notify the Department of Chile's objections to modifications in the protocols.

That part of the "false telegram" which credited him with a pessimistic opinion of the outcome of the negotiations seems to have been more completely a fabrication. First of all, Wilson's telegrams and dispatches during the

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3Ibid., December 22, 1901.
4Ibid., December 23, 1901.
5Ibid., December 25, 1901.
whole course of the negotiations, whatever might have been his private thoughts, reveal that his official estimate of the outcome varied with each new turn of events. He was well aware of the uncertain element in the Latin temper and of the mutual distrust which prevailed. He seems, however, to have endeavored conscientiously to predict as accurately as possible the problems that might arise. It was his habit of wanting his government to be prepared for any possible contingency that left him open for criticism. There is little reason to charge him with constant pessimism in his reports. He tried to report the facts and trends as he saw them. In fact, he was never extremely alarmed about this present problem. He sent no wire to the Department relative to the new crisis after December 25th; thus, if the charge of an improper attitude was to be sustained it would have to refer to the period after that date. Since El Mercurio published the "false telegram" on December 31st, the assumption is that the public was being referred to some message sent after the 25th of December.

The charge that such a telegram was sent was manifestly false and the State Department approved Wilson's course in denying its authorship. Secretary Hay must have been amused at his Minister's careful concern with technicalities. Wilson quoted his message of December 25th to the Department as proof that he had sent no message after that date. Hay could not have been unaware of Wilson's real sentiments. To
the leaders of Chilean society the American Minister's hasty
denial of the "false telegram" represented no change in his
attitude of partiality. He suffered no loss of prestige in
Chile.

As is well known, British arbitration was accepted by
both countries and a treaty of perpetual peace was drawn up.
By May of 1902, all differences had been resolved and peace
was established, allowing Chile to embark on the journey to
greater financial stability. While provision had been made
in 1898 for the eventual retirement of the paper money
issues, resumption could not be carried into effect during
a war scare. Even in January of 1902, the state of Chilean
resources did not permit the operation of the law of 1898.
This law provided for retirement of the paper but President
Riesco had another law passed postponing resumption of
specie payments until 1905. Wilson reported, however, that
there was no more talk of cheap money and unlimited govern­
ment issues as there had been in 1898. In his opinion,
Chile was now as sound in money as any other country.\textsuperscript{6}

This was gratifying to the party in power in the United
States, the party that had sent Henry Lane Wilson to Chile.
It had been an outstanding leader of that party, James G.
Blaine, who had urged closer trade relations between the
United States and Latin America just a few years before Wilson

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid., January 3, 1902.
went to Chile. Fear of the size and proximity of the northern neighbor and a long standing orientation toward Europe had kept Blaine's idea in the embryo stage. Increased trade would have to wait upon more receptive attitudes and the time when Latin American countries would see the value of closer commercial ties with the United States.

The test of a diplomat's usefulness to his country in the broadest sense is the skill with which he harmonises relations between it and the country to which he is accredited. Although Wilson had an exaggerated opinion of his own talents and accomplishments, the records show that real credit is due him in this respect. Evidence could be seen on every hand by the turn of the century that relations between the two countries, Chile and the United States, were becoming more permanently cordial. Not the least manifestation of growing mutual respect was the increase in commercial exchanges.

Chilean commercial and cultural ties bound her close to the old world and the problem of increasing Chilean trade with the United States was as difficult as anything else that the American Minister was called upon to do there. Chilean officialdom and society might accord the American Minister lavish praise in the Latin manner, but hard-headed business men chose to buy where they could obtain long term credit and familiar products. The public in Chile had to be shown the merit of American-made goods before merchants could
handle them. Moreover, increased buying power would have to be created by a greater demand in the United States for Chilean products. Chileans also preferred to deal with foreigners who thought enough of them to learn their language. Not much progress along these lines had been made previous to Wilson's time and it is a minor tribute to him that he set about learning the Spanish language as soon as he reached Chile, though there is no evidence that he was ever very fluent in it. One cannot have the necessary opportunity to do this, even when residing in a foreign country and dealing with foreigners in an official way when daily contacts remain primarily in an American colony. Wilson showed perhaps only slightly more interest in speaking the native tongue than many other Americans who are privileged to live in a foreign city.

But learning the language of the country was only a small part of the work to be done. The foremost authority on relations between Chile and the United States in this period had this to say:

The greatest handicap with which the United States was forced to contend in its aim to be the recognised leader of American republics was its lack of material business interests in so many of the larger countries. Nowhere was this more evident than in Chile.  

British sovereigns were much more in demand than American

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7Evans, Chile and its Relations with the United States, 155.
gold coins; and American consulates were, in many cases, in shameful condition. Yet, despite the increasing burden borne by the Legation in dealing with consular matters, the State Department refused to appoint a vice-consul. Americans did seek markets in the country and the Embassy received numerous requests for aid in establishing trade contacts.

The Legation rendered all of the help it could to foster

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8 The Vice-Consul at Antofagasta reported that "... Americans and travelers generally would serve their commercial interests in bringing British sovereigns to the coast rather than American gold. For the former there is always a fair rate of exchange, while American gold is little known except in larger commercial centers like Valparaiso, and in interior towns its sale is exceedingly slow." Senate Document No. 176, Volume II, 55th Congress, 2nd Session; printed in Monthly Bulletin of the Bureau of American Republics, 771.

9 A case in point was the part-time consulate at Talcahuano which in 1895, was transformed into a regular consular agency. The consul, an employee of a Chilean commission house, treated the emblems of the United States attached to the office with much disrespect and plowed over the graves of the Protestant cemetery under his care.

Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 47; Petition from American citizens in Talcahuano, Chile; enclosure in Wilson to Hay, April 2, 1900.

10 The controversy over the boundary evoked this interesting request of the Minister: "We hereby enclose some facts regarding the use of our guns by the United States Government in the recent Spanish-American War. We should be pleased if you would call the attention of the proper parties to this matter as an aid to a great and growing American industry." Consular and Miscellaneous Communications Received, Volume 2; Sims-Dudley Defense Company to Wilson, March 4, 1899.
sound, legitimate enterprise and encouraged any effort that had prospect of succeeding. Wilson was equally quick, however, to counsel against the needless investment of money in business efforts that were certain not to produce returns. Commercial expansion was, however, taking place and Wilson contributed to it. He was already becoming well known to American enterprisers seeking extension of markets and many who had received the aid of the Legation wrote complimentary and unsolicited letters to the State Department praising its Minister in Chile for his efforts on behalf of business.\footnote{The following are examples: "Being somewhat largely interested in the South American States as President of the Signal Oil Company of Pennsylvania I desire to express to you my gratification of the efforts of the Hon. Henry L. Wilson, our minister to Chile, by all consistent methods to render practical and substantial assistance to those seeking to develop American commerce in Chile . . . ." Again: "We had occasion recently to notice the activity in behalf of American interests, of the Hon. Henry L. Wilson . . . . "The incident furnishes very eloquent evidence of the fact that the Minister is on the qui vive to protect in every appropriate way, the interests of American institutions. . . ." Consular and Miscellaneous Communications Received, Volume 2.}
to become a full-fledged member of the organisation on February 3, 1899.\(^{12}\) He rendered valuable assistance to Buchanan, former Minister to Argentina, who became Manager of the Pan American Exhibition of 1900. The efforts of these two men resulted in Chile's enthusiastic participation in the Exhibition.\(^{13}\) The Minister to Chile was taken on a tour of the country in 1901, at the expense of the Chilean government, traveling on a special train throughout the central and southern regions. This excursion was one of many opportunities he had to see Chile's economic possibilities. Although no startling or rapid increase in trade between the two countries occurred, the envoy was ever on the alert for new business opportunities and he had a definite part in laying the groundwork for future improvement of commercial

\(^{12}\)Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 46; Wilson to Hay, March 6, 1899, and House Document 175, Part 2, 56th Congress, 1st Session, 1375-1376.

\(^{13}\)Wilson, however, gave much of the credit to President Errázuriz. Wilson to Hay, October 3, 1900. The Council of State in October, 1900, passed a decree providing for a Commissioner General for the Chilean exhibit. This exhibit ranked third, being exceeded only by those of the United States and Mexico. Sherman, Diplomatic and Commercial Relations of the United States and Chile, 203. See also Instructions from the State Department, Volume 13; Buchanan to Hay, January 3, 1901; enclosure in Hill to Wilson, January 11, 1901.
His sympathetic attitude toward the country and its people also helped to dispel some of the suspicion entertained by Chile, as by other Latin American republics for El Coloso del Norte. Increasing friendliness toward the United States was evidenced by the respect and cordiality shown to its representative. On the Fourth of July, when there are always celebrations and receptions at American posts abroad, Wilson was feted lavishly and was moved to some sentiments that were probably well received if somewhat exaggerated:

"I have been told," he orated, "that it is a diplomatic error for me to express a high opinion of the Chilean people. If it be a diplomatic duty to seek the faults rather than the virtues of a people, then it is a 'custom more honored in the breach than in the observance,' and I see no reason for accepting its mandates. I confess to a sincere admiration for Chile and the Chileans. I find you a brave, industrious, hardy and patriotic people, preserving the best traditions of the race from which you sprang."

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14Wilson agreed with Caples, the American consul at Valparaiso, that the extension of Chilo-English shipping lines to San Francisco in 1897, would aid American interests, but it was to be regretted "that the carrying trade of the west coast of North and South America should be in hands other than those of the American Merchant Marine." Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 45; Wilson to Sherman, November 12, 1897. The occasion for this comment was the extension of the Compañía Sud Americana de Vapores and the Pacific Steam Navigation Company jointly from Panama to San Francisco.
The newspaper that printed this message added:

there does not exist between the two countries at the moment any question to be settled, there can be no quarrels about the demarcation of frontiers, commercial competition is out of the question, and there is no divergence of opinion with regard to international doctrine.15

Another editor was even willing to have his own country accept the blame for the Baltimore incident:

The moment has arrived to admit that a great part of the responsibility for these events was ours.
Slow and erratic was the action of the civic authorities in Valparaiso; slow and erratic the action of the tribunals of justice; stupid was the government, and a thousand times more stupid was our diplomacy in the lamentable case . . . , and also in the other incidents which maintained us on the verge of an abyss.

The ultimate in self-humiliation had been reached. Even Wilson could hardly surpass such eloquent self-criticism:

There was even impressive evidence that Chile's attitude toward the United States was permanent. Genuine sympathy was shown on the occasion of President McKinley's untimely death by an assassin's bullet.17 Only a few Chilean newspapers cried "Imperialism" when American troops landed in Panama in 1903, and, although the general attitude

15 El Porvenir, Santiago, Chile, July 20, 1901.
16 La Tardé, Santiago, Chile, July 4, 1901.
17 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 75-76, and Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 48; Wilson to Hay, October 5, 1901.
in the Venezuelan crisis was one of sympathy toward Germany, the bombardment of San Carlos shocked Chileans as it did Americans into reflection upon the principles of the Monroe Doctrine.\(^\text{18}\) The Chilean government, anxious to best Argentina, even created embarrassment by insisting upon the rendering of port services to the United States Navy without charge, a thing which could not be permitted, of course.\(^\text{19}\)

There was not even a great deal of resentment when, with his characteristic desire to insure protection of American business interests, Wilson recommended that the United States station one or two ships permanently in Chilean and Peruvian waters. The occasion for this was a series of labor riots at Valparaiso in 1903; and rumors of such naval action led to speculation among Chileans about intervention. Wilson felt that if ships were stationed nearby at a time when no difficulties existed the "appearance of unwelcome interference" would be avoided while at the same time we would be

\(^{18}\)Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 49; Hutchinson to Hay, September 29, 1902, and Wilson to Hay, January 26, 1903.

\(^{19}\)Instructions from the State Department, Volume 14; Hay to Wilson, January 10, 1903.
"in a position to protect American interests." 20

The role of Henry Lane Wilson in the betterment of Chilo-American relations was clearly set forth in a report sent to the State Department by Norman Hutchinson, Wilson's Secretary of Legation. He observed that:

The position that the members of a Legation have in a social sphere not infrequently stands as the criterion of the political position a Legation may enjoy in relation to the cordiality or restraint existing between two independent states. In this respect, the United States Legation at Santiago is an example of a Legation standing high socially and politically. From every source, and even in Lima, and on the Steamer coming down the west coast, I have heard nothing but praise for the Minister and for the manner in which he has, by his cordial and sympathetic personal intercourse with Chilean people, and by his attention to, and appreciation of, their institutions, brought this Legation into a social and political position which it has not hitherto enjoyed since the unfortunate affair of 1891. From being the most disliked of foreigners, we have come to be the most liked and admired, and our Minister is undoubtedly the most popular foreign representative in Chile, or that has been in Chile within the ordinary memory of man. This change of sentiment, brought about mainly by the personal character of our representative has, I under-

20 Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 50; Wilson to Hay, June 19, 1903. It should be noted that the suggestion that the United States have vessels stand by, did not originate with Wilson. The British Ambassador had, in the early days of the riots, addressed a confidential note to the State Department inquiring if, in the event of serious trouble, the United States would have any war vessels stationed around Valparaiso. Instructions from the State Department, Volume 14; A. A. Adee, acting Secretary of State to Wilson, August 26, 1903.

Great Britain had, since the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, relinquished more and more of the responsibility of naval policing around the western hemisphere to the United States in acknowledgement of the Monroe Doctrine.
stand, done something for our country commercially, as we have risen, in this respect from the seventh to the third place during Mr. Wilson's tenure of office here. I am not unmindful of the fact also that this good feeling for our country has deepened since the recent Pan-American Congress for the Chileans believe that the United States and their republic drew somewhat closer together as regards certain questions.

The Chileans are a virile, progressive, and sensible people, and I believe they are growing more like us, if not imitating us more, every day. The social and political position needs to be maintained by a Minister who will treat them as Mr. Wilson has done; and I believe the trade of the United States will gain an impetus therefrom. Only the fact that our United States merchants, manufacturers and steamship lines find plenty to do at home and elsewhere, can be an excuse for not paying more attention to the trade with Chile.

The final expression of Chile's respect for the American Minister was not given until long after the termination of his service there. The Faculty of Philosophy, Humanities, and Fine Arts of the National University of Chile bestowed upon him the title of Honorary member of that body on July 12, 1911, after he had become Ambassador to Mexico. His diploma, sent to him through the Chilean Legation at Mexico City, was accompanied by the following message:

In transmitting the resolution adopted by the said institution to his Excellency, Mr. Wilson, you will have the goodness to make known to the distinguished American diplomat, the great satisfaction with which the Government of Chile approves of this designation which it considers not only a just recognition

21 Diplomatic dispatches from Chile, Volume 48; Hutchinson to Hay, March 8, 1902.
of his intellectual gifts but a cordial testimonial of appreciation of the constant proofs of affection with which His Excellency, Mr. Wilson has earned the gratitude of our country. 22

Wilson took an extended leave of absence in 1902, and after a tour of Europe, returned to Washington, D.C. prepared to tender his resignation from the diplomatic service. He did not suppose that President Theodore Roosevelt would have any interest in promoting him and he did not desire to continue in the service without some recognition. He was relieved, however, to learn that the new President had studied his work in Chile and approved of it. Roosevelt had a great deal of respect for the kind of forcefulness and loyalty to the ideals of his country and party exhibited by Wilson. Secretary of State John Hay was also satisfied with him and in consequence, Roosevelt assured him that he desired very much that he remain in the service; he promised to promote him at the first suitable opportunity. Wilson was anxious to give his children better educational facilities than were available in Chile and doubtless had other reasons also for desiring a more inviting post.

The expected transfer was to be much later than anticipated. He spent several months in the State of Washington during which time a general reshuffling occurred in the State Department but Wilson's name was not included in the roster.

22Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 105-106.
of appointees. It was not until he arrived in Panama on route to Chile that he learned of his appointment to Greece. Secretary Hay, however, made it clear that this was not really a promotion. Wilson leaned heavily on the advice of his brother John L. who advised him to decline the appointment even at the risk of annoying the President. When, however, Roosevelt learned the circumstances he determined to "take the earliest possible opportunity of repairing the injury. . . ." 23 The "opportunity" proved to be months away and in the Spring of 1904, Wilson sent his family to the States. He followed them in July.

It happened that President Roosevelt needed Wilson's help in the presidential election of 1904. The Minister to Chile was given a prosaic, if somewhat difficult task, in connection with the political campaign. Although this deprived him of a vacation it was undoubtedly of great value in the furthering of his career. He was mildly surprised a little later when, after going to the State of Washington to aid, "in a quiet way," the senatorial campaign of his brother, he received notice that the President expected him to return to Chile temporarily and to leave from there to go to a European post. He did not relish the idea of suffering the embarrassment and expense of going to Chile only to terminate his residence and threatened to resign from the

23 Ibid., 93.
service if forced to do so. Instead of accepting his resignation, the Department arranged matters so that he could report to a new post without returning to Chile.

His brother was defeated in the senatorial race and the incumbent senators from Washington were political foes of the Wilsons. Consequently his diplomatic career was again jeopardized by the protest of these men to President Roosevelt's proceeding with his appointment. Roosevelt, however, overrode the rules of senatorial courtesy and retained Wilson in the service, replying to the senators from Washington that he was not "appointing" Wilson but transferring him from one post to another. It was unusual at this time for appointments of such importance to be made on the basis of merit even though Roosevelt's decision was partly influenced, as it undoubtedly was, by Wilson's services to the party.

The appointment was to the legation in Brussels, Belgium. It was a promotion to a post where he would have increased responsibility in ceremonials and protocol. No outstanding problems were anticipated. For those who were believed to merit further promotion, it was a recognized training ground. Belgium proved to be an interlude in a career that involved

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24Ibid., 112. See also Elting E. Morison, editor, The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951-54), IV, 1089-90. Roosevelt wrote Richard Harding Davis, January 3, 1905 that Wilson was distinctly different from the "pink-tea" type of diplomat who infested the service, and that he had done good, hard work in an obscure South American post. He proposed, therefore, to promote him.
the greatest length of service in Latin America. It was, however, an important four years in his personal advancement. His duties were much lighter than they had been in Chile and he had more opportunity to travel. Apparently he took full advantage of it. Arriving in Belgium, he found that he could not take over his post at Brussels immediately without offending the departing minister. Hence, he enjoyed a tour of Paris before presenting his credentials and entering upon his duties. He returned to Brussels in a few days to take up his residence and present himself officially to the king.

It was his first experience with monarchy and his official reception by a monarch was a novel experience. Although unused to court ceremonies and somewhat amused by the trappings of royalty, he found King Leopold the "least ceremonious of all his court" and got off to a fine start with the old king. He even persuaded the monarch to set up the first golf links in Brussels and had the honor of being the first person to "tee off" on them.

By and large, the personal associations of the Legation and of the diplomatic corps were pleasant. Robert Woods Bliss, a man destined to render important service in his own right, soon became the Secretary of the Legation and Wilson was pleased with him. The Minister also renewed an old acquaintance with Francisco de la Barra, then the Mexican Minister to Belgium. The two diplomats had been officially
received on the same day. There was no American colony in Brussels but the British colony was large and the Wilsons made a number of friends among them. The family, indeed, spent their summer vacations in England.

There were few diplomatic problems of any importance and the Minister was not overworked. He was unable to persuade his superiors not to sell American interests in the Canton-Hankow Railroad to the Chinese government, a matter of great importance to King Leopold whose holdings were secretly carried by American bankers. The King also expressed his displeasure at times with the criticism by the United States of his policies in the Congo. Wilson observed that Leopold was not a popular king though "admired for his kingly qualities." In the summer of 1907, Wilson attended the Republican Convention in Chicago, the Convention which nominated his future superior, William Howard Taft, for the presidency. Returning to Europe, he toured Italy and reported to his post only to be invited to attend the Hague Conference as guest of the American Minister to the Nether-

25 Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 131.

26 Ibid., 148-49.


28 Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 153.
lands. Here he met a number of notables in the diplomatic service.

Not long afterwards he learned that the Department wished to transfer him. His destiny was once more uncertain. When he heard that he was to be sent to Russia he protested that this would be too expensive for him. Austria was rejected for the same reason and he requested that he be considered for the post of Mexico. Although there have been some hints of manipulation in his transfer to this latter post, it may be said that one does not have to go far afield in order to discover reasons why such an appointment would have been attractive to him. It was a promotion to the rank of ambassador and a place near home. He was not always in the best of health and his mother became seriously ill during his tour in Mexico. His brother, John L., died in 1912. Thus the urge to be near his family was sufficient reason for desiring this appointment.

But he was not the only person being considered. Another name was being placed while his own was submitted to the government of Turkey for preliminary approval. In fact, it was virtually settled that he would be sent to Turkey.

But the man in prospect for the Mexican post turned it down at the last minute and Wilson was notified in October, 1909, of his own appointment to that country. He was anxious to make the change but there were long delays. Among them was the President's desire that he stay and attend the funeral
of King Leopold who died while Wilson was receiving his new assignment. This duty was followed shortly by that of attending, as special Ambassador, the coronation ceremonies for the new King Albert. Despite the attitude of the deceased Leopold toward those powers whom he considered to be meddling in his Congo affairs, the old King had treated the Wilsons with special friendliness in the last days of his life and the Minister to Belgium left that country with many warm memories. His eagerness to get to his new post was dampened only by the reluctance he felt in severing his official relations with the new monarch whom he also liked and respected.

In March of 1910, Wilson was officially received by Porfirio Díaz, President and dictator of Mexico. This was an assignment with much greater responsibility and Wilson had proved himself to be worthy of it. He took up his new duties with the confidence and diplomatic maturity that twelve years in the service had given him. Both the letter and the spirit of instructions sent to him by Taft and Knox were followed conscientiously. His tour in Mexico might have been much longer but for the victory of Woodrow Wilson in the election of 1912.
IV

THE CRISIS OF BIG BUSINESS IN MEXICO

By the time Henry Lane Wilson arrived to take up his duties at the Mexican post the stability of that country was already being threatened by the rise of an opposition party against the incumbent dictator, Porfirio Díaz. The anti-Díaz movement, crystallizing around young Francisco I. Madero, was already gaining momentum; the government of the old dictator was tottering.

The story of "diaspotism" is so well known that it need not be recounted here in detail. Porfirio Díaz had established order in Mexico in the 1870's making it attractive to investors of foreign capital. He then began granting inducements and concessions to these foreign investors. A well-organized police force maintained unprecedented order. Many foreigners, a large number of them Americans, came to reside in the country and millions of dollars were invested in mining, stock-raising, railways, agriculture and other profitable ventures. About half of this imported capital was of American origin and, since 1900, a considerable amount had been invested in the oil resources of the country. British oil interests were also granted heavy concessions and there is some evidence that Díaz planned to increase these British holdings to offset dominance by American oil companies.
Thus, Díaz had become the chief of a well policed and growing economic empire. Not only was this fact appreciated by interested foreigners, but also by a growing group of wealthy Mexicans who eventually formed themselves into something resembling a party known as the "científicos." The financial genius of this group was Díaz' Minister of Hacienda, José Ives Limantour. The profits accruing to those fortunate enough to be counted in the ranks of the científicos were made possible, as they saw it, only by the kind of government provided by Díaz. They soon realised that an end of dictatorship would mean ipso facto an end of the syndicate, especially should the Díaz regime be succeeded by some form of democratic rule. This group was disposed to preserve the status quo.

The continuance of order and stability in Mexico was also of great interest to a number of Americans reaping profits there, both investors from outside of the country and American residents in Mexico. It was, indeed, the avowed policy of the Taft - Knox administration to encourage foreign investments as a means of increasing American influence in those areas where the maintenance of peace and the status quo was of vital interest to the United States. This was the real meaning of "dollar diplomacy." As has been shown, Henry Lane Wilson considered the expansion of foreign commerce an important phase of his work. It was only natural that Wilson should strongly favor the existing regime in Mexico. There
is no evidence that he had concerned himself with the welfare of the masses of the people either in the United States or in Chile and Belgium. He had been the representative throughout his career of the party of Big Business in the United States. No special urging from the Guggenheims, Doheny or anyone else would have been needed to make him assume the role that he did in Mexico although he undoubtedly welcomed their approval of him. Chile had been a training ground, Belgium had been a vacation and now he was faced with a real challenge. He now had the rank of Ambassador and a more dignified position than he had ever enjoyed before. In Chile he had been the symbol of a powerful country; in Belgium he had been little more than a decorated errand boy, overshadowed by far greater personalities on the gold-braided field of European diplomacy. Now he was the ranking diplomat in an important American nation and the first citizen of a large American colony. Important people brought him problems that they thought only the Embassy could solve. It would be useless to say that all of this failed to make a strong impression on him or that he did not come to feel that his importance should be noticed by everyone, Americans and Mexicans alike.

While Wilson was presenting his credentials to President Díaz and meeting such politicians as Limantour and Corral (Díaz' Vice-President) for the first time, the Madero movement was assuming alarming proportions. It threatened
a revolution if the administration should seek to withhold free and fair elections when the time came. The man who made the movement articulate was the scion of a wealthy family in the state of Coahuila who had gone into politics under a cloud of misgivings on the part of the family which stood to lose heavily unless he succeeded.

Francisco I. Madero was born in Parras, Coahuila on October 30, 1873. After several years of schooling in France in the 1880's he attended the University of California, studying agriculture; he returned to his native country embarrassed that his people should be so backward in the midst of such vast material resources. He concluded that education and democratic government would lift the people to a new level of progress.¹ How greatly his decisions were affected by his peculiar bent for communing with spirits of the dead is not apparent but he approached his goal by a practical route. By 1900, he had begun to consider politics as the field in which he must realize his aims since nothing could be accomplished until Mexico should become a more democratic country. His intention was to work at it gradually, beginning at the local level and finally extending the influence of his ideals so that the central government would

¹For the career of Madero and the account of the Revolution and his administration, I have drawn extensively from Charles G. Cumberland, Mexican Revolution: Genesis Under Madero (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952).
feel and be responsive to them. He joined political clubs, only to have his candidates bought off or undermined by the administration; yet he kept doggedly at it and resolved to stay, if possible, within the framework of the law. Though not of a compromising nature, he learned some of the rules of practical politics during this early period. It was fatal to him later that he was too idealistic to become a better pupil.

The lengthening of the presidential term to six years and the institution of the office of vice-president, followed by the selection of Ramón Corral in 1904, to fill the vice-presidential seat, served notice that the dictatorship was to continue. When Díaz indicated in the famous Creelman interview of 1908, that Mexico might be ready for more democracy, Madero began shaping his political forces. In January of 1909, he published his booklet, *The Presidential Succession of 1910*.

His movement against the reelection of Díaz, centered in the Centro Antirreleccionista de México, was not the only one opposed to the continuance of the present regime. The political situation was complicated by the desire of the anti-científicos for a change. This movement was not, however, opposed to the substitution of someone else for Ramón Corral as vice-president since it was not expected that Díaz would live out another term. Bernardo Reyes, an administration general, was the central figure of this group and when
the popularity of Reyes began to decline, with obvious assistance from the Díaz forces, Madero realized that Díaz had no intention of stepping down. Díaz either believed, or was persuaded by the científicos to believe, that a continuance of the present system was vital to the well being of Mexico.

The winter of 1909, was a bleak one for Madero. Pathways seemed to be closing instead of opening. In January of 1910, just prior to the arrival of the new American Ambassador, it became clear that Madero himself was the only logical candidate of his party for the presidency. The platform embodied the ideals of education, democracy, land reform and a fair deal for labor. While Madero was stumping the country in an effort to influence the congressional elections, Henry Lane Wilson presented his credentials to Díaz. Soon after Wilson's formal reception on March 5, 1910, he took up residence in the Embassy on the corner of Vera Cruz and Puebla streets not far from the National Palace and the Paseo de la Reforma.

The Ambassador had no reason for the moment to take much notice of Madero. Doubtless it did not even occur to him that Madero could displace Díaz at any time in the future. Meanwhile there were friendships to be established in the American colony and many official functions to attend. Wilson's close association with some of the members of the
colony was soon the subject of criticism. It became an almost unquestioned assumption that many of those whom the Ambassador chose for his friends were using him to obtain special favors. To some extent this assumption seems to have been a valid one. Among others there was one Lebbeus Redman Wilfley who was an acquaintance if not a friend of President Taft. Taft had met Wilfley when the latter served as Attorney-General in the Philippines, and had been responsible, at least in part, for his appointment as Judge of the

2Edward I. Bell, The Political Shame of Mexico (New York: McBride, Nast and Co., 1914), 134-140. Bell was the editor and publisher of "La Prensa" and "The Daily Mexican" of Mexico City during the Madero era. His book constitutes the most useful first hand account, though it contains a heavy bias in favor of Madero. The fact that Bell did, however, have the ability to face facts makes his account valuable. It has been cited often, and many times to justify preconceived conclusions. Used with due caution, the specialist will find it a rich source of information and a valuable check against other source material. The book is not footnoted.

3Ibid., 137. To those who were not admitted to the intimate inner circle around the Ambassador the clique which formed around him was known as the "Society of Friends of the American Ambassador." The implications in this phrase are sinister and would be more damaging as viewed by the scholar if any concrete evidence of wrongdoing were given. It does indicate the important position in the American colony held by the Ambassador and the disappointment of those who were not close to Wilson.
United States Court in China. The Judge became involved in difficulties with the consular office and resigned shortly after Taft's election to the Presidency. He returned to seek a place in the cabinet, possibly as Attorney General, but evidently Taft did not see fit to appoint him. He turned up next in Mexico as a lawyer specializing in the prosecuting of claims, assumed by some to have been pressed most vigorously when Wilfley stood to gain heavily from the transactions. He had become friendly with the previous ambassador, who remained in Mexico after Wilson's arrival to look after business interests (apparently one reason for his removal), but Wilfley now centered his attention on the new man. He

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4William H. Taft Papers, Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress, General Correspondence, Wilfley to Taft, November 30, 1908. At the time of the author's research in these papers, in 1955, no one could lay claim to having exhausted their possibilities. The collection was not all available and not well cataloged. Several interesting items were, however, uncovered. It should be noted that much of Taft's correspondence on this subject was included in the records of the departments and was found in the National Archives of the United States.

5Ibid., Fred W. Carpenter to Taft, February 6, 1909.

6Bell, Political Shame, 136. See also Records of the Department of State, C. A. Hamilton to William J. Bryan, June 4, 1913, enclosed in Hamilton to Woodrow Wilson, same date. Hamilton had been engaged in a suit for some time against Wilfley over proceeds from certain property which Hamilton claimed to be rightly his. He charged that the Ambassador had used, or allowed to be used, his diplomatic position and influence in Wilfley's behalf. Hamilton stated that he stood to lose a great deal in the litigation. Wilfley, he said, treated Embassy affairs as "marketable commodities." Although there is too much evidence of this kind to permit discounting the Wilson-Wilfley relationship, complaints were made, for the most part, by disgruntled people like Hamilton.
made himself notorious in Mexico City by flaunting his correspondence with President Taft. Wilson allowed him to become closely identified with Embassy affairs.

While the Ambassador was beginning his term of service in the Mexican capital, President Díaz, whom he greatly admired, was promising Madero and his adherents a fair election in July. During April and May, however, the party began to be molested. Madero and Díaz had met in a secret conference in 1909, and had failed to reconcile their views so it was not to be expected that Díaz would keep his promises. In fact, the degree of control which Díaz still had over his followers at this time is in doubt. At any rate, while the Díaz administration prepared to celebrate Mexico's economic progress in a centennial exposition at Mexico City in September, Madero, the mouthpiece of the discontented masses, was arrested in June, 1910, an act which made him all the more popular. He was released on bond the following month but the general elections, the results of which were announced on September 27th, placed Díaz and Corral once more in office.

7 Bell, Political Shame, 137.

8 Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933), 119. This is the first work on this subject in which an attempt is made to present the role of the United States and its Ambassador in the Mexican Revolution in a fair and impartial light. It is to Cline's credit that he examined a good many of Wilson's dispatches - not just a few selected ones. His thorough knowledge of Mexican history makes this a valuable work.
These events were dutifully described by the Ambassador in his reports to the Department while he prepared, at the same time, for the centennial celebration at which he presented, on behalf of the American colony, a statue of George Washington to the Mexican government.\footnote{Wilson, \textit{Diplomatic Episodes}, 191.} The irony in this gesture will become apparent later.

Wilson's disregard of the importance of the Madero movement is shown in his first dispatches to the Department concerning it. He believed that Díaz had blundered in arresting Madero as the latter was made a martyr thereby.\footnote{Records of the Department of State in the National Archives, Washington, D.C.; Wilson to Knox, June 24, 1910. Diplomatic correspondence pertaining to the Mexican Embassy from 1910 to 1929 has been filed chronologically and by subject in case books, each piece being given a file number. Scattered and confidential papers are to be found loose in a series of cases only roughly cataloged. The correspondence cited in this paper will, unless otherwise indicated, be found in the 612.00 series. Inclusive dates of the case books will be found in the bibliography and file numbers will not be cited in the footnotes except where two or more communications on the same date are cited.} To Wilson, Madero was a "wealthy farmer" of Coahuila "wholly ignorant of governmental affairs" who had been "arraigning" the government for two years in seditious speeches and pamphlets. The government had "patiently" allowed him to carry on his "peculiar campaign methods" but this had only encouraged him and "...the Government was finally forced to resort to drastic measures by placing Madero where, as a matter of fact,
he ought to have been some time ago."\textsuperscript{11} The election was proceeding, said Wilson, in an orderly manner but some arrests had been made because the opposition had not observed democratic methods, "their campaign having been one of personal defamation and revolutionary appeals to the masses."\textsuperscript{12} This latter observation was unfair. While Madero had warned Díaz that he could not be responsible for the consequences if fair elections were not granted, he was still trying to keep his movement within the bounds of the law. It is obvious too that Wilson equated "democratic methods" with loyalty to Díaz.

Upon the announcement of Díaz and Corral as winners of the election, Madero fled to San Antonio, Texas and there launched his revolution. Coincidentally, a wave of anti-Americanism began to spread, touched off by the lynching of a Mexican named Rodríguez in Rock Springs, Texas. The American flag was trampled in Mexico City by enraged Mexicans and inflammatory articles began to appear in the press. Although the Díaz forces blamed Madero for the upheaval, it is doubtful that his followers were encouraged to violence against foreigners. Ambassador Wilson said later that he believed at the time that the "riots" were fomented by members of the government to divert attention from the discon-

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., June 27, 1910.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
tent that was evident with the Días regime.\textsuperscript{13} Wilson notified the Department of the anti-American movement and held numerous conferences with Días in which he urged more complete control of the press.\textsuperscript{14} In response to his pleas, \textit{El Paso} and \textit{Diario del Hogar} of Mexico City were suppressed\textsuperscript{15} and \textit{El Debate}, which published an article entitled "The Cloven Hoof of Dollarism" met the same fate.\textsuperscript{16} Taft telegraphed Días, through the Mexican Embassy in Washington, to express confidence in the ability of the old dictator to protect American citizens,\textsuperscript{17} an act which might be considered a mild warning. Días was perplexed. He wondered if the American government was dissatisfied with his rule and was using the Madero revolution to get rid of him. He needed advice and urged Limantour to return from Paris, where the latter was concluding a new loan.\textsuperscript{18} The

\textsuperscript{13}Wilson, \textit{Diplomatic Episodes}, 191.


\textsuperscript{15}Ernest Ourying, \textit{Mexico and its Heritage} (New York: Century Company, 1928), 560.

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{17}Rippy, "The United States and Mexico" in \textit{American Policies Abroad}, 9-10.

\textsuperscript{18}Bell, \textit{Political Shame}, 32-33. Bell cannot conceal his admiration for Limantour's financial genius and he devotes a large part of his book to Limantour's activities.
Mexican President complained to Washington that the revolt was being hatched on American soil. This was partly true.\textsuperscript{19} An uprising on Madero's behalf began in the north on November 18th, but it proved abortive. Madero went to New Orleans hoping to make his entry from there but returned in December to San Antonio.

Although Wilson did not appear to welcome an overthrow of Díaz, his dispatch of October 31st, giving a comprehensive view of the Díaz regime, does not indicate a high degree of satisfaction. This might have been due to a realisation that Díaz had lost his power to control the Mexicans and a hope that the Madero movement would degenerate into a conservative opposition that would drive Díaz from power but maintain the general status quo. In defending American claims in the courts he revealed:

\textit{... I have sometimes knowingly exceeded the limits of my diplomatic character and have assumed dangerous personal risks, but I have thought, and shall continue to think, that there is no refuge for an American citizen whose clear and just rights are being taken away from him except recourse to the power and influence of his Government through its diplomatic representative.}

He reminded Secretary Knox that Díaz was really an autocrat and was now 83 years old. The United States had a billion dollars or more invested in Mexico, yet, whenever he found it necessary to defend American interests, the sic\textit{cient\textit{ficos} who

\textsuperscript{19}Rippy, "The United States and Mexico" in American Policies Abroad, 10.
surrounded Días opposed his efforts and he could only defeat them by naming them personally to Días. He went on to point out that the great concentration of wealth, the heavy and offensive taxation on the commercial and poorer classes and the corruption in the government were arousing an impatient discontent in the growing middle class. 20

The Taft administration may also have felt a coolness towards Días for giving welcome to Zelaya, the Nicaraguan dictator, and for alleged dealings with Japan via-a-via Magdalena Bay. 21 It is interesting, though somewhat confusing, to note that ex-Senator John L. Wilson wired Knox one day in November to learn the facts concerning a reported attempt on his brother's life. The Department had no knowledge that Wilson was in any personal danger. 22 Nor could it find the source of persistent rumors from December, 1910, to

20 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, October 31, 1910. No proof has been found that the Ambassador took money for the use of his influence. It was charged by one business man that a friend had had some papers given to him for safe keeping on one occasion, showing a contract entered into by Wilson in which he was to get $250,000.00 in return for services in a case before the courts. The man who is said to have had these papers was C. A. Hamilton, an erstwhile business partner of Judge Wiffley. This testimony is highly suspect as see n. 6 above. Ibid.; H. S. Bryan to Senator Pomerene, enclosed in Pomerene to Woodrow Wilson, July 25, 1913.

21 Bell, Political Shame, 36.

22 Records of the Department of State; Erastus Brainerd, Editor of the Post Intelligencer, Seattle, Washington to Knox, November 10, 1910.
February, 1911, that Wilson was about to be superseded. Without additional information the significance of these rumors cannot be ascertained.

Madero had to move as rapidly as possible because he was operating on limited funds. The idea that the Revolution was financed by powerful American interests is not generally accepted though it has been advanced. Charges were not lacking, that Taft and Knox, supported by powerful financial elements, had launched the movement. The Ambassador said later that money was obtained from "certain sources in the United States and Europe," and held that records in the Department of Justice connected Gustavo Madero with certain oil interests, but others who were more intimate with the Maderos argued convincingly that Gustavo was able to raise practically all of the money by a railroad bond issue to be made good when Madero became Presi-

\[\text{Ibid. File no. 123 W 691/51}\]

\[\text{24Juan Pedro Didapp, Los Estados Unidos y Nuestros Conflictos Internos (México, 1913), passim. Didapp was one of Madero's political opponents.}\]

\[\text{25Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 206. As noted below, Bell disagrees with the story that the Madero Revolution had the backing of large financial interests. Wilson writes as if he had seen the records mentioned and his view cannot, therefore, be entirely discounted.}\]
dent. 26

The Madero movement was also approaching a climax. As it increased in intensity in January, 1911, Madero sought the opportune time to cross the border and take charge. The American government quietly ordered cavalry troops to certain border towns with strict orders not to cross into Mexico. Madero was obviously violating the American neutrality laws and when a warrant was finally obtained for his arrest, Governor O. B. Colquitt of Texas, an ardent interventionist, let it be known that he would move into Mexico, if need be, to apprehend him. 27 Madero, however, quietly crossed the border west of El Paso on February 14th, and sent Dr. Vásquez Gómez to inform the Department of State that he would honor the commitments of the Díaz government up to November 20, 1910. 28 In Mexico City, Wilson learning that cabinet changes were planned, hoped that Enrique Creel would be replaced as

26 Bell, Political Shame, 69-94. Bell was an intimate acquaintance of Gustavo Madero and was convinced that he raised most of the money to finance the Revolution without outside help. Bell adds, however, that if additional funds had been offered, Gustavo would not have been the man to turn them down.

27 Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, 126. Much of the pressure on President Taft to intervene by force in Mexico came from Governor Colquitt.

28 Ibid., 130.
Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was also informed that the government had begun a systematic attempt to ruin the Madero family financially. His source of information was the Madero family legal advisor, W. H. McLaren. Wilson did not think the government's policy was fair since only Francisco and Gustavo were involved.

He believed that the situation warranted a conference with President Taft and while he proceeded to arrange one, Limantour arrived in New York where Francisco Madero Senior, Gustavo Madero, Francisco Leon de la Barra and Dr. Vásquez Gómez were already gathered. On March 6th, the day before Limantour's arrival in New York, Madero's troops were defeated, but not decisively, in the Battle of Casas Grandes in Chihuahua. Acting upon the advice of Ambassador Wilson, President Taft ordered the concentration of 20,000 troops

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29 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 8, 1911, confidential. He did not think Creel to be efficient in the Foreign Office. No personal motive seems to have been involved in his attitude.

30 Ibid. The impression has always been given that the Ambassador hated the very name Madero. This is far from a true picture. Madero's family did not want to see him get into politics and some of them, at least, did not hold the Ambassador responsible for his downfall.

31 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 207. Bell, Political Shame, 130, charges that the Ambassador carried a petition with him to Washington urging intervention and says it was signed by Wilson's faction in the American colony.
on the border for "routine maneuvers." Taft sincerely felt that the army could profit by some training anyway. The Ambassador observed that Taft did not intend to intrude in Mexican politics but that he meant only to warn both sides. Just what Wilson's own intentions and hopes were is not quite clear. The Navy at the same time arranged for the maneuvering of a part of the Pacific fleet along the Mexican coast. De la Barra, in New York, requested an explanation from the State Department of the meaning of this latter action. Upon being informed that the Mexicans were disturbed Taft replied that nothing had been said of naval vessels in the conference a week before and that the visits in a routine manner of certain small vessels to Central American ports were being misconstrued. He hoped that

\[32\] Correspondence of Philander C. Knox, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Volume 13; Taft to General Wood from Augusta, Georgia, March 12, 1911. The President stressed the training value of this troop movement. Under the apparent policy of readiness for possible trouble a valuable opportunity for training was not to be passed up.

\[33\] Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 210. It cannot be assumed that the Ambassador was aware of Taft's motives at this time.

\[34\] Knox Correspondence, Volume 13; Adee to Knox, March 12, 1911. Mexico had a law which restricted the amount of time that foreign vessels could spend in Mexican ports to thirty days. Huerta cited this law often later on in dealing with President Woodrow Wilson.
[/Knox would] see that these small fry do not appear anymore in Mexican ports. . . .^35

The truth was that Taft had acted largely on Wilson's advice without consulting his cabinet. He had to persuade Knox that he was following the wisest policy. Knox indeed pledged Taft his loyalty to the Mexican policy in a communication of March 18th. The Secretary of State would not endorse it wholeheartedly but with Wilson "throwing fits" and business men "wigling" [Sig] in agony at home, what else could Taft do but consider the matter from every angle and act as he thought best.36

While Taft was explaining his Mexican policy to the State Department, Dr. Vásques Gómez and Limantour met in de la Barra's apartment in New York. Vásques Gómez was willing to agree to an arrangement whereby Corral would resign only as Minister of Gobernanču, not as vice-president.37 Madero did not yet have the upper hand. The defeat at Casas Grandes had been a serious setback. De la Barra was undoubtedly the most acceptable provisional president.


36Archie Butt, Taft and Roosevelt, The Intimate Letters of Archie Butt, Military Aide (Garden City: Doubleday Doran and Company, 1930), 603-605. Knox could afford to be cautious. He did not feel all of the pressure that was being put on the President.

37Bell, Political Shams, 44.
should Díaz be forced to leave office. As Madero's troops maneuvered in the north, he gained strength, though some of the border fighting resulted in firing into American territory. The government subsidised press in Mexico City reported victories over the rebels but the people knew better. An observer was struck with the degree of calmness in Mexico City, even after government forces lost control. Wilson's predecessor, who was still in Mexico City, gave press interviews in which he calmly appraised the situation as not being particularly threatening to American lives and property.

On April 3rd, Wilson reported that Madero would accept nothing less than the resignation of Díaz and assured Knox that if more active measures than the mobilization on the border should need to be taken, it would probably result in some attempts on American lives but the ultimate effect would be "order and adequate protection." If the Ambassador was not worried about possible danger to American residents, how-

38Ibid., 55. See also Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 212. Wilson saw Limantour in New York and tried to explain the policy being followed by the United States but he could not convince Limantour of the wisdom of it.


40Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, May 10, 1911.

41Ibid., April 3, 1911.
ever, some of those residents were. The State Department
was besieged with pleas for more adequate security meas-
ures.  

There appears, at this point, a document which has been
overlooked by Wilson's critics. His independent course
during the Desena Trágsica does not seem so unusual in the
light of instructions given by the State Department in the
emergency under discussion. Knox wired on May 5th that
should the seriousness of the situation require "... you
will consult with the other members of the diplomatic
corps ..." [as to the measures to be taken to protect for-
eign lives and property]. Of course this did not mean that
Wilson was free to take drastic action without further in-
structions, but it reveals that Knox was coming around to
the views of Taft and Wilson (perhaps with some prodding by
Huntington Wilson, Knox's Assistant Secretary) and was con-
tent to accept Wilson's judgements.

The Ambassador was himself increasingly disturbed about
the future. His subordinates and their families shared his

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42 Among those was a request from Colonel Thomas D.
Boyd, President of Louisiana State University, to Senator
J. R. Thornton of Louisiana on behalf of Colonel Boyd's son
who resided in a small American colony at Topolobampo on
the west coast of Mexico. This group of Americans wanted
to be assured of protection in the event the United States
intended to intervene. Records of the Department of State;
File #12.00/1580.

43 Records of the Department of State; Knox to
Wilson, May 5, 1911.
He remarked at a dinner given in the Embassy that if Díaz went out it would be like embarking on unknown seas in a rudderless ship. On May 10th, the telling blow was dealt the government forces in the north. Madero captured Ciudad Juárez, a triumph that placed him in a strong position to negotiate with Díaz and allowed him to import arms and money. Progress was rapid. Madero and Díaz now came to terms while McLaren argued with the Ambassador that Mexico would be regenerated under Madero. With Mexico City unguarded, Americans felt some insecurity and Wilson called upon de la Barra for guarantees, telling him that if American lives and property were molested his government would "... be obliged to assume, prima facie, that insufficient protection has been afforded ...," and would place on

Mrs. Edith O'Shaughnesssey, Diplomatic Days (New York: Harper and Bros., 1917), 17. Mrs. O'Shaughnesssey's books were written in the form of compilations of letters to her family. She was the wife of Nelson O'Shaughnesssey who succeeded Fred Morris Dearing as Wilson's First Secretary in the Embassy. For the most part, Mrs. O'Shaughnesssey's opinions were merely those gained in conversation with important personalities at ceremonial functions and the attitudes of the Embassy. Occasionally an interesting sidelight is furnished.

Ibid., 19.

Ibid., 23-24. No doubt the Ambassador learned much about Francisco Madero from this individual. It is entirely possible that his low estimate of Madero's mental faculties was partly formed by the attitude of Madero's family who did not relish his rash action in risking the family fortunes in such a wild venture.
Mexico the burden of proof to the contrary.\textsuperscript{47} Then, in informing Knox of the changes to take place, he said naively:

\begin{quote}
I think the greatest praise is due to President D\'{i}az for his patriotic attitude in sacrificing his personal fortune in the interests of the Mexican people.\textsuperscript{48}
\end{quote}

After days of tension, the maderistas, on May 24th, thronged the streets of Mexico City and the police were powerless against them. Had it not been raining, greater damage might have been done by the enthusiastic mob. D\'{i}az, in bed with a toothache, feebly made his way to his library to sign the inevitable resignation. On the previous day, Wilson had reported that the revolutionary forces were now in possession of two-thirds of the country. D\'{i}az did not actually sign his name to the document of resignation until the morning of May 25th. He left the country shortly afterward and others of his cabinet soon followed, including Limantour. De la Barra assumed the presidency in accordance with the agreement but Madero was the man of the hour. The leader of the movement made his triumphal entry into the Capital on June 7, 1911.

\textsuperscript{47}Records of the Department of State; Wilson to de la Barra, May 13, 1911. When such strong language was used later with Madero in power it was interpreted by Wilson's detractors as persecution. Wilson simply understood that de la Barra was the spokesman for all important parties at this time.

\textsuperscript{48}Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, May 17, 1911, strictly confidential. D\'{i}az was forced out by political developments and there is no evidence that he sacrificed his personal fortune. He was able to live well abroad.
an event described by one observer as calling to mind the "entry into Jerusalem."

There lies in the National Archives of the United States, an unopened document containing a congratulatory message from President Taft to President Díaz (whom Taft had met personally in 1909) on the occasion of the latter's success at the polls in the election of 1910. A suitable time and occasion were never found for its presentation.49

49 Records of the Department of State in loose package. File no. 812.00/21.
... When Madero first attracted my attention he was engaged in the business of making incendiary speeches, usually of very little intellectual merit, before audiences in remote parts of Mexico. These meetings were usually interrupted by the soldiers, and generally Madero was put in jail, his release following some days afterwards. He never appealed to popular sympathy in Mexico. He was a practically unknown person in public affairs who appeared at the psychological moment...

... Madero in no sense overthrew the government of Díaz. The government of Díaz collapsed by reason of the desertion of friends, and a tide of anarchy which broke out and surged all about the capital city. Madero rode into power over the ruins of the Díaz government.

In the month of June, Madero entered Mexico City as a private citizen, after Díaz had resigned the presidency of the country.

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The same attitudes are expressed in Diplomatic Episodes, 204-205, and in an address by Wilson published in the Boston City Club Bulletin, May 1, 1920.

The questioning of Wilson before the committee was carried out by a Francis J. Kearful who said that he was in Mexico at the time. This is undoubtedly the same individual whose law firm was seeking to represent the Embassy as resident counsel. Wilson forwarded a letter from the firm to the Department but when asked if he approved it would not commit himself. Records of the Department of State; File no. 124 123/11. At any rate, the questioning was extremely friendly.
Such was the testimony of Henry Lane Wilson seven years after his resignation from the Mexican post. These words are more revealing of an attitude developed after years of being forced on the defensive than they are of contemporary judgement. Wilson had, however, developed a high regard for the well-policed state of the Díaz regime. He took a dim view of a revolution with mere democratic objectives than he believed it possible for the Mexicans to handle. Zealous to insure the continuance of orderly rule and being unable to interfere directly, he had urged ex-President Roosevelt to come and appear on the platform with Díaz in the hope that a reconciliation, at least, might be effected with the insurgents. His invitation was refused though it could hardly have been carried out in any event since Díaz' government was collapsing rapidly. This was soon evident to the Ambassador whose fears were communicated to Secretary Knox in a note of the 23rd of May. The:

... the adoption of universal suffrage. That it will result in orderly peaceful and progressive government I much doubt, but I expect to see ushered in a long period of corrupt practices in elections, violence at the polls and of armed settlement of the claims of various chieftains. ... the pendulum swinging back after years of trial, to conditions similar to those

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under which we are now living. . . .

Nor could he foresee what conditions might develop immediately after the firm hand of Díaz might be withdrawn. He was afraid that:

...the Government installed by the Mexican preacher of love and toleration, may prove inadequate for the pressing emergencies of the hour. . . .

...whether Madero shall be able to control the spirits he has called from the vasty deep, or whether he, failing to meet the demand of a situation which needs the curbing force of a strong hand and not the empty phrases of an altruistic statesman, shall yield precedence to a stronger man, is yet an unknown problem.

American interests have suffered and are suffering throughout the Republic; not so much on account of anti-American feeling - which practically subsided and disappeared with the placing of troops on the Rio Grande - as because of their large influence and predominance in the industrial and commercial affairs of Mexico.

These words make it appear that the Ambassador harbored a strong hope that Madero would be a mere figurehead in the new regime. Although it is entirely possible that de la Barra's retention of the presidency would have been more satisfactory to the United States, and certainly to Wilson,

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3 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, May 23, 1911. For the opinion of some resident Americans on "universal suffrage" for Mexicans see O'Shaughnessey, Diplomatic Days, 70.

4 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, June 23, 1911.
there was no question of recognition of the interim government and no problems arose. The ubiquitous de la Barra was President in name only. Bell informs us that;

Ambassadorial activity during the de la Barra period was confined, aside from its social features, to routine matters and formal presentment of claims. President de la Barra possessed a sense of humor; he permitted himself to be amused by Mr. Wilson's patronisingly protective attitude.

Most of the patronising was saved, however, for Madero who was the recognised "man of the hour." At the various social functions attended by both men, Madero found himself the object of flattery and concern by the Embassy staff, a position that impressed his followers more than it did the man himself. José Vasconcelos was present at one of these functions and heard the praise lavished upon his leader by the American Ambassador. "Most of us," said Vasconcelos later, "who were close followers of Madero felt that we were enjoying a sort of political honeymoon which would never end. One must remember that we were very young persons."

Madero did not respond to these overtures in the manner expected of him. He remained politely on his pedestal and

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Bell, Political Shame, 98. Bell offers a personal interpretation of Washington's attitude toward de la Barra's interim government which throws little light on the subject. There was slim hope that the de la Barra regime could be permanent.

"...seemed scarcely to be walking with the sons of men."

He had developed an inferiority complex during his years of study abroad and the intensity of this feeling had led him to the heights he now occupied - heights which seemed to make him a little dizzy. He resented even the slightest implication that his country or its government needed advice. There would be no tutelage by the American Embassy. Before the triumphal entry of the idol of Mexico, Wilson had referred to him as a "dreamer" but had been reminded that "Joseph was called a dreamer but became the practical ruler of a great kingdom and made his brothers princes." Madero gave little evidence of practicality.

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7O'Shaughnessey, *Diplomatic Days*, 160.

8 Cumberland, *Mexican Revolution*, Chapter II. See also O'Shaughnessey, *Diplomatic Days*, 117 and 157. Mrs. O'Shaughnessey remarked that "A sort of simplicity stamps all that he does," and again "Madero now talks of crushing all revolutionary movements with an iron hand; but his hand, alas has no likeness to iron or anything that can crush."

9 It was widely observed that the Ambassador sought to take Madero "under his wing" but the latter remained cool and indifferent to all such overtures. He appears to have been embarrassed by the praise lavished on him by Wilson at festive and ceremonial occasions. Yet, Judge Wilfley wrote Taft that Madero had announced publicly that he was in favor of a program suggested by the Ambassador in a recent speech. Wilfley said that the general disposition was to give Madero "a show for his white alley." It is interesting to note also that Wilfley admitted the oppression of the people by Diaz and the significanc. Records of the Department of State; L. R. Wilfley to President Taft, July 11, 1911.

The fall of Porfirio Díaz from power deprived powerful foreign interests in Mexico of the feeling of security they had enjoyed only a little while before. The sudden change in political developments in Mexico was of especial interest to American investors and great pressure was exerted upon the Taft administration to insure the protection of their interests. Unrest along the border brought increasing demand for active intervention as the Madero government took the helm of the ship of state and appeared to be unable to steer a smooth course. Absentee investors with heavy financial stakes in the country demanded more effective action from Washington. Americans who lived and worked in Mexico usually cautioned their government to refrain from meddling in Mexican politics, believing that business would be better off to take its chances with whatever faction happened to be in power. This latter group also stressed the safety factor. A show of force abroad could jeopardize their very lives.

The American Ambassador understood his responsibility to both resident Americans and to those with large holdings who were able to reach the ears of the administration at Washington. He was the representative of a leading industrial and commercial power many of whose citizens had chosen to invest time, energy and capital in an underdeveloped country in expectation of a suitable profit. Here, as in other Latin American countries, one might admire some of the quaint cultural features and certainly Americans could have no quarrel with
the general principle of national self-determination; but no mere sentiment must be allowed to interfere with profits. While playing their childish games of running governmental institutions and judicial systems, the people must not be allowed to extend their absurd and complicated legal machinery into the sphere of American business with regulatory action or confiscation. The American Embassy was the agency of American citizens and under the Taft administration with its stress on dollar diplomacy its duty was clear. The native population must, meanwhile, be content to enjoy the paltry crumbs of wealth that might sift down to those fortunate enough to receive steady employment.

It was Madero's keen resentment of the humiliating position of the Mexican masses that had caused his interest in politics. His popularity with the people was a disturbing factor to the American business interests and this concern was reflected in the Embassy. The Ambassador had felt, however, that the leader of these masses could be won over to the American viewpoint so that the United States, acting through its diplomatic agency, could throw the mantle of approval over him. The Ambassador summoned all of the dignity of appearance at his command, seeking to impress the new and untried authority with the importance of the diplomatic establishment of the United States. A more political mind would undoubtedly have succumbed, but the idealist was confronted with the realist, and neither was disposed to
compromise.

By November 6, 1911, when Madero took office as constitutional President, the Ambassador could see that the new administration would be more concerned with the welfare of the Mexican people than with the volume of American business profits and the Mexican leader had learned that the American Ambassador was not kindly disposed toward him. Claims, some of which were of direct interest to friends of the Ambassador, were presented to the new government, still endeavoring to stabilize political conditions in the country. Although there was nothing new about the presentation of claims after a period of disorder, Madero knew that a more sympathetic attitude would have induced less abruptness in the demands of the Embassy. "Now Mr. Madero," said Nelson O'Shaughnessey at a dinner given by the German Minister, "you are going to be President, and I know that when your government gets in you will clear up matters pending between the two countries and let us begin with a clean slate." "You Americans," Madero replied, "always act on the presumption that we Mexicans are always in the wrong."[11] "Foreign relations," wrote O'Shaughnessey's wife, "are to be founded on brotherly love instead of interest....; - - - Ojala! but it makes me sad."[12]

[12] Ibid., 126.
Wilson conceded, however, that while Madero "seems to be highly nervous and uncertain as to his course in regard to many important public questions," he had "one redeeming feature - a pair of excellent eyes, which indicates to me earnestness, truthfulness, loyalty, and it may be, reserves of strength and force of character which time may more fully reveal." The "important public questions" one may have no doubt, referred to the claims in which the Ambassador was interested and time was already revealing the necessity of revising his estimate of Madero's character.

The new regime was not, however, unduly pressed by the Taft administration. Madero was given an opportunity to prove himself equal to the trust his people had placed in him. Neutrality was enforced by the United States more greatly than ever in the Spring and Summer of 1911; and, after a conference with the Ambassador, Taft had withdrawn the troops from the border in August. It developed, however, that Madero was thinking in more long range terms regarding his promised program of reform than his people had been led to believe by his impassioned pleas for support in the campaign. Promises were not being fulfilled, estates were not being divided (a course which indicated compromise with power-}

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13Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, July 11, 1911, confidential.

14Rippy, "The United States and Mexico," in American Policies Abroad, 10.
ful hacendados) and other campaign promises were slow in being fulfilled. Long before he became President, Madero had been expected to initiate these reforms and failure to do so had led the American Ambassador to believe that the old familiar pattern of Latin American politics would be repeated in that Madero's government would have to incorporate conservative elements which would in turn cause a defection of the liberals. The latter must then seek a new political alliance. The appointment of numerous relatives of the new President to office did little to remove the stigma of hypocrisy from the Madero administration.

Although the State Department was notified that the election of Madero was unaccompanied by official interference by police or army, Wilson, not finding anything else to complain about, credited Madero's victory to the terror of the latter's name. There is no doubt that Wilson was unwilling to give credit where credit was due. He was simply unwilling to concede a completely fair victory, not wishing to place himself on record as testifying to Madero's popularity. Most observers agreed that the election was the freest ever held in Mexico. In spite of growing apprehension as the early spell of the leader's oratory wore off, he was still the most popular man in Mexico.

15Records of the State Department; Wilson to Knox, October 27, 1911.
It was believed that such powerful interests as the Rockefeller-Aldrich enterprises and the Guggenheim mining and smelting companies were opposed to the control maintained by the Madero family in some of the mining areas and that these same interests were closely tied to the Taft administration. The Guggenheims, according to the word of a careful observer, would now find it more difficult to gobble up the Madero mining operations in Chihuahua.16 Madero, besieged with the presentation of dubious claims, could not, some people thought, circumvent the hostility of the American Ambassador because he had made the mistake of appointing the self-centered, ambitious Manuel Calero, a friend of the American Ambassador, to the post of foreign minister.17

The administration at Washington did not see in Madero the kind of strong executive power needed in Mexico and this impression was strengthened by the dispatches of the Ambassador from the United States. The question of Madero's sanity was sometimes posed. Madero had manifested a considerable interest in ghosts and he would occasionally refer to the dead as if they were present in the room with him. Aside from this practice of spiritism, however, the only real evidence of mental lapses on his part was observed on those

16Bell, *Political Sham*, 131-133.
17Ibid., 145.
occasions when, in the midst of impassioned speeches, his voice cracked and squeaked and he gesticulated wildly. The conclusion can hardly be escaped that the most insane thing about Madero from Wilson's point of view was his determination to carry on his government independently. Although the rumors of insanity were the occasion for much Embassy gossip, they do not appear to have been taken seriously by the Ambassador until he found it necessary much later to defend his own cause. He did hint now and then in his dispatches that Madero suffered mental aberrations but the Department was never led to believe that there was a madman in the President's chair. Fred Norris Dearing, a Secretary of the Embassy at the time but destined for promotion to a place in the Latin American Division in the Department, wired Knox that:

Insistent rumor circulated has it that Madero is sufferer serious mental trouble but I have positive assurance from three credible sources that he is entirely in his right mind and is only somewhat worn out from his strenuous life of the last few months.18

The new President's faith in democracy for the Mexican people made him the object of ridicule to those who felt that they knew the country well. His enemies among the Mexicans gloried in the endless caricaturing of the Madero features in the press. Like some other prominent personages, Madero's

18 Records of the Department of State; File no. 812.00/2250. Cumberland in The Mexican Revolution, strangely avoids discussion of the question of Madero's sanity.
personal appearance lent itself well to grotesque and humorous caricature and few opportunities were lost in presenting him to the people as something of a fool. This, along with his bent for nepotism, his lack of firmness, and his failure to carry out immediate land redistribution did much to undermine his influence and political power. When criticised, however, he fell back upon his official position as though his right to the presidency were being challenged. He was, in the opinion of one foreign observer, simply "unfit to govern."19

A contemporary legislator and scholar credited the President with honesty and integrity but thought that these qualities were wasted in that Madero used the wrong methods. He warned the President that neither dictatorship nor democracy could succeed in Mexico in the short time he might have as leader and urged him to allow true parliamentary government. It was widely believed that Gustavo, who was the organiser of the administration, had swayed his brother toward dictatorial methods. In deserting Madero, it was observed later, Huerta was only doing what Madero had...

19 Leon B. Meats, Thunder in Their Veins: A Memoir of Mexico, edited by Russell Laird, (New York: The Century Company, 1932). "I grant him honesty," remarked Meats, "but it was the honesty of a fool." See also the New York Times, August 24, 1913, which quotes Senator Elihu Root as follows: "The trouble in Mexico began when Madero accomplished the overthrow of Diaz. Madero was an idealist, a theorist, and a dreamer and tried to apply principles in the governing of Mexico for which the Mexican people were not ready. . . ."
urged his own followers in the Army to do in the previous Revolution. Opponents of the administration charged that Madero's government was the worst since Independence. They could not help thinking that this was true because Madero failed to take the only measures that would have given his government stability - open criticism freely allowed and open opposition in a free parliamentary system. Since President Madero would not always listen to Gustavo, it may be that the explanation for the wavering of the government between petty acts of despotism on the one hand and lack of firmness on the other was due to the pull and tug between the methods desired by Gustavo and those practiced by Francisco. The country was never sufficiently free of internal disturbances to allow complete parliamentary democracy.

This last was the really disturbing factor and gave ammunition to Wilson and to those who were becoming more and more certain that Madero was both too weak and too idealistic to manage a country in which American profits were at stake. Wilson's attitude toward Madero was becoming known to Americans throughout the country and rumors were rife that the Ambassador would soon be withdrawn. The latter was still


21 Records of the Department of State; Homer C. Stuns, Board of Foreign Missions of the M.E. Church to Taft, December 26, 1911. File no. 123 W 691/77.
not overly pessimistic, however, at the end of the first month of Madero's administration. He believed that Madero was an "honest and patriotic man" and that he was trying to reconcile his "peculiar political creed" to the "stern necessities of the hour." He had said once that Madero would either change his policies or the people would change him and he now believed that Madero would change - that he would be forced to adopt more and more the system of Díaz. He seemed already to be abandoning his ideas of reconciliation with bandit chieftains (Zapata). Wilson had no objection to Madero's cabinet.22

Madero, though, was never secure from "revolutionary movements which kept the country in a constant state of turmoil." Zapata's rebellion in Morelos lasted throughout his term of office. This revolutionary activity may never have threatened the continued existence of the government23 but it weakened his control and placed foreign holdings at the mercy of lawlessness and banditry, a situation which was henceforth made the theme of Ambassador Wilson's dispatches. Although the Reyes faction surrendered in December there were other defections and some serious uprisings. Colquitt, the alarmist Governor of Texas, spoke for border Americans in demanding incessantly of the Taft administration that it take

22Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, November 30, 1911.

23Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, 185.
really effective action. Taft yielded to the extent of or-
dering a troop concentration along the border on February 4, 1912.

There is no reason to place responsibility for this action on the shoulders of Henry Lane Wilson, although he was certainly not out of sympathy with it. He shared, indeed, the fear of many other Americans in Mexico that such a show of force, if not followed by immediate intervention, might endanger countless American lives. The Ambassador and his compatriots could not be at all sure that they could live to see the American troops in control of the country should they be ordered across the border. Taft was under pressure to insure the peace of the border and the pressure was not coming primarily from any single or exclusive source. It was gen-
eral.24 Some steadfastly believed, nonetheless, that Taft had acted altogether on behalf of the business powers interested in Mexico.25 The immediate effect upon Mexico was an increase in marauding and brigandage and the creation of a situation in which Madero had to appear tyrannical in taking action to preserve his government.

24 Bell, Political Shaks, 160.

25 Starr, Mexico and the United States, passim. Starr saw no complexity in Taft's policy in Mexico. He believed that Taft was following the "dictates" of Wall Street.
Wilson reported on February 7th that the whole country was in a state of unrest and that there was almost complete lack of confidence in the government. Dearing, now in the Department and familiar with Wilson’s view of Madero, was of the opinion that the Ambassador’s seal to keep the Department informed had resulted in some overstating of the facts.

That Ambassador Wilson eagerly awaited a full scale intervention is doubtful but he did feel that Madero was not taking vigorous enough action while, for his part,

26 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 7, 1912.

27 Ibid.; Huntington Wilson to Taft, February 17, 1912.

28 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 24, 1912 and accompanying documents. Wilson said that any intervention which was not thorough would be resented by Americans in Mexico and he recommended that if troops crossed the border they do so with the clear aim of aiding constituted authority. When the Department drafted a proposed statement to the Mexican government from Taft regarding the return of Americans who had fled the country it was sent to the Ambassador for his comments. He recommended changing the phrase “until such time as the Mexican people should have established a government able to maintain law and order” to “as the Mexican government shall have established its ability” Records of the Department of State; File nos. 812.00/2888 and 2914. Wilson believed that Taft’s order had had a beneficial effect. Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, March 11, 1912.

29 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 20, 1912. Wilson did not agree with E. M. Brown of the National Railways that the fall of Madero’s government was imminent but:

“In the meantime the President remains serene and optimistic – an honest man, a man of high ideals and patriotic purposes, dealing with a situation which he comprehends very slightly and which he aggravates by the application of homeopathic remedies when the demands of the hour clearly cry for severe allopathic doses.”
Madero was reluctant to give out statements to the press for fear that "I should merely make more enemies and give another opportunity to your Ambassador." The man who most steadily urged intervention was Governor Colquitt of Texas but Madero was certain that Ambassador Wilson was the source of all of his trouble. The Ambassador was growing just as certain of Madero's rank incompetence. Huntington Wilson (so often accused of plotting with Ambassador Wilson for the overthrow of Madero's government) reminded President Taft that it would be cheaper to remove all Americans from El Paso while the fighting was going on around Ciudad Juárez than to risk intervention.

As a matter of fact, intervention was not really the object of the troop concentration. When the Consul at Ciudad Juárez (who thought that the danger to El Paso was being exaggerated deliberately in order to force the administration to action) notified the Department that the rebels were about to attack the city, Taft was consulted. "You know," said the President, "that I am not going to cross the line. That is something for which Congress will have to take responsibility... but I suppose it will do no harm to threaten them"

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30 Bell, Political Shaw, 156.
31 Records of the Department of State; Huntington Wilson to Taft, February 24, 1912.
a little. Madero believed that a great deal of harm had been done and Ambassador Wilson was blamed. Whatever may have precipitated the troop concentration in the first place, Taft was advised by many who were interested in Mexican business activity that it was neither necessary nor wise to carry it further.

It has also been charged that Ambassador Wilson made use of the subsequent Cresco rebellion to further embarrass Madero but the record clearly shows that the Department was not depending upon Wilson's dispatches alone for information about the progress of this rebellion in various localities in the northern states but had the reports of consular officials as well. Though copies of these were filed with the Embassy, the reports were forwarded directly to Washington. In fact, due to the interruption of communications, the Embassy was often less well informed than the State Department. It was the Department's policy to warn Americans in dangerous areas to leave the country. The Ambassador merely issued the warning. His report on March 1, 1912, that it was likely that some decisive event might lead to an uprising in Mexico City

32Ibid.; Memorandum, Division of Latin American Affairs, February 26, 1912. File no. 812.00/2912. A further explanation of Taft's policy lies in his proclamation in March of an embargo on military supplies. All such orders had to be approved by the President item by item and when there was ground for belief that the supplies might be going to rebels the orders could be refused. Even a saddle, ordered from Montgomery Ward, could not be sent without a permit. Ibid.; John Bassett Moore to Woodrow Wilson, May 5, 1913.
and the overthrow of the government was made in response to a request by the Department for estimates and possibilities and does not constitute sufficient grounds for charging the Ambassador with an overwhelming desire to precipitate the collapse of Madero's regime. Under the headline "Wilson Urges Precaution" the New York Sun carried a story quoting Wilson as saying: "In the first place we should obey the Mexican Government and in the next protect property, especially our own." He recommended that committees be appointed to handle preparation for any eventuality and that a special committee be set up to work with foreign colonies. He felt that the Mexican government's policy, which had been weak, was improving and warned that there must be no interference in Mexican politics. The Ambassador did arrange to

33Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, March 1, 1912. The British Embassy received the report from its Vice Consul at Guadalajara that the feeling of want of confidence in Madero was universal.
equip an American guard for standby purposes.\textsuperscript{34} No doubt it was the seal to make sure just how extensive this extra protection would need to be that led him to indulge in the very interference that he warned others against.

Calero, the foreign minister, was pressed by Wilson for figures on the armed forces available for the protection of the city. This met with a polite reminder that these were military matters and that such information could not be the affair of a foreign government but the Ambassador proved to be a hard man to put off. It became necessary to meet his insistent notes with a flat refusal to furnish the desired information, in spite of the fact that he had used his position as Dean of the Diplomatic Corps as authority for requesting the figures. The feared uprising did not come and he duly notified the Department of the improvement in the situation, though expressing his customary pessimism as to

\textsuperscript{34}These sentiments had been expressed, according to the report, in a speech to the Y.M.C.A. in Mexico City on March 7th. \textit{New York Sun}, March 8, 1912. Wilson denied that he had made the speech, telling Knox that his own speech had been "simple, dignified and cautionary" in tone. The reported statements were from a speech by someone else at the meeting, he told Knox. They had been credited to him through "ignorance or stupidity." One cannot help but be reminded of the "false telegram" in Chile. Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, March 28, 1912.

Wilson was active in the formation of the American Guard, organized into companies. Pains were taken to insure that no secret activity was carried on within its ranks as it was purely a protective measure taken for the purpose of being prepared for an emergency. There was some quarreling over the legality of some of the companies. Records of the Department of State; "Captain" W. B. Randall to Taft, April 3, 1912.
the final outcome. He told Calero that the United States would hold Mexico responsible for any damage that might occur in Mexico City to American life or property \(^{35}\) and notified the Department that wires had been laid for two blocks around the Embassy in an attempt to blow it up. \(^{36}\)

The dislike harbored by the Ambassador for Madero was deepening and irritants were increasing. It was even rumored that Wilson was scheming to place de la Barra in office again and was bringing him back from Paris for that purpose. \(^{37}\) This was an unsubstantiated charge. Most probably other forces were behind de la Barra's decision to return at this time. \(^{38}\) But Wilson was becoming disgusted with Madero. One of the Ambassador's friends, E. N. Brown, President of the National Railways, informed him one day on the golf course that an order had gone through forcing the use of the Spanish language on all of the railroads. This would, of course, place American workmen at a disadvantage but the right of the Mexican government to take such a measure cannot be questioned. Wilson, however, sent his secretary, Nelson O'Shaughnesssey, to exact a promise of Madero that the order

\(^{35}\) Ibid.; Wilson to Calero, March 25, 1912.

\(^{36}\) Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, March 26, 1912.

\(^{37}\) Ibid.; Wilson to Calero, March 27, 1912.

\(^{38}\) Bell, Political Shame, 175-76.
would not be executed and O'Shaughnessey had reported his mission successful. When confronted with his promise to O'Shaughnessey, Madero replied that he had made such a promise but had been powerless to stop the order. Madero was merely dodging here because he fully agreed with the decree; nevertheless, the order stood.

The censorship policy of the Madero government was also viewed with concern by Wilson and the American colony. Rumors of the defeat of the Federal troops by Orosco, on March 24th, soon reached Mexico City and there was fear that rioting might break out. Madero, after consulting his cabinet, refused to give out a statement either confirming or denying the rumors. When the Mexican Herald attempted to put out a Spanish language edition in the afternoon of March 25th, the paper was closed down by the government. Wilson was highly incensed and asked that Washington take a clear stand. He sent for Calero and registered a vigorous protest, though the State Department did not see fit to treat the matter with any importance. By March 30th, the restrictions had been removed, though the Herald had become defunct, not, in the opinion of contemporaries, due to the suppression,

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39 O'Shaughnessey, Diplomatic Days, 268.
40 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, March 29, 1912.
41 Ibid.; Huntington Wilson to H. L. Wilson, March 30, 1912.
but to financial difficulties.

The Ambassador received little encouragement in this affair from Huntington Wilson who was in charge of the Department while Knox was on a foreign tour. Nor did Huntington Wilson approve when it was reported that Wilson had sounded the British Minister, Stronge, on the possibility of joint military intervention. It turned out that Stronge had misrepresented the conversation to his own government to some extent but there could be no doubt that the American Ambassador had also committed an indiscretion. Wilson gave evidence occasionally of not understanding, or else not respecting, the line between official correctness and correct diplomacy. The whole affair was turned over to President Taft who probably took little notice of it.

Meanwhile, Madero, in the face of a major military defeat, was enduring much criticism. Caricatures and cartoons were fed daily to the public and he was charged with incompetency. Industrial enterprises amounting to millions of dollars, many of them involving American investments, were suffering work stoppages. In desperate need of a victory, Madero placed Victoriano Huerta at the head of the forces operating against Orosco. The American government demanded action. Huntington Wilson forwarded, on April 13th, a lengthy telegram to the American Ambassador for communication to the

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42 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, April 4, 1912.
Mexican government. This message was in reality an ultimatum. It called upon the Mexican government to give protection to American life and property or be prepared to accept the consequences.\textsuperscript{43} The Mexico City press issued, as usual, stinging rebuttals, calling this message a "blow struck unexpectedly after a long and silent meditation," and one that could only be read with much disgust and some heavy stupefaction.\textsuperscript{44} The note was formally delivered on April 15th, after some last minute changes, suggested by Ambassador Wilson, had been made.\textsuperscript{45} Although the note was popularly

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Ibid.}; Huntington Wilson to H. L. Wilson, April 13, 1912. H. L. Wilson wired the Department on the same day that it was generally believed that the Madero family had sent five million dollars in gold out of Mexico. He recommended intervention in Chihuahua and Guerrero to protect Americans against Orosco, it being understood that the authority of Madero's government would not be undermined in any way. \textit{Ibid.}; H. L. Wilson to Huntington Wilson, April 13, 1912.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Editorial, El Imparcial, April 17, 1912 and La Prensa, April 16, 1912.}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{45}\textit{Records of the Department of State}; File no. 812.00/3690. Wilson's superiors resented some of the changes in wording suggested by the Ambassador. On a memorandum in the records containing this correspondence J. R. Clark (counselor) asked Dearing if it were not about time to suggest that Wilson "is not our instructor in English grammar and Rhetoric..." and that "...we want what we want when we want it." Wilson had completely rearranged the last paragraph but did not change the essential meaning. Nevertheless, since the Department had already released the original to the press, Wilson was instructed to file it also with the Mexican Foreign Office. \textit{Ibid.}; Huntington Wilson to H. L. Wilson, May 1, 1912.
\end{quote}
referred to as an ultimatum, Secretary Knox insisted on the designation "friendly admonition." The technical absence of a time limit made this possible. Wilson learned from de la Barra that Madero's government was on very shaky ground and he urged de la Barra to support Madero up to the point where it became evident that the government would fall, then to appeal to Congress for a change. This was not a secret arrangement that was being discussed, for the Ambassador reported his exchange with de la Barra very frankly and openly to Knox. Furthermore, he discussed very freely with Knox the information that he had received from one Oscar Branif to the effect that Orosco, having received powerful financial aid, was about to triumph and that de la Barra's name was being much mentioned in the event of victory. De la Barra would, indeed, be just the man for such a role. The important point is, however, that Taft and Knox could have been left with no doubt whatsoever as to Wilson's views and it is patent that these views were shared by the Taft administration else the Ambassador would not have discussed them so freely. The overworked theme of Ambassador Wilson's representing no one but himself in Mexico and

46 Ibid.; Knox to Letcher, Consul at Chihuahua, April 22, 1912.

47 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, April 22, 1912.

48 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, April 26, 1912.
carrying out a policy independently of his superiors is thus weakened considerably. It is even more weakened by his continued frankness with his superiors.

Pedro Lascurain who had just replaced Calero as foreign minister (Calero was accredited to the United States) proved more loyal to Madero and less amenable to the will of Ambassador Wilson. His reply to the "friendly admonition" was polite but firm. Mexico could not accept the assumption that the United States had a right to make such a representation. Madero's attitude was stiffening. Although there was some trouble with Huerta over his faulty bookkeeping, the General was successful in his offensive against Orosco while de la Barra stayed in the background and seemed to lend strength rather than weakness to the government. The transfer of Calero to Washington, however, seems to coincide closely with an intensification of Wilson's impatience with Madero. The Department was flooded with dispatches urging that Madero be called to account. Wilson does not seem to

Lascurain said that his government "... finds itself under the painful necessity of not recognizing the right of your Government to give the warning which the aforesaid note contains since it is not based upon any action imputable to the Mexican Government signifying that it has departed from the observance of the principles and practices of international law." Mexico would not be "forced" beyond her regular responsibility under international law and the government would accept no responsibility for the acts of rebel leaders except within these bounds. Ibid.; Lascurain to Wilson, enclosed in Wilson to Knox, April 17, 1912.
have realized that while it was not the policy of the Taft administration to sacrifice order and stability in Mexico in order to help Madero establish a true democracy, there was no wish either to precipitate a crisis at this time. This did not keep the Ambassador from urging, however, some more forceful action.

He was finally driven by his consuming zeal to make the Mexican government more responsive to American wishes into an unfortunate choice of words. In the course of ordinary procedure the Mexican government had deported two non-naturalized foreign "Americans" for acting through a "Tampico News Company" to forward arms to Zapata. This act reflected badly on two of Wilson's friends who were interested in the Company financially but who had, as far as is known, nothing to do with the gun-running. It appears that Wilson acted on an impulse when he telegraphed Knox on the day that the men were arrested that "in certain circles" in the city an "official reign of terror" prevailed. The "reign of terror" did not interfere, however, with the Ambassador's plans to return to the States to discuss policies and claims with the Department and also to follow more closely the Republican Convention which met in June. It was the Democratic Convention that commanded the interest of Madero.

50 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, May 3, 1912.
After a rest in the United States, which was no doubt much needed, Wilson returned to his post, well pleased with the outcome of the Convention. He found a steadily deteriorating situation. There was criticism of Madero on the one hand and anti-American feeling on the other. President Taft, meanwhile, made it clear to Calero in Washington that the United States expected Mexico to live up to her international obligations and when Calero assured Taft that the Madero government was in effective control, Ambassador Wilson could not understand what he took to be hypocrisy on Calero's part. This was more fully explained when Calero made his famous "I lied" speech to the Mexican Congress in January of 1913. Meanwhile in July of 1912, Taft was disturbed at the bitterness of Senator Albert B. Fall of New Mexico who listed, in one of his speeches, a great number of outrages against Americans in Mexico. Wilson, queried for verification, explained confidentially that Fall might possibly have spoken out of disappointment for heavy losses suffered in some mining enterprises in which he was interested.\footnote{Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, July 28, 1912. File no. 312.11/759.} It appears that Fall really compiled his speech
mainly from the pages of interventionist newspapers in El Paso.\(^2\)

Such outbursts drowned the voices of those who urged support of Madero and retained faith in his ability to overcome his opposition. Professor L. S. Rowe of the University of Pennsylvania, after a two months on-the-spot study of conditions in the disturbed republic wrote Taft that:

In spite of appearances to the contrary, the government of President Madero is steadily growing in strength and I am confident that if outside influences, especially certain interests in the United States will remain neutral it will not be long before the government will have the situation well in hand.\(^3\)

Such information did not harmonize with the news from various parts of the embattled land. A consular report came from San Luis Potosi which must be taken very seriously since it was praised by that experienced and able official, A. A. Adee, as a "good report, clear and temperate showing no excitement, prejudice or partiality." It stated that the loyalty for Madero among the common people was waning due to disappointment, and that the upper classes in that region had never

\(^2\)Ibid.; Consul Thomas D. Edwards of Ciudad Juarez to the Department. File no. 312.11/771.

\(^3\)Ibid.; Rowe to Taft, August 12, 1912. Judge Delos J. Haff of Kansas City, an attorney for some mining companies with interests in Mexico, was active in stirring up a favorable opinion of the Madero government among American congressmen and government officials. Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, April 19, 1912.
adhered to the administration. This report went on to point out that the failure of Madero to deal adequately with the revolutionary forces in the immediate vicinity of Mexico City had proved humiliating to his official supporters and outside of this group there appeared to be no outspoken advocates of the Madero government. It was further stated that "... anti-American feeling. ... [continued] as usual and the public and private comment upon the government of the United States is generally suspicious, hostile and unfair."4 Wilson, however, has been taken to task for reporting at the same time that:

I think now that I should say to the Department for the especial consideration of the President that unless some drastic and convincing attitude is taken by our Government none of these murderers [of American citizens] will be punished and that criminals will be emboldened to commit further crimes against American citizens.5

4Ibid.; William L. Bonney, Consul at San Luis Potosí to the Department, August 13, 1912. See also Photostat copy of extracts from the report of Special Agent L. E. Ross, Bureau of Investigations, Department of Justice, July 22, 1912 from El Paso, Texas. Agent Ross writes:

"Of late I have mixed freely with the Mexican element in El Paso and I find that the consensus of opinion is that Madero has failed miserably in most of his promises to the people; that there is a general air of disgust and dissatisfaction with the turn of events, especially with regard to the Terrazas holdings which have not been divided up in accordance with Madero's promises. A little encouragement would start these men off on another campaign."

5Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, August 22, 1912.
The Ambassador further pointed out that the Mexican government's policy toward some American firms was costing them great sums of money and that a great preference was being manifested for European trade. Wilson realized that this would be disturbing news. It may have had some effect on Taft's decision to have naval vessels call at Mexican ports quietly for the next eight or ten months for "moral effect."

This policy would also give American citizens a greater feeling of security. It supplies concrete evidence of the increasing concern of the Department over the Mexican situation because Taft had ordered "small fry" naval vessels to quit Mexican waters in the earlier phases of the Revolution.

The picture, so often painted, of the Department depending for information solely on the reports of Ambassador Wilson would have appeared ridiculous to contemporaries. If there was exaggeration of the decline of Madero's political and military strength, the Ambassador was not the only guilty party. An ardent supporter of the Madero regime

6Ibid.; Huntington Wilson to H. L. Wilson, August 24, 1912, confidential. Huntington Wilson later changed his name to Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson. He was Assistant Secretary of State until his resignation in 1913. He had been Secretary of the American Embassy in Japan and 2nd Assistant Secretary under John Hay. See Who's Who in America, 1932-33.
wrote concerning this period that:

It is not my intent to deny that there was grave disorder in Mexico, or that the United States had cause for anxiety as to the safety of its nationals on the other side of the border.

Wilson was at a loss to understand how Madero could remain optimistic and he was convinced that Madero would yield to nothing but force in the matter of the claims, which were multiplying steadily.

The Ambassador's patience was wearing thin. Madero's coolness when confronted with "wrongs" done to Americans strained the Ambassador's usual courtesy in dealing with the President of the Republic. After one session with Lascurain, he frankly admitted to Knox that he had remonstrated "... sometimes in words not compatible with my diplomatic character." Nor did Taft mince words with Calero in Washington. He considered calling Congress into session to place the matter before that body. Wilson, however, could get no more satisfaction from Lascurain than Taft could get from

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7 Bell, Political Shame, 217.
8 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, August 28, 1912, confidential.
9 Ibid.; Memorandum forwarded by H. L. Wilson to Huntington Wilson, September 4, 1912. File no. 312.11/1354B.
It was under these circumstances that a long list of grievances, referred to as the "strong note of September 15th," was presented to the Madero government. There is no doubt that Wilson delivered the note in a righteous and vengeful manner. It was not, however, a great surprise to the Mexican leaders and not without some justification.

The attitude of Madero toward this move was determined to a great extent by political changes that had transpired in the United States. The question naturally arises as to why he did not ask for the recall of an Ambassador whom he obviously disliked and feared. He did not have to give any reasons for such a request; this was established in international practice. The explanation is that Madero understood what many students of the history of this period have strangely overlooked or failed to understand completely, i.e., that Ambassador Wilson was carrying out the intention and instructions of a government that was just as anxious to see Madero fall as was its Ambassador unless he would accept the dictatorship of the United States in matters that involved citizens of the United States with interests in Mexico. That Madero hoped for a new and sympathetic administration in Washington is beyond doubt. There was a notice—

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10 A Vera Crus judge, in writing of Lascurain, credited him with intelligence and uprightness but said that he was also inexperienced and indecisive. Ramón Prida, *From Despotism to Anarchy* (Copyright by Ramón Prida, 1914), 159-160.
able stiffening in his dealings with Washington in all matters soon after the nomination of Governor Woodrow Wilson by the Democratic Party. After the election of a Democratic president, Madero was inclined to treat the Taft administration as having been repudiated by the American people. As Vasconcelos says:

The first thing that Madero was disposed to ask from his friend President Wilson was the withdrawal of his personal enemy, Ambassador Wilson.\footnote{Vasconcelos, "A Mexican's Point of View" in American Policies Abroad, 109-110. Madero told Vasconcelos on one occasion: "Do not worry; it is only a question of time. In a few months we shall have a friend in Washington." The President of La CIA. Mexicana de Impermeables, S.A. wrote Carmi Thompson, Taft's Secretary, that Alfonso Madero, Francisco's brother, had begged the Mexican President to ask the United States to declare Wilson persona non grata. Records of the Department of State; H. S. Bryan to Thompson, enclosed in Thompson to Huntington Wilson, September 18, 1912.}

This attitude was not kept secret but was widely known in Mexico. It was not calculated to improve the personal feeling of the Ambassador toward Madero. Nor did it cause the Taft administration to place any curb on the Ambassador.

The presentation of the "strong note" was the culmination of a policy developed by Taft and the State Department. Taft had a talk with Calero on September 4th in which there was a clear understanding that he expected the Mexican government to act more firmly than it had in the past to guard American lives and property and to settle outstanding claims. The American President was losing patience,
and failing to obtain satisfactory guarantees from Calero he instructed the State Department to work out some solution. On September 5th, a dispatch went forward to the Ambassador listing the many grievances against Mexico in detail and instructing him to insist that "predatory persecution" cease "forthwith." The dispatch went on to say that:

The Government of the United States finds itself compelled to say on behalf of the American people that its faith in the effectiveness of the Mexican Government has been shaken to its base.

The note also called upon Madero to show that he could handle the situation, or state frankly that he could not, in which case the United States must then consider what measures should be adopted. In today's language this would be interpreted as a threat of an "agonising reappraisal."

12Taft Papers, Letterbook no. 42, September 5, 1912. Taft instructed his Secretary, Carmi Thompson, to meet with Huntington Wilson and recommend a move. Thus Wilson does not deserve the full blame for engineering the presentation of unjust claims in order to deal Madero's government a crippling blow.

13Records of the Department of State; Huntington Wilson to H. L. Wilson, September 5, 1912. File no. 312.11/334A. Had Taft been reelected the State Department was preparing for intervention by June of 1913 if conditions under Madero had not ameliorated by that time. Ibid.; Fred Morris Dearing, Memorandum on Recognition, April 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/8066.
There was genuine fear among Americans in Mexico that Taft really meant business this time. Typical of the many letters received by him was one in which he was told that:

If you or Congress are bent on a high-handed, history making episode, blockade them fore and aft. . . .

But there would be danger to the American residents if intervention were not carried out in such a way as to give immediate protection to them. The above writer did not think that an invasion of the country was advisable just yet.\textsuperscript{14}

It was generally supposed at the time that the "strong note" had actually been prepared by Ambassador Wilson\textsuperscript{15} with the approval of the Department but the initiative was taken by President Taft himself as stated above. The belief that Wilson had prepared the note grew out of the manner of its presentation and the fact that the Department approved some claims in which the Ambassador was interested because they concerned his friends. Although prepared and sent to Wilson on the 5th, it was dated the 15th of September and was not actually delivered until the morning of the 17th. The reason for the delay was the lengthy character of the "bill of particulars" and the necessity of some revisions of a technical

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.; J. N. Shafter, Piedras Negras, Mexico to Taft, September 9, 1912.

\textsuperscript{15}Bell, \textit{Political Shame}, 227-228.
nature.\textsuperscript{16}

As Wilson had predicted, the note was slow in being answered. He was asked pointedly by Lascurain if he could be counted on to represent the Mexican case fairly and sympathetically to his government. His reply was that the responsibility rested with the Mexican government which must act upon matters treated in the note. The Ambassador fully expected that the answers would be vague and evasive and prophesied that in this case "vigorous and firm action of some sort will be necessary to maintain our relations and secure action relative to our just complaints."\textsuperscript{17} This was in accord with the Taft policy so far as it did not involve an outright military invasion. The State Department even refused to allow the Mexican government to interpret the note as an ultimatum. Again, no time limit was specified and it was not until the latter part of November that a reply was received. Madero soon had even more pressing worries in the form of a new rebellion.

A reactionary movement headed by Félix Díaz was started at Vera Cruz in October. It was premature and was soon ended with the capture and imprisonment of Díaz. Madero, either out of kindness or acting according to advisors re-

\textsuperscript{16}Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, September 17, 1912. File no. 312.11/882.

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, September 18, 1912.
voked Díaz' sentence of execution and the latter was kept, instead, in prison in the Capital where he was to become the center of a continuation of the movement in February. This uprising was simply additional evidence that President Madero either did not know the seriousness of his opposition or was determined not to admit failure. He was able to overcome the first Díaz rebellion but the legislative arguments over foreign loans, the failure of the government to satisfy Indian demands, Madero's regulation of the press and his refusal to recognize that the country was in a chaotic condition stamped him as an honest but inept leader incapable of handling the problems facing him. His enmity toward Ambassador Wilson blinded him to the need for effective action on his own part. It was too easy to lay his failures at the door of the American Embassy and by encouraging his followers in this attitude he could save face. He told them that a change of administrations at Washington would solve most of his problems and he was too much of an idealist not to have believed this himself. It is interesting to find that one who defended Madero was in essential agreement with Ambassador Wilson on the matter of conditions in the country:

In these crowded months while the disturbing elements which I have striven to describe were at work in Congress and throughout the country, and beyond its borders, President Madero regained the optimism which had always been characteristic of him, and had been for only a while disturbed . . . . To what extent he willfully deluded himself after the manner of various faith-cults, I am uncertain, but the
result was very similar to their achievements even in the point of its ultimate fatality. He gained a more assured and cheerful attitude which had a value when he appeared in public, but he suffered the inevitable loss in judgement and in power to think honestly. It became more difficult than before to convince him by the plainest evidence against a preconceived opinion. He had posted a deaf and blind sentry at the gateway of his life to cry "All's well" and there were times when he would hear no other voice. 18

The Ambassador was more concise:

... The Department will doubtless note the optimistic character of Madero's address to Congress on September 16th, which seems to be designed to conceal rather than discuss the real condition of the country. However, it deceives no one in Mexico as to the conditions which really exist though it may have the effect which it is evidently desired to have abroad. 19

Independently of Wilson, the State Department began hearing rumors of the impending rebellion in the army. 20

The Ambassador was on leave when the news of the Díaz rebellion reached him at Kansas City. He was gratified to learn that the Department was taking steps to have the Navy in readiness. While there is some controversy over statements that he made to the press at this time, it should be clear by now that the removal of Madero from office would be, to

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18 Bell, Political Shame, 248-249.
19 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox September 18, 1912.
20 Ibid.; Adee to Wilson, September 27, 1912.
him, a welcome relief. A secret message from Schuyler (left in charge of the Embassy at Mexico City) to the Department disclosed that four personal friends of the Ambassador had expressed approval of the revolt of General Díaz, believing that order would be restored thereby and had recommended recognition of the "belligerency" of Díaz by the United States. They were careful to obtain a pledge that their names not be used. One may hazard a good guess as to who these men were since Wilson suggested that Schuyler consult Cook, Agramonte, Long, McCarty, Walker and Galbraith in the event of a disorder. All of these men were in the American colony. Agramonte was president while Cook was chairman of the colony. The swift capture of Díaz was undoubtedly a disappointment to the colony and to the State Department. Although the Department gave immediate and

21 Ibid.; Schuyler to Knox, October 17, 1912.

22 George W. Cook was the head of a firm of Mosler, Bowen and Cook which did business in government supplies and was believed to be in close touch with Limantour. Bell, Political Shame, 138-139.

23 All of the other names appear among those in the American colony who signed a petition dated March 4, 1913 asking that Wilson be retained as Ambassador to Mexico. This petition was addressed to President Woodrow Wilson. Hearing - Subcommittee on U.S. Citizens in Mexico, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, 2266-2267. See also Records of the Department of State; Huntington Wilson to the American Embassy in Mexico City, October 23, 1912 and Schuyler to Knox, October 27, 1912.
hearty approval of Schuyler's course in withholding interference, there was disappointment in high places. Governor Hay of the State of Washington wrote Taft that:

Heretofore I have been opposed to American intervention and have requested my people to lie still hoping that conditions would right themselves long before this, but I am commencing to get the same feeling the boys in the Mexican office have had for so long, and that is our government must interfere. 24

Although it is agreed by contemporaries that Madero made a fatal mistake in reversing the decision of a military court to execute Díaz, the swift capture of the rebel leader gave Madero unbounded optimism. The election of Woodrow Wilson to the presidency in the United States was even more reason to rejoice. One cannot help wondering if the reply which was shortly made to the "strong note" would not have been more conciliatory had the election in the United States had a different outcome. At any rate, the reply, long overdue, finally came on November 24th. It was forwarded through the Mexican Embassy in Washington and contained one flat denial after the other that the Mexican government had been remiss in any of its obligations. The inclusion of Wilson's pet

24Records of the Department of State; Governor M. E. Hay of the State of Washington to Taft, November 9, 1912. A departmental memorandum later stated that: "On theoretical grounds [Madero] may be absolved of responsibility, but on immediate practical and political grounds no excuse for him can be made." Ibid.; Fred Morris Dearing, Memorandum on Recognition, April 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/8066.
projects in the "strong note" certainly weakened the American stand but in any case the attitude of the Mexican government would have been the same and would have been unsatisfactory to Taft. Denial of the justice of the claims was coupled with citations of American delinquency in cases of injustice to Mexican citizens on United States soil.

As the "strong note" fell just short of an ultimatum, no direct punitive measures had to be taken. Meanwhile, Madero was bragging openly that he was "enchanted" with the election of Governor Wilson and a considerable increase in anti-American feeling was becoming noticeable. One member of the Mexican cabinet went so far as to make public statements derogatory of American officials and Knox made this the subject of a message to Foreign Minister Lascuirain. Madero countered by sending Lascuirain to Washington, ostensibly to discuss the claims but also to explain the situation to President-elect Wilson and urge him to remove Ambassador Wilson as soon as he was in office.25 That the reply of the Mexican government to the "strong note" caused a flurry of activity is evidenced by the immediate circularizing of the consuls throughout Mexico. They were asked to report all instances in which Americans suffered losses in lives or

25 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 234-235.
property since October 1, 1910. It was also decided that
each item of the list of claims would be studied and treated
independently a project that would consume a great deal of
time.

The fact that the Taft administration would soon leave
office and that it could very easily leave under a cloud if
too firm a stand were taken in Mexico made for considerable
confusion in the Mexican policy during January of 1913.
There was no lessening of the desire to make Mexico more
willing to meet the demands of the American government, but
there was less and less readiness to commit the administra-
tion to a firm course. Taft, preparing to leave for Panama,
notified Knox that he desired a conference on the Mexican
situation adding that he was:

... getting to a point where I think we
ought to put a little dynamite in for the
purpose of stirring up that dreamer who
seems unfitted to meet the crisis in the
country of which he is President.

26 Records of the Department of State; Circular Letter
to all Consuls in Mexico from Huntington Wilson, November 25,
1912.

27 Studying these claims would provide plenty of time
for the Taft administration to drift along without having to
come to a final decision on the Mexican question. Wilson
does not mention this in Diplomatic Episodes where he dis-
cusses the matter, 247-249.

28 Taft Papers, Letterbook no. 46; Taft to Knox,
December 14, 1912.
Washington newspapers soon caught the note of impatience in Mexican-American relations and it was widely reported in December that Madero no longer had the confidence of the American government. No doubt the presence of the Ambassador to Mexico in Washington was partly responsible for this but Taft was also under pressure from strong elements in his party who did not want to tolerate Madero further.

Nevertheless, the Mexican question was left more and more in the hands of the Ambassador. Let it be said again that his views harmonized with those of his superiors. His opposition to Madero was well known and had there been a real desire to allow the Mexican imbroglio to subside until March 4th, Wilson could have been replaced by transfer or by several other methods. The shipments of arms (only allowed by presidential permit in each case) increased decidedly during December and January. Was this the means of "stirring up the dreamer?" One thing was certain. There was still to be no policy having military invasion as a possible outcome.

As a result of conferences between Taft and Henry Lane Wilson, another ultimatum (the third of the year) was drafted for delivery to the Mexican government. This time the draft originally carried a time limit but this latter feature was canceled by the President and the note itself was never de-
Far from being mystified by the pessimistic character of the Ambassador's dispatches in January of 1913, after he returned from Washington, Taft and Knox were alarmed lest he involve the United States in the consequences of a policy that they themselves had formulated. For his part, the Ambassador could not understand the sudden inclination of the Department to question his reports on conditions in Mexico. How could he know that he was being abandoned to carry on the policy alone while the administration quietly placed itself in a position where it could avoid political damage regardless of the outcome. Madero's government was experiencing a crisis that was equally as important as the question of whether or not the country was, at the time, under effective Federal control. This was evident to more substantial people than "coffee-house politicians and disappointed fanatics." The Mexican government was beset by financial problems.

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29 *Washington Post*, December 22, 1912. See also Knox Correspondence, Volume 20; H. L. Wilson to Knox, December 24, 1912 and Bell, *Political Shame*, 252.

30 The traditional view that Wilson was playing a lone hand is carried over into this period by Cline, *The United States and Mexico*, 130.

31 *Ibid.* Cline is in substantial disagreement on this point. Apparently his view is still closer to that of Druener: *The United States and Mexico*, passim.
Wilson's dispatches did begin to take on a tone of desperation stimulated by his contempt for Madero. He blustered that the situation was hopeless and had to be given a mild rebuff by Knox for talking to Lascurain in sharp tones. Wilson, apparently not understanding the reasons for the reticence of his superiors, interpreted this years later as being the result of Knox's legal training which "... sometimes affected or delayed the vigour of his action in acute crises." When the Ambassador issued a request for warships to enter Mexican waters and when the intensity of his emphasis on the anti-Madero movement reached alarming proportions some checking was done in the Department and Fred Morris Dearing assembled substantial proof that the Ambassador was composing his dispatches from the columns of

32 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, January 7, 1913. Knox was not the only one who was disturbed by Wilson's seeming desire to force things to a culmination. Judge Delbert J. Haff of Kansas City who represented firms with large investments in Mexico warned Wilson in a telegram that friendly relations between the United States and Mexico now depended upon his wise and courageous action. He felt that the resort to force would be the great catastrophe of the age. Ibid.; Haff to Wilson, quoted in Wilson to Knox, January 6, 1913.

33 Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, January 7, 1913.

34 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 297-298.

35 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, January 14, 1913.
the *Mexican Herald*. When called on for an explanation of the unwarranted pessimism of his reports Wilson took an insolent tone and threatened to discontinue his dispatches until an apology was forthcoming. His only excuse for his messages was that Madero was incapable of governing. One historian has assigned the term "personal vendetta" to this feud but that Wilson was also pursuing a State Department policy is indicated by the fact that instead of recalling him for insubordination, Secretary Knox swallowed his pride and replied that the Department wished him to continue his reports but to be guided by the "cautionary intent" of his instructions which the Department "regretted to see were much misunderstood." Of course, Wilson should have been able to view his own position in a more political light but he was in no mood for retreat.

Knox was, of course, caught in the middle of the whole affair. In some desperation he laid the recent correspond-

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36 *Ibid.;* Memorandum, Dearing to Buck, Division of Latin American Affairs, January 27, 1913.
37 *Ibid.;* Knox to Wilson, January 21, 1913.
38 *Ibid.;* Wilson to Knox, January 22, 1913.
39 *Cline, United States and Mexico,* 130.
40 Records of the Department of State; Knox to Wilson, January 24, 1913.
ence of the Department with the American Embassy in Mexico City before the President, calling his attention to the increasing pessimism of the reports as indication "that the Ambassador has taken a stand of his own with regard to claims of American citizens..." and "... an intention on the part of the Ambassador to force this Government's hand in dealing with the Mexican situation as a whole."41 It must have been disturbing indeed when the Department one day received word at 6:30 P.M. from the Consul at Saltillo that there was no disturbance in that district, to hear at 11:00 P.M. on the same day from the Embassy that the "National Line has been cut north of Saltillo and a number of bridges burned."42

It was indeed true that Madero had not pacified Mexico.43 In addition to the continuance of armed uprisings in the south, the financial situation was acute and accusations against the Madero administration were shouted daily in the halls of Congress. To add to Madero's misery, Calero resigned his position as Ambassador to the United States to take his place in the Senate and join in the arguments on the condition of finances. It was like the bursting of a bomb-

41Ibid.; Knox to Taft, January 27, 1913.
42Ibid.; Wilson to Knox and Holland to Knox, January 28, 1913.
43Bell, Political Shame, 242-243.
shell when, on February 4th, in a flat statement to the Senate, he admitted that he had **lied to the American government for ten months** about conditions in Mexico. Lest this be interpreted as mere malice, he added a strong recommendation that the Madero government be supported as the only alternative to anarchy.

On the same day, Ambassador Wilson addressed a lengthy dispatch to Washington which was circulated to the President, the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. He reiterated the generally miserable state of Mexico as a whole and the effect this had upon foreign interests. Madero was about to carry the government hopelessly into debt in order to stave off collapse and Madero himself was vacillating, siding with first one faction, then another, and heading an administration that was "impatient in the face of domestic ills and disorders and truculent in its international relations." He had not fulfilled his promises "... and the dreamer of Coahuila, who essayed the role of Moses [was] shrinking rapidly to the dimensions of a Castro." 44

The causes of the new revolution which ensued are not pertinent here45 but it caught the American Ambassador by

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44 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 4, 1913.

45 Indications that Gustavo Madero obtained a list of the revolutionaries and could not convince Francisco of the need for caution appear in Bell, *Political Shame*, 261-262.
surprise. While he was planning a weekend trip in the coun-
try, disloyal troops, small in number at first, began an
attack on the government by marching on the City and freeing
General Félix Días from prison. Thus began the famous
Decena Trágica, the event that concluded the feud between
Wilson and Madero. The latter was murdered by his enemies
and the former was shortly humiliated and dismissed from
service by his.
WILSON AND THE TRAGIC TEN DAYS IN MEXICO

The revolt against Madero, which began on Saturday night, February 6, 1913, and resulted in a ten day siege of Mexico City, could be made the theme of volumes of interesting detail. The problem here, however, is to determine the role of Henry Lane Wilson in this crisis. From his viewpoint, his major responsibility was to see that protection was given to the lives and property of foreigners, especially Americans, in a city without police protection and constantly under carelessly directed gunfire. In trying to perform this duty he was led, step by step, into a position which made it necessary for him to observe the total political picture and side with the faction that gave most promise of restoring order.

Wilson's behavior should not be interpreted entirely in the light of his opposition to Madero's idealism. Admittedly he did not agree with the basic assumption that the Mexican people were capable of choosing wise leaders. The government he represented held no such belief. The outbreak of revolt followed by the swift defection of Federal Generals merely confirmed his studied conviction that Madero was an inept leader. That he did not favor the retention of Madero in power or labor to support an unpopular regime should not be
surprising. He had no illusions about the situation. His reporting of the events of the *Decena Trágica* were objective enough; they were based on information from his military attaché and other reliable sources. His occasional exaggeration of the dangers and magnification of his own role as protector of lives and property is understandable. He always enjoyed being the center of attention and he felt that his course would be approved.

The first news of the revolt reached him at seven o'clock, Sunday morning, the 9th of February. By ten o'clock the Embassy was a beehive of activity. Wilson, with the approval of the Diplomatic Corps, sought assurances from both sides that foreign lives and property would be respected but he assured the State Department that he had done nothing that would involve recognition of Díaz.1 Meanwhile, the foreign guard was organised and guns were passed out. The American Embassy became the headquarters for emergency measures. Americans were warned to stay out of danger zones and this warning was so often repeated from the Embassy that the Ambassador's concern throughout the siege with the protection of life and property was often the butt of jokes.

By the next day, (Monday, February 10th), Díaz had become firmly entrenched in the Ciudadela (the arsenal)

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1Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 9, 1913.
several blocks from the National Palace where Huerta held command of the government forces. "Loyal" Federal forces were reported coming in but they arrived slowly and then only in small detachments. Wilson decided that the Embassy could not assure adequate protection to American citizens. He wanted warships with marines sent to Vera Cruz.

That Wilson and some of his friends in the American colony desired more forceful action than the State Department intended to take is evident from his telegrams. Although consuls in Chihuahua and along the border reported no undue excitement, some of the people at Vera Cruz asked their Consul to request battleships. The Department waited impatiently for the Embassy's estimate of conditions. Wilson was warned not to indulge in any act that would constitute a recognition of Díaz but the Department approved his course in seeking guarantees under any circumstances wherein Díaz exercised de facto control. The Department requested prompt and effective advice as to what course the United States should take. At twelve noon the Ambassador telegraphed that the

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2Madero ordered General Blanquet to move from nearby Toluca. Troops were also called in from Vera Cruz but they were later returned because of the lack of ammunition and also because the Americans at Vera Cruz felt insecure because the garrison had been reduced.

3Records of the Department of State; Canada to Knox, February 10, 1913.

4Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 10, 1913. File no. 812.00/6058.
military circumstances were uncertain, that protection could not be guaranteed for foreigners and that conditions were likely to become more serious. He believed that in time the revolt would spread to the provinces, and recommended that Mexico be surrounded by naval and land forces; a note penciled on this dispatch by his superiors read "too far" in referring to this latter point.

Knox now reiterated for Wilson's benefit the Department's previous notice that there had been no change in the policy of the United States. The President, considering the uncertain conditions that might affect American citizens both in Mexico City and the provinces, wished only to take precautionary measures. Some two hours before this last message was sent to the Embassy, Wilson renewed his call for

5Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 10, 1913.

6Ibid.; Memorandum, Division of Latin American Affairs, February 12, 1913. Among the reasons discussed in the Department for not sending the troops to Vera Cruz at this time was the idea that if the United States had to use force they would be maintaining only a "principal" while Mexicans were fighting with the entire Republic at stake.

"Moreover," the memorandum went on to say, "the present Administration, if after proper preparation took the action recommended by Mr. Wilson, would be in the position of possibly plunging the country into a war which it would not have an opportunity to carry on and which would have to be turned over to a new Administration which would have none of the responsibilities of the state of affairs found to exist when it came into power."

7Records of the Department of State; Knox to Wilson, February 10, 1913. File no. 812.00/6095.
warships with marines. At six o'clock in the evening he telegraphed that he could not locate the de jure government but that someone who had talked with Díaz had reported to the Embassy. Díaz knew that delay was hurting his cause but he preferred to negotiate with Huerta and to avoid bloodshed if possible. Wilson added, for emphasis as well as for information, that a few stray bullets were entering the Embassy. By eleven o'clock the same evening he was doubting seriously the loyalty of troops under Generals Angeles and Blanquet which were supposed to be on the move toward the Capital. He could not, he said, locate any representative of the government; however, in the same dispatch he stated that General Huerta had been contacted and had promised to give some police protection. Madero was away (probably negotiating with Zapata) but there was nothing to indicate that he had abandoned the city as was implied in Wilson's messages. Wilfley, Wilson's close associate, joined in the appeal for warships to be sent to Vera Cruz, by telegraphing directly to the White House. The press in the American Capital emphasized Díaz' popularity and believed that he was

8 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 10, 1913. File no. 812.00/6075.

9 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 10, 1913. File no. 812.00/6077.

10 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 10, 1913. File no. 812.00/6078.

11 Ibid.; L. R. Wilfley to President Taft, February 10, 1913.
the man to bring order in the Capital as well as throughout Mexico. 12 General Blanquet, meanwhile, denied vigorously the rumor that he intended to join the rebels. 13

The fighting continued into the early hours of the morning of February 11th (Tuesday), and it became increasingly clear that there was to be a heavy bombardment in the heart of the city. In the opinion of many observers, Díaz and Huerta had already come to terms and the battles of the next few days were staged to give time to plan the overthrow of Madero. 14 The New York Times and the Washington Post continued to tell their American readers that General Díaz would probably become "the man of the hour" but the Times did warn that Huerta was also to be considered. As usual, the American people could learn little from the press except the most obvious facts. 15 In a special message to the Times, Díaz promised that the issue would be decided within a few

13 El Intransigente, Mexico City, February 10, 1913.
14 Prida, From Despotism to Anarchy, 159-160. Prida agrees with Bell, Political Shame, 288, that Huerta could have taken the Arsenal at his own discretion but that he delayed, not because he had been involved in the plot beforehand, but because an opportunity had arisen for him to play politics for the first time and he took advantage of it.
15 New York Times, February 11, 1913. The American press was unusually ignorant of the moving forces and personalities in this affair.
hours and that he would extend protection to all American citizens. In such circumstances one would expect that the man who in a few more days would become the President of the United States would have more than a passing interest in events that were taking place in Mexico, but President-elect Wilson stated publicly that he did not even bother to read newspaper reports on the situation until he returned home in the evening from his office. No doubt many interested American citizens in the United States were just as well informed about Mexico. Madero's subsidized press boasted of Knox's continued confidence in the government and denied all rumors that Madero would resign, but the Consul at Tampico told Knox that apparently the revolution was regarded favorably, and the New York Times declared jubilantly that Mexico was well rid of Madero.

Meanwhile, the buildings housing the American Consulate and Embassy came directly within the line of fire. Since few of the artillery shells were finding their target, (bolstering

17 Special to the New York Times from Trenton, N. J., February 11, 1913.
18 Records of the Department of State; Miller to Knox, February 11, 1913.
the view that this was a useless duel), most of them were falling indiscriminately nearby making it difficult for Wilson and Consul-General Shanklin to care for the large numbers of people who poured into the Embassy grounds needing food and shelter. Undisciplined Federal soldiers occasionally fired into the Consulate-General building and Shanklin was eventually forced to escape to the safety of the Embassy. Wilson wired Knox that public opinion, both native and foreign, seemed to be overwhelmingly in favor of Díaz. At six P.M. the Ambassador asked for permission to call Madero to account:

I am convinced that the Government of the United States in the interest of humanity and in the discharge of its political obligations should send hither instructions of a firm, drastic and perhaps menacing character to be transmitted personally to the Government of President Madero and to the leaders of the revolutionary movement. (Underlining is the author's).

If I were in possession of instructions of this character or clothed with general powers in the name of the President I might possibly be able to induce a cessation of hostilities and the initiation of negotiations having for their object definite pacific arrangements.

20 Records of the Department of State; Shanklin to Knox, February 11, 1913.
21 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 11, 1913.
22 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 11, 1913. File no. 812.00/6092.
The above message indicates that the Ambassador had received some communication from General Díaz that went beyond mere guarantees of safety. No doubt the rebel leaders would have received the advantage of these "full powers." Wilson really desired the power to sanction a new government that would not include the maderistas. He was confident that public opinion would soon force Taft to resume a more active policy in Mexico, but Taft and Knox were not going to be responsible for any decision that would possibly embarrass the incoming administration or reflect on the prestige of the Republican Party. The real blame that should be attached to Wilson was his failure to recognize this fact. If the situation in Mexico were to be stabilized, however, now was the time to act. Wilson laid great stress, in reviewing his action later, on the fact that his views represented those of the Diplomatic Corps who were constantly consulted. The Mexico City press carried stories on this day that may present a partial solution to the question of why civilians were targets for so much of the gunfire from the opposing sides. It seems there were forces on both sides who had been companions in the military academies and there was a reluctance on the part of the common soldier to shoot down compatriots. If this was the case and Madero could not command sufficient loyalty to induce a real effort to take the Ciudadela then foreigners might indeed fear for life and property and political considerations in Washington could
have little meaning. The fighting might go on indefinitely. In a midnight cabinet meeting, President Taft decided, with the approval of the War, Navy and State Departments, to take no more affirmative action than to order three more battleships to stand by at Vera Cruz. This policy was firmly agreed upon when Secretary Knox showed the President Wilson's telegram of the previous day. Wilson was duly advised by Knox that:

The conjecture that if given drastic instructions the Embassy might possibly be able to induce a cessation of hostilities leading to negotiations for peace does not convince the President of the advisability of any such instructions just at the present time. In the first place if the Embassy's representations under such instructions should be disregarded the enforcement of such representations with the accompanying message to Congress looking to authority for measures of actual war might precipitate intervention, which could not be considered except as a last resort and if found justified after deliberate consideration of the whole Mexican question including the situation

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23 *Washington Post*, February 12, 1913. This must have been a keen disappointment to Governor Colquitt of Texas who took this opportunity to renew his campaign for forceful intervention. He wired Taft that: "...continued disorders and the obligations of the United States to the world under the Monroe Doctrine makes it now a duty for our government to intervene in Mexico to restore order. ..." Records of the Department of State; Colquitt to Taft, February 12, 1913.

24 *Ibid.*; Knox to Taft, February 12, 1913. Knox had the difficult task of explaining Taft's position to Colquitt. He replied for the President that:

"Thus far the policy of the President remains unchanged, subject, of course, to the evaluation of the general situation and the (a penciled 'ultimate' appears here) effect of the sudden crisis of events occurring since Sunday at the Mexican Capital." *Ibid.*; Knox to Colquitt, February 12, 1913.
of foreigners throughout the Republic. Just now action looking to intervention might moreover precipitate many of the evils of actual intervention and might indeed subject American interests in the City of Mexico to increased dangers under the cloak of the present turmoil. In the second place, drastic representation might radically affect the issue of military supremacy at the Capital which is one for the determination of which it is not now expedient for this Government to become to any degree responsible, and is, moreover, one which, once definitely settled may well create a better situation for foreigners in the Capital, bad as it is nothing seems thus far called for beyond the precautionary dispositions as to ships and so forth already taken \[sic\] and in view of the warnings given, the kind of representations to both sides already approved and other precautions so promptly taken by the Embassy it appears evident that foreigners ought to seek places of safety until after the fighting, giving due heed to the emphatic recommendations which the Embassy should continue to make in this sense. Meanwhile the Department is gratified to note that thus far there are no indications that Americans or other foreigners as such are being subjected to more than the ordinary perils incident to such unfortunate conditions as now exist.\[25\]

\[25\] Ibid; Knox to Wilson, February 12, 1913. File no. 812.00/6092. Knox had good reason not to put any faith in the ability of Madero's government to overcome the rebel forces. Typical of the messages that the Secretary of State had received even prior to the outbreak of the revolt at Mexico City was one from the Consular Agent at Torreón, Coahuila. This man warned that revolutionary conditions were assuming more alarming proportions and that people made no secret of their opinion that the government could not hold out. Furthermore some of these people were maderistas. Knox was also reminded that the independent press of the country was demanding Madero's resignation. Ibid; G. C. Carothers, Consular Agent, Torreón, Coahuila to Theodore C. Hamm, Esq., Consul, Durango, January 30, 1913. Enclosed in Hamm to Knox, February 3, 1913 and received February 13th. Copy to the White House, February 17, 1913.
While this telegram was going forward from Washington, Wilson was engaged in summing up his activities of Wednesday, February 12th. He told of having gone to Madero and then to Díaz to protest the aimless bombardment of the city. He spoke in the most general terms of his conversation with Madero, reporting only the trend of his representations and adding that Madero had promised an early end to the fighting. He was much more explicit with regard to his conference with Díaz. He told Díaz that American warships were prepared to land marines which would then march to Mexico City unless the fighting were stopped. Wilson was flushed with his sudden importance but he would hardly have been so bold as to have made this threat had he not had reason to believe that Taft and Knox would, under the pressure of American public opinion, change their course and follow the protective policy used elsewhere in Central America. It can be assumed that Wilson had been led to believe this during his recent conferences in Washington. There were, besides this, a number of reasons for more drastic action. Americans were being killed and wounded (Knox did not yet know this) and surely the administration could not mean to wait for a wholesale massacre of Americans to take place. The tone of Wilson's dispatch does, indeed, indicate that he dealt far more harshly with Madero than with Díaz. He was bluffing in the

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26 *Ibid.*; Wilson to Knox, February 12, 1913. File no. 812.00/6112.
matter of landing marines, but not having received Knox's reply to his request he could not have realized that he was going to be sacrificed to expediency. From his viewpoint, and that held at one time by the administration, intervention might become necessary at any time. It would be far better if it were undertaken in a situation like this than under other circumstances when such action might be interpreted by the world as persecution of a weaker state by a stronger one.

Knox fully approved of Wilson's negotiating with both sides for the purpose of obtaining guarantees. Critics of the Ambassador have never found it necessary to explain just how he could have, by throwing the authority of his government behind Madero, caused Díaz to withdraw politely or Huerta to regain respect for a President that he already despised. How could a national leader whose entire administration had been characterized by political innocence, nepotism, misplaced idealism and disorder be expected to establish order? His troops were doing little to help him.

This became evident on the following day, Thursday, February 13th. Federal troops continued deserting to Díaz and the Ambassador had every reason to believe that the Ciudadela

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27 As noted earlier, Madero had called Huerta to account for some financial discrepancies in the General's records. Huerta was stubborn and unforgiving. No doubt he awaited an opportunity to get even with the President.
would not fall. Captain W. W. Burnside, the military attache testified that:

I do not now recall the exact date on which I stated to you that the government would be unable to take the Ciudadela, but such was my opinion at all times (underlining is the author's) after the evening of February 13th. Subsequent events only strengthened this opinion and made me feel more certain that it was correct.28

Consular reports revealed that the Madero administration was losing ground steadily in the States. Laredo and Ciudad Juárez remained quiet, Aguascalientes reported conditions unchanged and Tabasco and Nogales were orderly but the rebels were gaining ground in Durango, where fighting was underway, and there was some brigandage at San Luis Potosí. Madero property was suffering damage in Saltillo and the reduction of the Federal garrison at Vera Cruz caused concern to foreigners. Although Tampico and Ciudad Porfirio Díaz had seen no unusual disturbances, conditions were reported to be growing worse at Acapulco.29 The Consul-General at Monterey

28Hearing - Subcommittee on U.S. Citizens in Mexico, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, 2262; Burnside to Wilson, American Embassy, Office of the Military Attaché, Mexico, June 5, 1913.

29Records of the Department of State; Knox to Wilson, February 13, 1913. Wilson's knowledge of the rebellion was confined largely to events in the Capital where conditions were growing steadily worse for the civilian population. Consular reports could not be sent to the Embassy in the ordinary manner as wire services were often interrupted. The Department of State was better informed about the rest of the country than was the Ambassador.
assured Knox that that city, true to tradition, was peaceful but that conditions throughout the country were "worse than ever before." The Washington Post likened the situation in Mexico to the Boxer Rebellion and predicted the impending landing of United States troops. A garbled version began to circulate of a request by Márquez Stirling, the Cuban Minister to Mexico, that Cuba be permitted to land infantry troops and it was soon rumored that a company of them was about to disembark at Vera Cruz. Actually the Cuban Minister had requested approval from Madero to do this but had been turned down. Apparently, Stirling felt that it was proper for his legation to have military protection but any such hint from American officials amounted, of course, to "interference." Foreign Minister Lascurain informed the Senate, with thirty members present, that the United States might land troops which indicates that Wilson had told Madero, as he had told Díaz, (on the previous day), that marines might indeed be sent in. It was suggested that the Senate meet with Madero the following day; but only a few senators in the opposition seemed to favor the meeting and it was held in a private

30 Ibid.; Hanna to Knox, February 13, 1913.
31 Washington Post, February 13, 1913.
32 El Quartelazo, Mexico City, February 13, 1913. Some of the American consuls also reported this.
It may well be that Huerta had already made up his mind by this time to take over the government in machiavellian fashion. The majority of the senators were waiting to see which military faction would seize power while a minority discussed the feasibility of requiring Madero's resignation. Meanwhile the civilian population, confined to places of refuge and in constant danger, bore the brunt of the ordeal.

Matters were serious enough to induce the Secretary-General of the Pan-American Union to suggest publicly a plan of mediation to be undertaken by a group of Latin American states. Such a plan seemed absurd to Wilson when he learned of it through the press and it was repudiated by an administration at Washington that saw it as an embarrassment rather than a help; however, Taft was magnanimous enough to forgive the meddling dignitary. Wilson was incensed and wanted to know if the Department could not do something about such harmful utterances in a situation "which needs at the time firmness, activity, but no sentimentality or amateur politics." It is of passing interest that Taft also received

33 Prida, From Despotism to Anarchy, Chapter XXIV. This is the basis for the charge, probably true, that the call upon Madero to resign came not from Congress but, in reality, from a few opposition senators who were half afraid to meet and were only gradually drawn into the plot against Madero.

34 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 14, 1913.
at this time suggestions that the United States and two or three Latin American states undertake intervention, a means of settlement President Wilson finally used in the Niagara Falls Conference.

The Ambassador was far more concerned over his ability to end the indiscriminate fighting in Mexico City, and at eleven o'clock on the morning of February 14th (Friday), he telegraphed the Department asking once more for fuller powers. Although Knox's instructions clearly indicate that Americans in Mexico would be left to deal with the danger as best they could, Wilson was still deluded with the notion that his government would actively encourage the opponents of Madero. His superiors were resolved to drop the whole thing in the lap of the incoming administration; but where did this leave the foreign colonies in Mexico City? Wilson registered an urgent plea:

Will the Department please instruct me immediately as to the measure of control I will be permitted to exercise over the American ships and marines which should arrive tomorrow at various Mexican ports? So far as the situation in Mexico City and Vera Cruz is concerned I recommend that I be clothed under such restrictions as may be lawful and as the Department may think proper with power to act immediately in crisis without further instructions. The situation is becoming hourly more acute and dangerous, and conditions here are almost chaotic. The scarcity of food and impending hunger here are now becoming fait accompli and the Department should consider
in making its reply to this telegram all possible contingencies which may arise.35

Although denied by the Madero press, rumors circulated that the Mexican Congress was about to call upon Madero to resign if it had not already done so. Headlines in the United States announced vivid stories of Americans huddled around the Embassy to escape danger. Another American had been killed in the city and no relief seemed to be in sight.

As the city continued under siege and while Wilson awaited his instructions he was visited by Stirling, the Cuban Minister. Stirling wished to consult him about the refusal of Madero to allow his infantry to land. Stirling wrote later that Wilson told him that if the Mexican government did not soon act to preserve order Cuba would have every right to send in troops but that this should be done in cooperation with him. Stirling then reports the following conversation with Wilson:

"¿No cree usted, Mr. Wilson, que las fuerzas leales decidan pronto el pleito o que se llegue a una transacción o a un arreglo decoroso?

"Aguarde usted si puede, un rato - contestó - y le daré noticias.

"Yo: (Stirling) ¿Está ahora negociándose algo sobre esa base?

"El: (Wilson) Ha ido el señor Cologan [the Spanish Minister] a la Ciudadela y en breve le tendremos aquí."

Stirling preferred not to wait for Cologan's arrival as

Wilson appeared to be busy. So he left the Embassy. He had not gone two blocks before he met Cologan who was on foot. Stirling returned with him to the Embassy. This gave him an opportunity to talk with the Spanish Minister and the following conversation is reported:

Cologan - "Vengo de hablar a Félix Díaz. [This was said in a very low voice].

Stirling - "¿Y ha logrado usted algo?

Cologan - "Nada! - y moviendo la cabeza, para expresar desesperanza, añadió - ¡Esto es muy grave Ministro!

Yo [Stirling] - "¿Y Félix Díaz dispone de muchos elementos?

Cologan - "Me ha parecido un poco débil. Pero el Embajador no querrá darse por entendido cuando le informe acerca de ello (Reflexionando) Yo sé a dónde va Mr. Wilson; él me habla y yo oigo. . . . No se puede nada."  

36Stirling, Los Ultimos Días, 391-393. Stirling's testimony has been generally accepted as convincing evidence of the "treachery" of the American Ambassador. His book is, however, only one of a number of anti-American tracts that were circulated by sympathizers and diehards among the supporters of Madero in Mexico. Stirling had, it is true, first hand information and was close to the situation at the American Embassy; but Wilson, as was usual, gave most weight to the support and advice of the representatives of larger countries with more at stake in Mexico. Apparently none of the representatives of these latter countries felt any need to protest that they had been overridden by Wilson in the decisions that were being made. Cologan, the Spanish Minister, Von Hintze, the German Minister, and Stronge, the British Minister, were in frequent conference with the Ambassador.

Wilson's Embassy staff drew up a sworn document testifying that his relations with Huerta and Díaz had been confined at all times to the matter of safety for American lives and property. Hearing - Subcommittee on U.S. Citizens in Mexico, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, 2286.
Stirling has been taken too seriously by those who followed the traditional view of the role of the Ambassador but much of the Cuban Minister's information was gained by hearsay and he was obviously chagrined at not being taken into the confidence of the Ambassador from the United States whose position was so much more important.

While much is made of the argument as to whether Huerta could have overcome Díaz or not if he had really wanted to, it was not the business of the American Ambassador to determine this. Wilson reported that Lascurain had told him that morning that he was "profoundly impressed with what he believes to be the threatening attitude of our Government and intimated to me in confidence that he thought the President ought to resign." Wilson urged Lascurain to seek an armistice and try to arrange a calling of the Senate.37 A little later Lascurain conveyed Madero's wish that the Embassy be moved to the suburb of Tacubaya, out of the line of fire, but Wilson steadfastly refused to move. When Knox heard this he was annoyed; however, there could have been a great deal of danger and inconvenience in such a move - the Embassy having already become a rescue station - and evidently there was little order anywhere around the city. If Wilson had been plotting against Madero at this time it would seem that a position outside of the city would have been more favorable.

37 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 14, 1913. File no. 812.00/6153.
At any rate, the attitude of the Department was passive. Knox urged weakly that the Americans remember that city fighting was not without precedent and that an Embassy could not in all cases be interposed in such a manner as to affect the issue of fighting when there existed a way of escape. In times of upheavals in Mexico no American colony anywhere in the country desired to make itself conspicuous. If Madero was being betrayed, evidence points to forces in his own government. The Ambassador was not at all averse to seeing those forces triumph.

Meanwhile, late in the evening of the 14th, it was learned that Díaz had asked for an armistice but had been turned down. He sent two special messengers to Wilson with another request that his belligerency be recognized by the American government. Wilson quickly conveyed this information to his superiors. Just before doing so he telegraphed

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38 Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 14, 1913. Critics of Wilson's policy mistakenly believed that Knox had "ordered him to move the Embassy." Ibid.; H. S. Bryan to Senator Pomerene, enclosed in Pomerene to Woodrow Wilson, July 26, 1913. No assurances could be given that the refugees could be moved; thus the gesture of the Mexican government was, in reality, meaningless.

39 Bell, Political Shame, 281. Two hundred troops from Vera Cruz were returned to that city during the morning reporting that the Federal government did not have enough ammunition to use them in Mexico City. See n. 2, this chapter, and Records of the Department of State; Canada to Knox, February 14, 1913.

40 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 14, 1913. File no. 812.00/6154.
that he was trying to confer with his colleagues at every step but this was difficult due to the interruption of communications, however.

The British, German and Spanish Ministers and French Chargé are in entire accord with the policy I am pursuing and I believe also the rest of my colleagues, though the greatest difficulty of communications is rendering consultation difficult.\(^{1}\)

There seemed to be no difficulty, however, in remaining in touch with General Díaz.

Madero remained deaf to all suggestions that he resign or treat with the rebels. His protestations that he was the constitutional president of Mexico became almost monotonous. Finally, driven by desperation, he sent a message to Taft promising to observe his obligations under international law:

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\text{Indubidablemente los informes que usted tiene y que han movido a tomar tal determinación, son inexACTOS o exagerados pues las vidas de los Americanos en esta Capital no corren ningún peligro se abandonan la zona del fuego y se concentran en determinando puntos de la ciudad o en las poblaciones puede darles garantías.}^{2}\]

\(^{1}\)\textit{Ibid.}; File no. 812.00/6173.

\(^{2}\)\textit{Ibid.}; Madero to Taft, National Palace, February 14, 1913. Fred Morris Dearing, who translated this message, said that he was confident that it was the result of a statement made to President Madero by Ambassador Wilson on his own responsibility. \textit{White House Memorandum, February 14, 1913. File no. 812.00/6532.}
This message was sent in vain. Taft's policy was already rigid and it would do Madero no good to give the American Ambassador further reason to dislike him. The United States Senate, meeting until two o'clock in the morning of February 15th, decided that intervention was not warranted.

The Decena Trágica was now approaching its end. The rebellion had been underway almost a week and no relief appeared to be in sight for the beleaguered city. Wilson was able to call together the Spanish, German, Italian, British and French Ministers and a discussion was held. Some time before dawn it was decided to send Cologan (partly because he was a Spaniard) to urge Madero to resign. It may be remembered that some members of the Mexican Senate were already making such representations to their President. The choice of Cologan was a wise one from the standpoint of Wilson's position in the Diplomatic Corps. While the latter's rank gave him the technical title of Dean, Cologan had been longest at his post and was referred to by contemporaries as Dean of the Corps. Cologan was also in agreement with Wilson. The Spanish Minister may, however, have acted under the impression that Wilson had stronger authority than the Ambassador actually had to act in this case. Wilson was not one to diminish his own importance in the least. Certainly it was known by now that Madero was being pressed by the científicos, of whom de la Barra was acting moderator, to resign. Presumably a compromise would then be made and
the fighting in the city would end. Conditions were worse than could be imagined by one not on the scene. There were problems of hunger, bad sanitation and physical danger as well as the destruction of property. The members of the Diplomatic Corps looked to the United States for leadership and the Ambassador of that country had decided that Madero's government could not stand any longer.43

President Madero again tried to deal directly with Taft through Mexican diplomatic channels. He instructed the Mexican Embassy to inform the Department of State that Wilson and a part of the Diplomatic Corps had urged him to resign in order to resolve the conflict in the city. He promised to give all possible protection to Americans but urged that the Ambassador not be authorized to land troops. He reiterated a phrase that was being heard with more and more frequency in the Capital - that he would die at his post before he would resign.44 Soon after this message was sent he was visited by Wilson in company with the German Minister at the National Palace, a visit which was made to see Huerta and not Madero. Madero, however, insisted on receiving them himself. Wilson reported that "There was a noticeable effort [on Madero's part] to prevent our talking alone with General

43Stirling, Los Últimos Días, 404-405.
44Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 15, 1913. File no. 812.00/61720.
The Ambassador was irritated when Madero showed him the telegram he had sent to Taft. He told Madero very frankly that he considered it misleading and inexact for the most part. When apprised of this visit to the National Palace, Knox congratulated his subordinate and approved his "excellent work."46

The Secretary of State was, however, mildly disturbed about Madero's complaint that the Ambassador was threatening to call in American Marines. He asked Wilson to let the Department know just what he had said to Madero.47 This request was sent at 5:15 P.M. less than two hours before the convening of an emergency meeting of the Cabinet which, in fact, met twice, once at seven and again at ten thirty that evening. President Taft reiterated his decision not to intervene unless there was "wholesale slaughter of Americans," but if Congress chose to find a casus belli in the situation he


46Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 18, 1913.

47Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 15, 1913. Wilson replied that he had been queried by Lascurain unofficially and had told him that he had no authority to land marines but that European powers might possibly bring pressure on the United States to give that protection which the Mexican government seemed unable to give. He denied saying anything more than this to Madero. Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 17, 1913.
would not oppose it. Wilson denied having told Madero that he had the authority to land marines, but this was a technical matter of the choice of words.

Wilson is portrayed during this phase of the crisis as slamming fists on the table and shouting that Madero was a lunatic who must step down! In his contempt for Madero he may have made some extreme statements, but the situation was tense and his animosity toward Madero was excessive. He told the Diplomatic Corps, according to one of its members, that he would negotiate with Huerta through Enrique Cepeda (either a nephew or an illegitimate son of Huerta) and with Díaz through an American doctor who was visiting Díaz regularly in Wilson's name. Cepeda had been introduced to Wilson by Shanklin, the Consul-General, as a man that might prove useful. He carried messages back and forth to Huerta pertaining to military protection. In the course of these communications, Wilson learned that Huerta desired to meet with the Diplomatic Corps and that some movement was under

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49 Stirling, *Los Últimos Días*, 411-416. Stirling may not have been exaggerating. Wilson was capable of becoming exceedingly high-strung when opposed. The Cuban Minister charged him with saying that he did not care about humanity.

50 Ibid.; Cepeda was frequently in and out of the Embassy but Wilson made no secret of his lines of contact with the opposing forces. Cepeda was, no doubt, an unwholesome personality but he was useful in this situation.
foot whereby Madero would turn his powers over to Congress. The Ambassador never faltered in his testimony that he had not met Huerta personally until the day of the coup d'etat and had no knowledge that it was going to take place. Again, technicalities and words are involved. To Wilson, it appeared perfectly logical that the farce of Madero in the presidential office had been carried much too far and that order should be restored now before further damage should be done. It is not being argued that the Ambassador followed a moral course that most Americans would approve, but it is important to place his thinking and action in this crisis in proper perspective.

The comment of an onlooker at this point is interesting:

But Ambassador Wilson had taken that military insurrection in Mexico City at a valuation which he thought a true estimate. He knew that the solid men of Mexico were backing it, and the interests of that country, as he viewed them, demanded that it should win. The Huerta overlordship of the situation, however, was something he probably had not, at the time of his colleague's Cologan call to ask for Madero's resignation, taken sufficiently into account. He had been an active figure during the insurrection riding in his car within the field of that preposterous military duel, to the rescue of endangered Americans and others; and he had doubtless acquired a belief in his personal as well as his official right to be heard on this vital subject. But his share in Cologan's mission seems to me to have been ill-advised, like so many other proceedings of his

51 Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 273-274.
which I have been compelled to criticize, in their official aspect, and without personal malice toward a man who, I believe, was sadly and often absurdly misled.\textsuperscript{52}

Another observer interpreted the strange apathy of the State Department at this point to a desire to allow Madero to be overthrown without soiling the hands of the administration.\textsuperscript{53} This is the author's opinion also.

Further proof on this point may be gained from Taft's reply to Madero's message of the 14th. Impatience and irritation are as much in evidence in Taft's words as in any of his Ambassador's dispatches or contemporary remarks; "Fresh assurances," said the President of the United States, "of friendship to Mexico are unnecessary after two years of proofs of patience and good will." He was anxious to see order restored in Mexico and American property safeguarded, but "...the course of events during the past two years culminating in the present most dangerous situation creates in this country extreme pessimism and the conviction that the present paramount duty is the prompt relief of the situation."\textsuperscript{54} We have seen that Taft had no hesitation in pre-

\textsuperscript{52}Bell, \textit{Political Shame}, 292.


\textsuperscript{54}Records of the Department of State; Taft to Madero, February 16, 1913.
vious upheavals of the Madero era in "threatening them a little," and he could not have been ignorant of the possibility that Wilson had indeed impressed Madero with the idea of disembarking marines. Another significant point to remember is that, while Wilson gave the Department an almost hourly account of what was transpiring and the press in the United States assumed that Madero's resignation was near, the Ambassador was never instructed to give unequivocal support to the established government in Mexico. What Madero obtained were the same threats from Wilson's superiors that he got from Wilson himself.

Another illuminating exchange of telegrams clarifies the view of the Secretary of State in this respect. At seven minutes past eight in the evening of February 16th (Sunday), the Department received a telegram from the Ambassador in Mexico asking why the Department had, in its wire to Wilson at 4 P.M. on the 15th, spoken of a "turn for the better" when the Embassy had made no report to this effect. Knox explained in reply that the latest reports the Department had, at the time the telegram in question was sent, was that Madero had indicated a willingness to resign. It would seem that no clearer proof is needed that Ambassador Wilson was not proceeding entirely on his own initiative. Here in Knox's own words is the admission

\[55\text{Ibid.} 5\text{Ibid. Knox to Wilson, February 18, 1913. File no. 812.00/6179.}\]
that the ousting of Madero was expected.

Events moved swiftly on the 16th and 17th as the Decena Trágica drew to a close. At eleven o'clock on the morning of the 16th Wilson notified the Department that Huerta desired to see him some time that day and that he (Wilson) would probably ask the German and Spanish Ministers to go with him. He hoped for "good results."56 One is led to conclude that such a message was not expected to be received with any surprise in the Department. The Ambassador had the definite word of his military attaché by now that the troops of General Blanquet, on which Madero depended so much, were not to be placed in a position to aid Madero and that Díaz would never be driven from the Citadel.

An armistice had been arranged, partly through Wilson's efforts, but both sides accused the other of breaking it and fighting was resumed, though not as heavily as before. The Ambassador had hopes of bringing about a renewal of the armistice on the next day and Huerta's spokesman at the Embassy promised to meet with the representatives of Díaz at seven o'clock that evening.57 At midnight, the Department was notified that this meeting had not taken place as Huerta could not keep his appointment but he had told Wilson that he

56Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/6180.

57Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/6207.
expected to take steps "tonight" to terminate the situation.\textsuperscript{58} It may have been that Huerta had, in this unforeseen opportunity, suddenly discovered an excellent bargaining position. At any rate the meaning of his words to the American Ambassador must have been as understandable as they were welcome. The pressure on Madero from Mexican sources was growing and this was certainly known to the Ambassador. He consistently reported to the Department that Lascurain was distressed because Madero would not resign. Lascurain was particularly disturbed about Madero's course of sending identical telegrams to all of the Mexican governors warning of military intervention.\textsuperscript{59} To keep the record straight, Knox cited the Department's telegram on policy previously given to Wilson and to the press. Furthermore, Madero, while attempting to maintain a rigid censorship of all opposition newspapers, had his telegram to President Taft published as widely as possible. The Washington Post was able to obtain an interview in which Madero stated his case as positively as possible. He admitted that the situation was serious but this was true of all civil wars. He blamed the physical position of the Embassy and the responsibility he felt for its protection for the fact that his troops were

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/6186.

\textsuperscript{59}Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 16, 1913. File nos. 812.00/6181 and 6183.
not attacking the Ciudadela with more vigor. He pleaded that he represented the last vestige of constitutional government in Mexico and, though willing to make reasonable concessions, he would not resign his post, not because he expected material compensation but because a principle was involved.

These utterances made Taft and Knox fear for the lives of Americans in Mexico City. It was left to Knox to decide how best to handle the situation so as to prevent an outbreak of violence on account of Madero's statements. Knox was afraid to issue an emphatic denial of American intervention lest the "sobering effect" of the idea that under certain circumstances intervention might become necessary be lost. "Accordingly...," Knox advised Wilson, "it is left to you to deal with this whole matter of keeping Mexican opinion both official and unofficial (underlining is the author's) in a salutary equilibrium between a proper degree of wholesome fear and a dangerous and exaggerated apprehension." Wilson later published some correspondence in his memoirs to establish the fact that Madero admitted his error in accusing him of instigating Cologan's mission and that he (Wilson) called upon Madero to withdraw his note

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60 Washington Post, February 17, 1913.
61 Records of the Department of State; Knox to Wilson, February 17, 1913.
Since the State Department concurred so heartily in the procedure of threat-making the question of just how much Wilson did say to Madero about landing marines mattered little to anybody except Madero himself. Furthermore, events were moving along at a rapid pace. Wilson notified Knox by telegram, sent at 4 P.M. and received shortly after eight o'clock at the Department, that plans for the deposition of Madero by Huerta had, according to the latter, fully matured and the only cause of delay was the desire to avoid bloodshed. The inclusion in his dispatch of the statement that the Ambassador had made no suggestions beyond requesting that no lives be taken except by "due process of law" (underlining is the author's) placed the Embassy on record as distinctly opposing any form of treachery with regard to

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62 Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 266-270. Wilson also stated later that Madero withdrew the telegram and apologized for sending it. Hearing - Subcommittee on U.S. Citizens in Mexico, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, 2263. Both sides, in fact, apologized but Cline, *United States and Mexico*, 131, holds that Taft was still not sure just what Wilson was doing.
the lives of Madero and Suárez. 63

At ten o'clock, a wire went forward to the Department letting Knox know that the Embassy expected important developments on the "morrow." Federal troops were being withdrawn from exposed positions and what fighting there had been during the Decena Trágica was dying down. 64 Madero seems to have been almost the only person in an important position in Mexico City still entertaining doubt that his power had vanished. The treachery of General Huerta was about to culminate in the actual coup, yet, despite the flow of rumors as to Madero's expected resignation (and he had declared flatly that he would not resign without resistance) there was no hint of instructions for the American Ambassador to continue full support of the established government in any way nor was there any questioning of Wilson's procedure in treating with the opposing Generals on questions

63 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 17, 1913. File no. 812.00/6225. Murray in "Huerta and the Two Wilsons," April 16, 1916, charges that Wilson called a representative of the AP to his office and gave him the details of the planned action for the next twenty four hours. Conveniently, for Murray, this was done in the strictest secrecy with pledges being exacted. The most interesting thing about Robert Hammond Murray is that none of the really damaging evidence that he produced against Wilson can be checked. Murray was in possession of confidential dispatches of the Department of State that could only have been stolen from the Department by someone and Murray edited them so as to place Wilson in the worst possible light.

64 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 17, 1913. File no. 812.00/6235.
which might more properly have been taken up with the legally constituted government through regular channels.

The immediate concern of both Wilson and the Department was only partly with the protection of American lives and property. The cabinet meetings in Washington on the 16th had resulted in the stationing of the transports with marines at Guantanamo Bay ready to move. If another Porfirio Díaz should emerge out of the Decena Trágica they would not be needed.

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65 Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 18, 1913.
At about two o'clock in the afternoon of February 18th, Wilson was notified that Huerta had arrested the President just a few minutes before. The message was brought by Cepeda, Huerta's nephew (?), who rushed into the Embassy with a badly wounded hand. Accounts of the exact time of the arrests of Francisco and Gustavo Madero vary but they took place in the period from noon to two o'clock. Wilson's dispatch to Knox bearing the time 12:00, noon has been used with damaging effect. "The assumption," said Wilson, "is that the Federal Generals are in control of the situation and the President."¹ In the midst of a flood of similar telegrams to the Department in an attempt to keep it abreast of the situation, how could the Ambassador know that this one dispatch would later be torn out of context and made the basis for charges that he had known just what would happen and had described it to the Department an hour and a half

¹Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 18, 1913.
before it took place\(^2\) or that "he announced to the State Department hours in advance of the fact, that what was yet to be accomplished was already done."\(^3\) A little objectivity is all that is needed to tear this fabric apart. Henry Lane Wilson may have appeared to certain people as irritating and pompous but to imagine that he would have been foolhardy enough to time a report to his government before he could reasonably be sure that an event he was supposed to know about had actually taken place, taxes the intelligence of the reader. That Wilson expected and approved the removal of Madero from power is clearly established, whatever may be said about the morality of his stand; that he could reasonably be certain it was taking place on that day, is also clear. But to have placed himself on record in a conscious manner as announcing an action he was not technically supposed to know about and thus convict himself of conspiracy, can only be supported on the basis that he wanted to "scoop"

\(^2\)Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage*, 567. This is a characteristic exaggeration of Gruening's. *Time* magazine, December 9, 1940, 27, flatly retracted an earlier statement that Wilson had "... helped plan the downfall and murder of Francisco Madero. ..." *Time* expressed its willingness to clarify such accounts as that of Gruening. Sumner Welles, among others, aided the sons of Henry Lane Wilson in gathering sufficient proof to persuade the Editors of *Time* to make this retraction. The author has examined a voluminous file of correspondence on this matter in the possession of Warden McKee Wilson.

everyone else. He was expected to keep the Department as well informed as possible but, although his communication was more than an educated guess, he would hardly have arranged a telegram that would condemn himself knowingly.

The presence of Cepeda in the Embassy and the fact that he was wounded was embarrassing to the Ambassador; he sent Cepeda away as soon as possible.\(^4\) A wire was gotten off to Washington at once reporting what Wilson's "confidential messenger with Huerta" had said.\(^5\) Meanwhile Huerta addressed a note directly to Taft with an abruptness of words that must have been somewhat shocking:

> I have the honor to inform you that I have overthrown this Government, the forces are with me and from now on peace and prosperity will reign. Your obedient servant.

Victoriano Huerta
Commander in Chief\(^6\)

Huerta also sent a message to Wilson asking him to convey the new state of affairs to his government, to the Diplomatic Corps and to General Díaz. The Ambassador complied with his

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\(^4\)Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 275.

\(^5\)Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 18, 1913. File no. 812.00/6245.

requests and immediately assembled the Diplomatic Corps. Huerta was urged to unite with all other factions and confidence was expressed in his ability to maintain order. He was urged also to place his army under the control of the Mexican Congress. Wilson realized that he was skating on thin ice in proceeding without direct instructions in this matter but communications were uncertain and the Department had made no effort to bind him anyway. His action was taken, by his own admission, on his own responsibility.

Huerta and Díaz were called to the Embassy about eight o'clock in the evening of Tuesday, February 18th; and while the Diplomatic Corps waited, Wilson and the Generals resolved differences. Huerta and Díaz were persuaded to issue a joint manifesto by the terms of which Huerta was to become provisional president, Madero was to resign legally, and Díaz was to become a candidate in the next election which, according to one newspaper publisher in Mexico City, might "be set in the privacy of Huerta's mind, for the first Tuesday after the first Monday following the Day of Judgement." It is interesting to note that later on President Woodrow Wilson somehow acquired the false notion that Huerta had promised not to become a candidate in that elec-

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7 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 18, 1913. File no. 812.00/6244.
8 Bell, Political Shame. 297.
tion. It took some three hours to get the Generals to agree and they broke off the talks three times before coming to an understanding. Such a well planned affair as some have described this "Compact of the Embassy" to have been, should have gone much more smoothly.

The restoration of order in the city, however, depended upon the outcome of these talks. The American Ambassador was not "overthrowing Madero" by any stretch of the imagination since there was no question of Madero's deposition. As is the case ordinarily in much of Latin American politics, the only question remaining was how the struggling factions would arrange a new government.

The Ambassador was, of course, dealing in a shockingly rapid time with the deposers of the former government; yet it should be remembered that Madero had not been in effective control for at least a week. If this was Huerta's fault, all the more reason existed to recognize his ascendancy and hasten the inevitable. Madero had been called upon more than once to resign for the good of the country. The decision to overthrow Madero and become president himself, having been made, Huerta was naturally glad to have his position strengthened by the prospect of recognition by the United States. The Ambassador told Knox that he called the two men to the Embassy to consider the question of preserving order in the city but discovered after they arrived that many other questions had also to be discussed. He did this on his
own initiative, "... without having conferred with anyone," he wrote later in his memoirs. "I decided," he continued, "to ask Generals Huerta and Díaz to come to the embassy. ..." He stated also that after years of reflection on the matter he would take exactly the same course.

Unfortunately for him, he had unknowingly slighted the Cuban Minister, Márquez Stirling, who recorded that Wilson had announced to the Diplomatic Corps that he had known all about the plan to depose Madero for three days and that he had advised Díaz of this long before Huerta had requested him to. Wilson was certainly elated at his accomplishment and he was not one to share glory. As risky as his position was, he made incautious statements, hailing Félix Díaz as the saviour of Mexico and a friend of the foreigners and talking breezily of the fate of Madero and Suárez. What was, in all probability, mere braggadocio was accepted at face value! About Suárez, he apparently had no concern at all, but he supposed that Madero would be placed in a lunatic asylum.

Wilson sent a full account of what had taken place to the Department immediately after the signing of the compact.

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9Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 279.

10Stirling, Los Últimos Díaz, 471 ff.
between Díaz and Huerta and ended by saying:

I expect no further trouble in the city and I congratulate the Department upon the happy outcome of events which have been directly or indirectly the result of its instructions.11

No one will fail to recognize the attempt in these words to salve a somewhat guilty conscience. Wilson was not at all certain that he had not been led, by his enthusiasm and eagerness to get things settled, into dangerous paths. He wired Knox the next day that the original of the agreement that had been drawn up on the previous night had been placed on file in the Embassy and that it contained provisions for legalizing the new arrangements. This meant that the provision for Madero's legal resignation was in the hands of the American Embassy; the wisdom of such a procedure is questionable. Perhaps a wiser man would have given himself more protection but the Ambassador wanted it thoroughly understood that peace in Mexico City and the restoration of order had come about largely through his efforts. He must have begun to realize already, however, that there might also be criticism of his position.

There was still a strong possibility that the agreement would not be kept. Wilson told Knox that he had insisted upon conditions for the maintenance of peace and order and that he believed that Congress, which was now in session

11 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 18, 1913. File no. 812.00/6246.
(5 P.M. on the 19th), would ratify the agreements. He now made a plea for definite approval of his action:

I have been assuming considerable responsibility in proceeding without instructions but no harm has been done and I believe great benefits have been achieved for our country and especially for our countrymen in Mexico who I believe will now find the ban of race hatred removed. The list of their interests will receive just consideration at any rate. Our position here is stronger than it ever has been and I would suggest that I have general instructions immediately to bring to the attention of whatever Government may be created here the complaints set forth in our note of September fifteenth and urge for at least an arrangement to settle them all.12

The reader may be left to form his own conclusions as to the meaning of the above message. But one thing is certain; Wilson was going to have trouble. The time left to the Republican administration at Washington was short and the means by which Huerta accomplished his coup were not calculated to appeal to the American people. The New York Times guessed the situation correctly by saying that some high-ranking officials were glad to see Francisco Madero deposed, "especially since they learned that Madero used anti-American feeling to bolster his administration."13

On the afternoon of February 19th (Wednesday), Ambassador Wilson went to question Huerta specifically regarding the fate of the deposed Executives. This was also done on

12 Ibid.; February 19, 1913.
his own initiative. Admiral von Hintze, the German Minister, called upon Wilson early in the morning of the 19th and, in company with Mrs. Wilson, discussed the necessity of making an effort to save Madero's life. Wilson and von Hintze then paid a visit to Huerta and got from him "his word of honor as a caballero and a soldier to protect the life of his erstwhile superior." "In future days," von Hintze told Wilson, "you will realize that by today's action you have added a laurel wreath to the crown of the United States." Wilson paid a second visit to Huerta in the afternoon of the same day (all of this prior to Madero's legal deposition) to obtain guarantees and an explanation of the killing of Gustavo Madero. This latter event undoubtedly made Wilson feel uncomfortable about the fate of the former President. Instead of giving him a clear answer, Huerta turned to Wilson for advice. He asked Wilson whether he thought Madero should be committed to an insane asylum or sent out of the country. "I replied," Wilson wired the Department, "that he ought to do that which was best for the peace of the country." This sounds cynical and it indicates how little Wilson cared about the fate of Madero but the Ambassador had taken the trouble

14Hearing - Subcommittee on U.S. Citizens in Mexico, 66th Congress, 2nd Session; Letter from Admiral von Hintze, German Minister to China, to Henry Lane Wilson, January 3, 1916, 2274. Yet, Wilson was represented later as having made "... only the most perfunctory verbal and unofficial representations respecting the safety of Madero...", to Huerta. Murray, "Huerta and the Two Wilsons," Harpers Weekly, March 25, 1916.
to inquire about the matter more than once and certainly was not abandoning the ousted leader to a planned murder. It should be remembered that Wilson was not alone in his view that Madero was not entirely sane. The choice Huerta offered was not between life and death but as between two measures of protection for the ex-President. The idea of committing Madero to an asylum was not surprising at all to the American Ambassador and the suggestion of his being allowed to leave the country may even have been a bit distasteful to him since Madero might reach powerful ears with his complaints. It would be absurd to assume that the "peace of the country" would be assured by a mysterious murder of Madero. It would injure Huerta's chances of being legally recognized. It is not certain that Huerta was aware of this, but the Ambassador would be.

The *Decena Trágica* was officially terminated that night when Congress exacted resignations from Madero and Suárez and made Huerta acting President by a stroke of constitutional fiction. Immense relief was felt by foreigners in the city. The siege, with its consequent peril to inhabitants, lack of food, water and proper sanitation, and the stench of dead bodies in the streets had ended. Nothing but praise could be heard for the American Ambassador. The Embassy had

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15 Huerta was appointed Minister of Gobernación by ex-Foreign Minister Pedro Lascurain who had been made President for some twenty or thirty minutes in order to place Huerta in legal line for the position.
become the haven of refuge and the Ambassador had risked his own life and those of his staff many times on behalf of the foreigners of all nationalities, being especially solicitous of the welfare of his own countrymen. He had set up an emergency hospital, a bank and other necessities in the Embassy and his prompt and effective leadership in this phase of the Decena Trágica is unquestioned even by his sharpest critics. Perhaps if he had not had so many urgent details to look after he could have exercised more caution in the wording of his dispatches. Credit is also due Mrs. Wilson who directed Red Cross activities, distributed milk and performed other needed services.

The means by which Victoriano Huerta came to power, though brutal, treacherous and legally questionable, were by no means unusual in Latin America. Far from experienced in administrative and political matters, Huerta was nevertheless rough and shrewd. A rather steady alcoholic he was now drunk with power. He was now beyond the point of caring what happened to Madero and Suárez. Having won approval from the American Ambassador, he gave little evidence henceforward of worrying about what Americans, or any other foreigners (even including Wilson), thought of his seizure of power. But while the people of Mexico City rejoiced in newfound peace and congratulated the parties to the agreement, Madero and Suarez waited fearfully in prison in the National Palace, hoping to be sent into exile. There is little reason
to suppose that Huerta did not intend to allow them to leave the country. The "law of flight" had been used on Gustavo Madero. Huerta could have disposed of the two executives in the same way just as easily. Indeed, if he intended a crime, why had he not ordered them shot during the arrest?

Ambassador Wilson had, moreover, persistently warned Huerta that he had grave responsibilities in this respect. It would hardly be possible to assert that the Ambassador used every scrap of influence at his disposal to prevent the deaths of the ex-President and Vice-President. On the other hand, whether or not he could have saved their lives is a matter of opinion. Wilson had the backing of the Department of State in accepting Huerta's coup as a fait accompli. Undoubtedly the Department, as well as the Ambassador, was more concerned with maintaining a regime that could offer stability in Mexico than with the fate of the deposed officials. Wilson must have realized, however, that the chances of recognition of Huerta would be small if foul play were dealt Madero. It would appear that Huerta also understood this. The State Department was concerned that it be clearly understood by both. Knox wired that:

While it is the general duty of this Government to conserve for use on behalf of its own citizens (underlining is the author's) and its national interests the influence it possesses, nevertheless General Huerta’s consulting you as to the treatment of Madero tends to give you a certain responsibility in the matter. It, moreover, goes without saying that cruel treatment of the ex-Presi-
dent would injure, in the eyes of the world, the reputation of Mexican civilization and this Government earnestly hopes to hear of no such treatment and hopes to hear that he has been dealt with in a manner [the original of this latter phrase which was lined out read "had supposed that exile would be the disposal"] consistent with peace and humanity.

Without assuming responsibility (underlining is the author's) you may in your discretion make use of these ideas in your conversation with General Huerta.16

The above is an amazing essay in mildness. There are no such phrases here as "strongest possible terms" or "definite responsibility." Moreover, the only message in this wire (which was sent the day following the resignations of the former government) that might be considered as instruction is directly contradictory! Wilson is told that he has a certain responsibility and in the next paragraph is instructed not to assume responsibility! In order to make any sense out of these phrases it must be assumed that Knox was reminding Wilson that he (Wilson) had unfortunately placed himself in a position of personal responsibility and that he might make known the feeling of the United States,

16 Records of the Department of State; Knox to Wilson, February 20, 1913. Yet, according to Stirling, Los Ultimos Dias, 520, Madero and Suárez exchanged the following words while in prison:

"Madero - Somos hoy simples ciudadanos y debemos buscar protección en las leyes: ¿No lo cree usted así Ministro? Suárez - La única protección eficaz sería la del Cuerpo Diplomática."
without, however, putting the Department in any official position. Whatever interpretation is placed on it, it was far from a mandate to use the full diplomatic power of a great and influential country to protect important Mexican citizens.

Arrangements were made for the two men, accompanied by the Cuban and Chilean Ministers, to be sent to Vera Cruz by train where they could board a Cuban ship; but these arrangements, to be carried out two hours after the President's resignation, were cancelled. The Madero family waited at the railroad station where a special train was in readiness for them on the night of the 19th of February. Madero and Suárez were not delivered. Huerta's explanation was that he had gotten news from Vera Cruz that an uprising was to be staged there as soon as Madero arrived. No doubt it was remembered that Madero had been sent out of the country previously. He was not one to know when the game was over.

Wilson also received a message the next day from the Consul at Vera Cruz which read succinctly: "Do not allow ex-President Madero to come here now." This message was sent to Knox as well and was followed two days later by a full explanation. The Consul said that General Velasco had told him that if Madero came to Vera Cruz he would recognize him as President and that he had organized volunteers. Since the sup-

17Ibid.; Canada to Knox, February 20, 1913.
porters of Díaz were also making preparations a disturbance would have been caused.¹⁸

It appears that Wilson already had misgivings about Huerta. He was no longer so confident of the future. "A wicked despotism has fallen," he told Knox, "but what the future contains cannot now be safely predicted."¹⁹ Madero's future was, of course, very insecure. He had a number of enemies including the families of the men he had shot while they were resisting arrest and even Huerta had been taken to task by him. Huerta was, nevertheless, reassuring about his own feeling. Wilson testified in 1920, that Huerta had told him "...that he had no grievance whatever against Madero, that he never received anything but kindness at his hands, and that his great problem was to get him out of the country and get him out of the situation entirely."²⁰ Either Wilson was trying to strengthen his own position or he had been told contradictory stories by Huerta, because the new President had complained to the Ambassador on the afternoon of the 19th, that Francisco and Gustavo had tried to assassi-

¹⁸Ibid.; February 23, 1913.

¹⁹Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 20, 1913.

²⁰Hearing - Subcommittee on U.S. Citizens in Mexico, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, 2273. Madero had refused to appoint Huerta Minister of War because of his habitual drunkenness and Huerta was aware of that fact; Records of the Department of State; William B. Hale to Woodrow Wilson, June 18, 1913.
nate him twice and had held him prisoner for one day.⁲¹ Such "kindness" would be difficult for Huerta to forgive. It might not make him determined to kill Francisco, especially in view of his own position; but it would not produce the sort of mental climate that would lead to extraordinary caution on behalf of the ousted executive.

On the afternoon of February 20, after visiting her husband in prison, Mrs. Madero went to see the American Ambassador to ask for his help in saving Madero's life. She was accompanied by her sister-in-law, Mercedes. Wilson listened impatiently while the two women implored him to use his influence to save the lives of the prisoners. Although he explained to them that he had received assurances of the safety of Francisco Madero they were not satisfied. They did not believe that Wilson really understood just how untrustworthy was the man who now held the power of life and death over the ex-President. Nor was Wilson very tactful in his conversation with them. Mrs. Madero, as a last resort, asked that the Ambassador forward a personal message from the family to President Taft; but Wilson only half-promised to send it, saying that it was unnecessary to do so. As related by these women to more sympathetic ears, the story of this interview grew to such proportions as to make Wilson out some

²¹Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 19, 1913. File no. 812.00/6271. Gustavo may have borne the blame for acts that should have been attributed to Francisco. See Frida, From Despotism to Anarchy, 123.
kind of an ogre. It would seem that Wilson could have been less cruel in his attitude, but Mrs. Madero could also have approached him with more wisdom. It was no help to her cause, for instance, to raise the point of Pino Suárez as Suárez’ reputation was one thing that had contributed to Madero’s loss of popularity. Wilson, as noted above, de-

22Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage, 570-573 and n. 572-573. Gruening gives an account of an interview between Mrs. Madero and Robert Hammond Murray which is stated to have taken place on August 15, 1916, in which Mrs. Madero recounted her experience with the Ambassador. Murray, who was the Mexico correspondent of the New York World at the time, certified the interview to Gruening as having been sworn to by Mrs. Madero before the vice-consul of the United States in Mexico City on April 27, 1927. Conveniently, the certified original was in the possession of Murray and copyrighted by him. In the context in which Gruening places it, the interview is highly damaging to Wilson. He is reported as saying that he knew all along that Madero would be overthrown. He had, as we know, predicted just that. The statement attributed to him, however, that he did not warn Madero because then Madero would have prevented it, appears to be apocryphal. It would have been just the sort of thing that Gruening and Murray would have wanted the former Ambassador to say. Bell says nothing about such a statement.

A much fairer account of Mrs. Madero’s visit to Wilson is, indeed, given by Bell, Political Shame, 313-314, although he had little respect for Wilson either. After presenting his account of the conversation, Bell adds:

“These are the essentials of the interview. Mrs. Madero derived no comfort from Mr. Wilson’s expressions because she appreciated the situation, and knew that the Ambassador must be relying upon empty words if he really believed that her husband would be efficiently protected by those who had overthrown him. That he did believe what he had said to her there can be no doubt, though his error now seems to have lain at the most distant extremity of reasonable judgement if not beyond.”

Stirling, Los Ultimos Dias, 546, gives a version of the interview, emphasising the prolonged conversation over the merits of Madero and Suárez. In this version Mrs. Madero came to Suárez’ defense. None of these are eyewitness ac-

counts.
tested Suárez.

Wilson simply told Mrs. Madero that he had been instructed to say by the Department that he could not assume responsibility. As to the message she wanted delivered to Taft, it would have been highly irregular procedure to send it and would have placed the Ambassador in an embarrassing position. There would have been the natural assumption that Wilson was not doing everything that he could do to prevent a tragedy; and if, as was possible, Huerta should discover such a communication from the Embassy there would be evidence that he was not trusted and Wilson's influence would be at an end. He did report the interview.

The Ambassador may have been stirred by this plea to seek additional assurances from Huerta. It is not clear how many times he went to see Huerta that day. His own account indicates at least two trips. He relates that he had just come from a visit to Huerta in company with the German Minister and had found Mrs. Madero waiting in the Embassy. Then he says that he went to see Huerta a second time. It may be that the first visit is to be identified with that made on the 19th, certified to by the German Minister himself; but one account of the interview says that Wilson

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23See note 14. Cf. Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 283-284. It was given out in the press that Wilson and the Japanese Minister had gone to see Huerta to tell him that if Madero were executed they would retire from the country. Prado, Revolución en México, 268.
was visiting Huerta when Mrs. Madero called at the Embassy and that she had to wait until he returned. At any rate, at six o'clock on the afternoon of the interview he wired Knox that he had visited Huerta at the request of Mrs. Madero, that the German Minister had gone with him and that they had unofficially requested that the "utmost precaution be taken to prevent the taking of his [Madero's] life or the life of the Vice President except by due process of law." Huerta explained to Wilson that he had not sent Madero and Suárez off on the previous night because he had feared an attack on the train for which he did not wish to assume responsibility.

The implication is that Huerta was concerned for Madero's safety when he was really making certain that the former President did not escape to lead a counter-revolution. Huerta added that Madero and Suárez would be guarded with every precaution and that they would be tried. He did not know what the charges would be. Wilson informed Knox that the prisoners were still in the National Palace and that he understood that they were being subjected to severe treatment. "This feature...," said Wilson, "should be brought to the attention of the President and... instructions be sent... for me to deal with the matter of reprisals with General Díaz as an intermediary with General Huerta." The Ambassador recommended that the American war vessels not be given the discretion of leaving Mexican
Wilson recounts that he also made representations to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Fomento and the Minister of War and that he offered Lascurain and Ernesto Madero asylum in the Embassy. Lascurain had queried Wilson about this earlier in the "Decena Trágica" and Wilson had been instructed by Washington to allow temporary refuge in the Embassy only to political refugees. Wilson has been criticized for not offering asylum to Francisco but the reader will not need to be reminded that that individual would never have made such a request.

Why had Wilson asked for instructions to deal with Díaz? The disposition of the prisoners was the personal responsibility of Huerta. If there was some kind of prior agreement between the two factions which only Huerta refused to accede to verbally, then Díaz might be the man to see. Certainly Díaz had some reason to want to spare Madero's life but it may not have appeared so to him. At any rate, he refused to take responsibility for the fallen leaders.

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*24* Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 20, 1913. File no. 812.00/6277.

*25* Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes*, 284.

*26* In an interview with *El Universal*, Mexico City, on February 19th, published on February 20th, Díaz was asked: "¡Cuál es la suerte que espera a los señores Madero y Pino Suárez?"

"No lo sé. No son mis prisioneros. Están en poder del señor General Huerta y él dispondrá de ellos. Por lo demás las responsabilidades los asumimos juntos."

It is clear that while Díaz and Huerta had planned joint responsibility for the government, no agreement had been reached regarding the prisoners.
two prisoners remained in a temporary and uncomfortable prison at the National Palace while the Madero family and the Spanish Minister sought to have them made more comfortable and to arrange for their exile. Huerta seems to have been occupied with other things. It is doubtful if anything more could have been accomplished by advising him further of the danger. It was widely known that he was never entirely sober. Wilson, meanwhile, if he were as well aware of Latin American political psychology as he professed to be, would assume simply that if Madero's safety could be assured until he were brought to trial then the standing political custom would be observed whereby he would be given some light punishment or sent out of the country, thus allowing those who had served him to take their places alongside the ruling government. Of course if Madero should be sentenced to death, this would be by "due process of law" and one could not interfere!

The Washington government had no lack of warning that something unpleasant might happen to Madero and that if it did the administration might be held responsible. A band of senators from Texas addressed a request for the Department to use every legitimate step in international law to save Madero.27 On the day that this was received, and undoubtedly with Wilson's added warning in hand, Knox wired the Ambassador

27Records of the Department of State; Morris Shepard to Knox, February 21, 1913.
that the President was gratified to know that there was no prospect of injury to the deposed President or Vice-President or their families. What could Knox have thought that Wilson meant when he used the phrase "severely treated?" Why would Wilson ask for instructions to deal with Díaz if Huerta could be completely trusted? Furthermore, Knox had a telegram, sent by Wilson at 5 P.M. on the 21st, stating that he had been asked by Madero's mother to intercede with Huerta to spare the men and allow them to go to Europe since this was an "express condition attached to their resignations."°

The accounts of the exact manner in which Madero and Suárez met their deaths are as numerous as they are conflicting. Everyone had his own version of the killing and many professed to know the inside story. The only person

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28 Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 21, 1913. The press in Mexico City attached greater importance to this communication. El País, in a story under current dateline from Washington said:

"En los círculos diplomáticos corre con insistencia el rumor de que el Presidente Taft ha enviado instrucciones al Embajador de los Estados Unidos en México, Henry Lane Wilson, para que en nombre del Gobierno Americano, notifique al General Huerta, Presidente Interno, de aquella República, que los Estados Unidos vieron con desagrado que el ex-Presidente Madero fuera ejecutado sumariamente, considerando que en su actual situación debe mirársele como inofensivo y que por humanidad tiene derecho a que si se le sujeta a proceso, goce de todo el apoyo de las leyes mexicanas." Prado, Revolución en México, 267-268.

29 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 21, 1913.
who could have given a correct version, perhaps, was Francisco Cárdenas who commanded the escort in which Madero and Suárez were transferred from the National Palace to the Penitentiary where they would be more "comfortable." The irony in the event was that it took place on George Washington's birthday, February 22, 1913. Madero was remembered by many as having been able to visualize Washington before his very eyes, so great a respect did he have for America's revolutionary hero. He liked to think of himself as following in Washington's footsteps. Nothing could have emphasized more clearly the historical dilemma of the application of American constitutionalism to Latin American practice and custom.

Huerta and perhaps Díaz had been invited to a celebration in the American Embassy on the evening of the 22nd.  

An article in El Noticiero Mexicano, Mexico City, February 22, 1913, reported that Díaz had "perhaps" been invited also. The meeting was also assumed to have some significance: "Esta invitación es un reconocimiento tácito del nuevo gobierno según esucháramos ayer de labios de algunos políticos." Although the affair was described as a "tea," Bell, Political Shame, 322, calls it a "banquet." Whatever it was, the Ambassador was unwise, one may even say foolhardy, in allowing it to take place since he had no instructions to deal with Huerta except as the only apparent government. However, on the basis of private correspondence, John Lind later connected Wilson with Madero's assassination in two separate speeches. Faced with a court suit on the occasion of press reports of his first speech, he backed down and refused to accept responsibility for the "reports" of his speeches in the press. Wilson took this as an apology and dropped the suit. George M. Stephenson, John Lind of Minnesota (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1933), 307-310.
William B. Hale, Woodrow Wilson's special agent, attempted a connection between this event and the murder of Madero just a few hours later but there is no evidence that Wilson had any inkling of foul play. The known facts are that Madero and Suarez were shot down after the cars in which they were carried had passed the gate of the Penitentiary. Little credence was ever given the story that they were murdered while still at the National Palace. The Ambassador was incensed when he heard of the crime. He has been condemned for accepting the government's version so quickly but he had his reasons, as he later explained to Knox.

First of all, the Ambassador had little love for Madero and one could hardly expect him to shed tears over the execution of the ex-President. Secondly, he accepted the view that Madero's deposition was complete. The ex-President was now a private citizen. Thirdly, Wilson was anxious to have Mexico tranquilized and to complete the recognition of a government that could keep order, even if it were not all that Wilson would want it to be; (the popular idea that Huerta and Wilson were admirers of each other is a myth). Finally, Wilson's refusal to accept the government's version would have involved an insinuation that the government had failed in a criminal way. As Wilson later put it, private citizens were getting killed rather regularly in Mexico. Also, it will be remembered that he had no official responsibility for Madero, according to the express instructions of
the Department of State which, it must be assumed, was not acting contrary to the policy of President Taft.

The government's version of the affair was simple. Arrangements had been made to transfer the two men to the Penitentiary where they would be more comfortable - and also more secure - until public passions had cooled. De la Barra had notified Wilson of this plan on the evening of the 22nd, no doubt while attending the function in the Embassy. The transfer took place about 11:30. The escort was attacked by unknown assailants and the prisoners were shot.

The Ambassador had some hesitation in proceeding in regular relations with Huerta since in this wire, sent at one o'clock in the afternoon of the 23rd, he said that he had told de la Barra (now Foreign Minister) that the scheduled reception, by his government, of the Diplomatic Corps on the 24th would not take place until the matter had been understood by the Corps. By four o'clock he had decided to ask Knox to accept the government's version due to the pressure of business on the Embassy at this moment. An hour earlier he reported that the government had liberated

31 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 23, 1913. Sent at 1 P.M.

32 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 23, 1913. Sent at 4 P.M. Wilson did not leave the Embassy grounds all day on the 23rd although it was reported incorrectly that he had gone to the Penitentiary to verify the deaths of the two men. El Independiente, February 24, 1913.
all imprisoned deputies and that it had decided to do all military honors to Madero and Suárez before turning their bodies over to their families for burial. An hour later, at five o'clock, Wilson gave evidence that he expected trouble;

In case the atmosphere clears measurably in the next two days, I recommend that the Department consider the desirability of sending to this city the commanding officers of our boats [the navy would have been horrified at this reference to ships as "boats"] in Vera Cruz with the marines and such sailors as may be deemed advisable. I think the effect would be excellent and if the Department approves I can make the necessary arrangements here.

Wilson had only accepted the government's version of the killing for convenience. He was angry that such a thing had taken place and when de la Barra paid a visit to the Embassy on the afternoon of the 24th Wilson talked to him in such scalding terms that it was heard by "persons in the adjoining rooms." Wilson was overheard using such terms as that the "incident smelled to Heaven as the blackest of infamies" and he also told de la Barra that the bloodshed would reflect on him (de la Barra) and upon every member of

33Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 23, 1913. Sent at 3 P.M.

34Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 23, 1913. Sent at 5 P.M.
the new government. As for the calling in of American forces, Knox must have found it difficult to believe that the Ambassador still had not discovered his abandonment by his own superiors. Knox's answer to Wilson's request ended in a note of the purest sarcasm:

At some future date when the situation at Mexico City shall have settled down and circumstances should be such that this Government would be disposed to accord formal recognition as a provisional Government to those now in de facto authority, the Department will be ready to consider the suggestion of a visit of ceremony by the Commanding Officers of the warships at Vera Cruz; but the Department cannot at present rid itself of the feeling that even then it would probably be unwise to have them accompanied by marines and soldiers.

The incident of Madero's death upset Wilson and his plans for a smooth transition. Adee received a communication later from a man who said that he had been in the Embassy on the day (Saturday) of Madero's death and that Wilson showed confidence that he had prevented reprisals. This writer told Adee that Wilson was not only shocked but

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35 Bell, Political Shame, 320-321. Such evidence as this seems purposely to have been overlooked by those who have followed Bell so faithfully in those passages in which the Ambassador is placed in an unfavorable light.

36 Records of the Department of State; Knox to Wilson, February 24, 1913.
that he suffered in health from the news of the murder. Nevertheless, the campaign to make him responsible directly or indirectly for the murders began almost at once.

Upon reflection, the Ambassador decided that Huerta was not directly responsible for the deaths, though he entertained the suspicion that the General had been careless in letting the news of the proposed transfer of their persons leak out somewhere or had failed to provide an adequate escort. At the time, as noted above, Wilson was more concerned with the effect on Mexico. He was relieved to be able to report on the 24th that "... evidently the tragedy of yesterday has produced no effect on the public mind."

All was quiet. Although a shock to foreigners, the

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37 Ibid.; J. L. Starr Hunt to Adee from Mexico City, April 7, 1913. File no. 123 W 691/178.
38 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 288.
39 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 24, 1913.
40 Stronge, the British Minister at Mexico City wired the British Embassy in Washington on the 21st that de la Barra had given general assurance that Madero and his family were to be spared. Ibid.; Memorandum, Department of State, Division of Latin American Affairs; Informal note, Dearing to Nelson, February 21, 1913.
killing was no great surprise. The most important mistake made by the American Ambassador was to endorse the government's version so readily. It was his eagerness to have Huerta recognized by the United States in the short time left that caused him to neglect the moral side of the question.

It will be noted that in the last communication from Knox Wilson had only been assured that "at some future date" the recognition of Huerta might be "considered." As Woodrow Wilson would become President of the United States on March 4th this "future date" would have to be within a few days at most and a cursory reading of the telegram shows that Knox had no such immediacy in mind.

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41 The killing was discussed freely in Chihuahua on the day before it happened. Ibid.; Letcher to Knox, March 1, 1913. This is an indication that the feeling against Madero had been so strong in much of the general public that most people assumed that he could not be allowed to live. This does not prove, of course, that the government (Huerta) deliberately staged the killing. As noted above, Madero had many enemies.

42 Knox said later that he and Taft would have recognized Huerta had they known that Woodrow Wilson was not going to do so.

43 See note 36. It was not the means by which Huerta came to power that concerned the Department of State but the question of whether Huerta would accept the claims previously rejected by the Madero administration. Wilson claimed later that he had exacted promises from Huerta to honor them but he never really received any word of sufficient authority to submit to the Department.
Wilson's only comment on the murders so far had been "It's too bad."  

\[4\] Washington Post, February 24, 1913.
THE TWO WILSONS AND THE QUESTION OF HUERTA'S RECOGNITION

It is time that historians stopped making excuses for the diplomacy of Woodrow Wilson in Mexico. The means by which Victoriano Huerta came to power were not essentially different from those employed by hundreds of other dictators in Latin America. President Wilson's non-recognition policy had to be achieved in a manner far short of that high degree of morality that Wilson wanted to inject into international politics. The first by-product of this policy was the persecution of Henry Lane Wilson.

Two days before Madero was killed, Ambassador Wilson, accepting the new government of Mexico as constitutional, queried the Department on the matter of recognition. Knox countered with a warning that in the light of the past two years there must be strong evidence that outstanding claims were to be settled before such a course could be considered. In order to obtain such guarantees Wilson was given authority to circumvent de la Barra, the Foreign Minister, and go di-

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1Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 20, 1913. File no. 812.00/6287. Huerta never asked for de jure recognition during these days. His title was "The Interim Constitutional President of Mexico." He was recognized as such by other powers. Ibid.; Fred Morris Dearing, Memorandum on Recognition, April 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/8066.
rectly to Huerta. Meanwhile the Secretary of State put out feelers to find out how the other foreign governments were reacting. Wilson declined Knox's suggestion that he deal directly with Huerta, saying that he had known de la Barra for years and preferred to deal with him—a procedure that disturbed Knox because he was afraid it would result in delays. Wilson was optimistic, however, over the prospect.

A veritable international honeymoon was indeed taking shape on the very day that was to be Madero's last. The Attorney-

2Ibid.; Knox to Wilson, February 21, 1913. Knox, as well as the succeeding administration, mistakenly assumed a close personal friendship between H. L. Wilson and Huerta. The Ambassador favored Huerta's provisional government, not Huerta himself. The idea that he was closer to Huerta than to de la Barra is based on poor logic as well as his own testimony both at the time and later. Taft Papers (Unassembled); H. L. Wilson to the New York World, July 5, 1916.

The Department's motive in trying to steer Wilson directly to Huerta was its belief that de la Barra characteristically clung to an "unessential vantage" in giving "non-committal assurances" out of a "sort of mistaken pride and patriotism," which it were better for the real good of the nation to forego. Ibid.; Fred M. Dearing, Memorandum on Recognition, April 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/8066.

3The Mexican Minister in Washington told Knox that Britain had said it would not recognize any government that was not elected by the people. Knox instructed the London Embassy to try to find out just what had been said to the Mexican Minister there. Ibid.; Laughlin to Knox and Knox to the American Embassy, London, February 21st and 24th respectively.


5Ibid.; The Embassy was so strongly in favor of Huerta that the Department felt itself deprived of the ability to use recognition as a weapon in securing acknowledgment of claims. Ibid.; Fred M. Dearing, Memorandum on Recognition, April 16, 1913. File no. 812.00/8066.
General of the United States received a telegram reading: "Everything finished satisfactorily, new situation strongly augurs prompt, peaceful settlements." The murder of Madero, aside from its inhumane aspects, threw the well-oiled machinery of international harmony out of gear.

Wilson learned from the Secretary of the British legation that Britain would probably not now recognize Huerta. The American Ambassador was disposed, as we have seen, to take the word of de la Barra that the government had not been directly responsible for the tragedy. He urged the Department to consider the matter closed as this would be of "infinite value in these difficult moments." The Mexican Minister in London, however, characterized the new government as "revengeful" and "self-seeking." The British government was in the process of adopting the policy of non-recognition until Huerta could show a constitutional election.

As late as February 21st, when the Diplomatic Corps met with Huerta, none of Wilson's colleagues possessed in-

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6 Records of the Department of State; Senator Castellot to George V. Wickersham, February 22, 1913.

7 Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 24, 1913.

8 Ibid.; File nos. 812.00/6372 and 6374.
structions to recognize him. The American Ambassador had a problem on his hands. His colleagues were waiting to see what the United States would do. Those who deluded themselves with the assumption that Wilson had great influence with Huerta and was responsible for his boldness in ousting Madero were puzzled that the Ambassador did not round out the picture by persuading Huerta to take immediate measures of pacification. Wilson, however, was dealing with de la Barra as a representative of the científico group who would supposedly dictate to the dictator just as the advisors of Porfirio Díaz had made use of that old despot. Huerta was also faced with uprisings following Madero's deposition which he could not immediately quash. Furthermore, Wilson probably hoped that Díaz would emerge as the real power and re-establish the regime of his illustrious uncle. But Huerta listened to nobody. He took just as much advice as suited him and ignored the rest. He listened to the Ambassador, patted him on the back, (he later accorded Nelson O'Shaughnessey the same treatment) and then did exactly as he pleased. As time went on, he ceased even to do much listening.

Nevertheless, the correspondence of the Department of State indicates that observers were correct in believing that the Taft policy was popular with Americans in Mexico.  

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9Ibid.; Wilson to Knox, February 21, 1913. File no. 812.00/6319.

10Bell, Political Shame, 340.
Many who had fled the country in March of 1912, had returned. Most of them now believed that after an initial "mopping-up" operation Huerta would be able to keep order. Taft congratulated himself that he had kept out of a war with Mexico and the State Department could be safe in assuming that Huerta would not meet its demands in sufficient time to claim recognition. Both Taft and Knox were well clear of political criticism but Wilson had opposed Madero almost from the beginning and his attitude was well known.

Soon after the administration left office Knox warned Taft not to give Wilson wholehearted approval as this would transfer the hostile attitudes of the political opposition from Wilson to Taft. The abandonment of the Ambassador by his superiors had become complete and effective. For all practical purposes, Wilson could now assume that he was respon-

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11Taft Papers, Letterbook no. 8; Taft to Professor J. D. Brannon, Cambridge, Mass., February 27, 1913. "...I am not going to get into a war," Taft told Brannon, "with Mexico. If I have not demonstrated that by what I have done thus far, I have not succeeded very well in bringing my intentions clearly to the knowledge of the American people." Taft could use bold words now.
sible to a new administration.\textsuperscript{12}

For the time being, nothing was done beyond obtaining some unofficial assurances from the Huerta government that the American claims would be settled for the most part on a favorable basis. Knox, several years later, remarked to Wilson that if Huerta had conceded to the demands in full of the United States he would have recommended recognition to Taft as late as ten o'clock on the morning of March 4th.\textsuperscript{13}

It may be interesting at this point to quote from the most recent authority on diplomatic relations between the United

\textsuperscript{12}Knox Correspondence, Volume 20; Wilson to Taft, June 3, 1913, Taft to Knox, June 19, 1913, and an unfinished draft of a letter addressed to Taft by Knox. It could not be determined whether or not this last letter had been sent but it may safely be assumed that it, or something like it, was and it does reflect Knox's view. Also, Taft did temper his replies to Wilson. See also Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Knox, February 26, 1913, in which Wilson made an appeal for some expression of approval of his efforts to get the Huerta government established. Knox replied that "The Department perceives no reason to doubt the usefulness of such unofficial activities undertaken upon its own responsibility by the Embassy and always kept within the limits of cautious circumspection." \textit{Ibid.}; Knox to Wilson, February 28, 1913.

\textsuperscript{13}Wilson, \textit{Diplomatic Episodes}, 297. See also Arthur S. Link, \textit{Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917} (New York: Harper and Bros., 1954), 108. Knox said that if he had thought Woodrow Wilson was not going to recognize Huerta he and Taft would have recognized Huerta themselves. But see also Records of the Department of State; Knox to Wilson, February 28, 1913 where Knox refused to issue any public statement at all on the matter of recognition.
States and Mexico:

In the rise and fall of Madero from 1910 to 1913, Henry Lane Wilson spoke for the whole United States in Mexico, but unfortunately much that he said represented nobody but Henry Lane Wilson. During his tenure as Ambassador there were two, and sometimes three, United States policies; the State Department's, Taft's and the Ambassador's own. Taft consistently wanted to preserve constituted authority; the State Department chastised Wilson and warned him against meddling, but in 1913 they were willing to back him up if (on his own personal responsibility) he was successful; and, as seen, Wilson was determined to unseat his bete noire at almost any cost and by whatever instruments which came conveniently to hand. He succeeded, but the cost to him, the United States and Mexico are incalculable.14

This is a far more charitable view of Wilson than is usually given and the author's estimate, arrived at independently, of Wilson's true position in the events of the Deena Trágica is in essential harmony with the evidence presented above. It is the author's contention, however, that Wilson spoke more often for his superiors than for himself, that Taft and Knox were more concerned with the protection of life and property than for preserving constituted authority and that Wilson was not warned against meddling until early in 1913, when the administration had definitely decided to leave the problem for the next President of the United States.

14Cline, United States and Mexico, 133.
The "incalculable cost" to the United States came not so much from the Taft-Knox policy as from the negative approach to the issue by the Woodrow Wilson administration. The incoming President of the United States, so well schooled in political science and professing such regard for international law in dealing with other countries, stubbornly and consciously departed established international practice in the present situation.

President Wilson entered upon his office with important domestic affairs to be carried out and with preconceived notions about Mexico and the American Ambassador. This; coupled with the inexperience of William Jennings Bryan in diplomacy, resulted in an almost unparalleled persecution of Henry Lane Wilson for four grueling months. During this period, Ambassador Wilson was largely ignored officially while every effort was made to unearth evidence that he had been responsible for the overthrow and assassination of Madero. He was subjected to unprecedented embarrassment by a flood of amateur sleuths sent out by Bryan and Wilson.

Recent authorities are agreed that Woodrow Wilson was a dangerous novice in this matter and that he knew nothing fundamentally of Mexico or the Mexicans. See Cline, *United States and Mexico*, 143. The President was no doubt encouraged by such advice as was rendered by John W. Foster, a former diplomat to Mexico who reminded him that Porfirio Díaz had not been recognized for eighteen months after he came to power. Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Box 141; Foster to Woodrow Wilson, July 19, 1913. These papers were used with Mrs. Woodrow Wilson's permission.
The President finally dismissed Ambassador Wilson in the most humiliating public way. How pleased Madero would have been!

When Woodrow Wilson and Bryan took office the situation at Mexico City was fluid. Although public opinion in the United States was turned against Huerta by the Madero assassination, (H. L.) Wilson as we have seen, could hardly do otherwise than to continue to treat Huerta's as the de facto government. Without necessarily committing his own government to a de facto recognition he, along with the rest of the Diplomatic Corps, dealt with Huerta in this manner. He notified Bryan, his new superior, that "The Diplomatic Corps has entered into communication with the Provisional Government without committing themselves in any way as regards formal recognition. . .\"16 This was approved and the Wilson administration allowed this relationship to stand officially. Thus, the Ambassador was left to carry on necessary dealings with a government which the United States refused to recognize. The President was following the biblical admonition not to let the right hand know what the left hand was doing!

The usual course would have been to withdraw a representative of this rank and leave a chargé at the post. The way was, in fact, made easy. In accord with custom, (H. L.) Wilson tendered his resignation on March 5th, though it was

framed in such a way as to indicate that he intended it as a formality and did not necessarily expect it to be accepted.

President Wilson received a note from Huerta and replied, thanking him for his "cordial congratulations." Meanwhile, a flood of petitions reached the State Department citing Ambassador Wilson's capabilities and requesting that he be retained on the scene. To the colony at Mexico City, he

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17 Woodrow Wilson Papers, LB 1, File VII; Wilson to Huerta, March 7, 1913.

18 See Records of the Department of State; 812.00 series, Case books nos. 28 and 29 for many such letters. William C. Potter, former head of American Smelting and Refining Company in Mexico and now Executive Chairman of Intercontinental Rubber Company, also with large holdings in Mexico, praised Wilson's efforts on behalf of those companies.

See also Hearing - Subcommittee on U.S. Citizens in Mexico, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, 2264-2272, for letters, petitions and memorandums of a congratulatory nature. Stronge, the British Minister, von Hintze, the German Minister, Ayguesparsu, the French Chargé, Cologan, the Spanish Minister and D'Arenas de Lima, the Portuguese Minister, all addressed personal letters of gratitude to Wilson for his help rendered to them and to their nationals in the Decena Trágica. The American colony addressed a telegram to President Wilson on March 4th, asking that (H. L.) Wilson be retained and this was followed by a committee visit from this group to Washington which drew up a memorandum describing Wilson's service to Mexico, especially in getting Huerta and Díaz to agree, as indispensable. The British colony addressed a letter of thanks to Wilson as did the American clergymen of Mexico City. Much of the solicitude of the American colony was based on the belief that Wilson could establish more harmonious relations with Huerta than he had been able to do with Madero. Mrs. Alex Tweedie wrote that: "Whatever approval President Wilson's policy may have gained in the United States, the withholding of recognition of Huerta was certainly resented by Americans in Mexico."

was the man of the hour. Only a few voices in Mexico were raised against him. As for the Ambassador himself, he was certain that the new administration would, with proper information, proceed to the recognition of Huerta. He was

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19 See note 18. The belief that Wilson could handle Huerta was strong at this time. Later, his "friends" lost enthusiasm.

20 Records of the Department of State; 812.00 series, Case books nos. 26 and 29. Some of the letters from correspondents in the United States were, however, extremely bitter. One told Bryan that Wilson was just about fit to represent the Sultan of Turkey at the court of McBeth in the dark ages. Others charged that the Ambassador aided and abetted the overthrow of Madero. William G. Manson of 356 Pine St., San Francisco, California in a letter to Bryan dated March 15th stated that it was common knowledge that Wilson was associated with the Guggenheims who had gotten concessions from Porfirio Díaz through Enrique Creel and de la Barra. This writer said that a tip was going around advising the purchase of Smelter stock as the Díaz crowd was in again. A telegram from R. V. Pesqueira, a member of the Congress who supported Carranza, inaugurated a pressure campaign on the White House itself on behalf of the rebel forces. In a letter to Woodrow Wilson, dated March 5th, he urged non-recognition of Huerta on the grounds that:

"... Ambassador Wilson's statement that he is inclined to accept Huerta's statement of the assassination is partial and not based on facts."

John Lind wrote Bryan on March 16th (File no. 123 W 691/126) that information he had gotten from an army officer a year ago led him to believe that H. L. Wilson should not be retained. He said that he knew his brother, John, the publisher and always regarded him as a "blowhard." This shows more of Lind's character than it does of either of the two Wilsons.

These charges and insinuations would have been far more impressive had they contained a shred of evidence to show that (H. L.) Wilson had been guilty of wrongdoing. They do indicate that the Ambassador could not please everybody and that some who disliked him had friends in important places.

W. P. Carmichael of St. Louis, Mo. wired Bryan on March 12th, that he had known (H. L.) Wilson for many years and held it inconceivable that he could have connived at Madero's murder.
confident that Carranza would be defeated in spite of the warnings of the consuls in northern Mexico and did not interpret the opposition to the Huerta regime as formidable. Just how Wilson reacted to all of this is not certain. He may have been too busy to make a decision, but at any rate, (H. L.) Wilson's resignation was not accepted. No excuse can be given for failure to do so within the next two or three weeks.

The Ambassador never meant to imply that Huerta's success in dealing with the uprisings was assured or even that he was particularly friendly to the United States. In fact, careful study of Ambassador Wilson's dispatches during this period reveal a growing impatience with Huerta. Wilson desired the authority to make strong representations to him just as he had requested such authority to deal with Madero. The difference was that he felt that Huerta would have sense enough to respond to pressure where Madero had ignored practical measures.

There may have been a deliberate attempt by friends of the Ambassador in the Department of State to commit that agency and its head to the views of (H. L.) Wilson. A telegram, drafted by someone in the Department (Huntington Wilson??), went to Bryan's desk where it was signed. It contained a message of praise for the Ambassador for having followed the Department's instructions in the recent crisis. When Bryan saw the carbon copy he was disturbed and ordered
the telegram recalled. His subordinates tried to shrug it off, arguing that one might approve the skillfulness of an action without approving the action itself. The matter was not cleared up, however, as it hinged on the question of whether a red tag, usually attached to such documents going to the Secretary's desk, had actually been attached to this telegram when Bryan signed it. His clerk could not remember seeing it. The message was withdrawn because Bryan sincerely felt that it was too early to make such commitments. Nor would he act on other advices of the Ambassador. "Inopportune" was the reply of the Department to another request for a visit of American naval officers to Mexico City.

Meanwhile, Huntington Wilson, the Assistant Secretary, who actually handled most of the details of the Taft-Knox-(H. L.) Wilson policy in Mexico, resigned in disagreement.

21 The clerk who was charged with arranging Bryan's mail said that he did not remember seeing any red tag attached to the telegram. "Did somebody put one over on the Secretary of State?" asked the New York Times. See issues of March 11th and 13th, 1913.

22"We explained," says Huntington Wilson, "that the telegram approved only the manner in which things had been done; not the things that had been done. Doyle even pointed out that one might admire the skill of a burglar's technique without at all approving of burglary." Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson, Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat (Boston: Bruce Humphries Inc., 1945), 247.

23Records of the Department of State; Adee to Wilson, March 22, 1913.
with the new President over the China loan. The President accepted his letter of resignation as quickly as it was received. 24 Bryan was preparing at this time to take a vacation and Huntington Wilson's action caused him to feel some hesitancy about leaving. "Things will go on perfectly well," the President assured him, "without him so that this need not disturb your vacation." 25

President Wilson stated to the press shortly after he took office that he proposed to end the practice of "dollar diplomacy" and allow Latin American states to elect constitutional governments, the only kind that would be recognized by the United States. Although he probably had more specific reference to the Nicaraguan situation at the time, the government at Mexico City was already being referred to as

24 Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters: President, 1913-1914 (New York: Doubleday Doran and Company, 1931), IV, 72-73. The President would not permit the State Department to back a large loan to China by a banking consortium.

the "Administration at Mexico City."26

The policy of ignoring Huerta and (H. L.) Wilson, officially, began at once. Without recognition from the United States, Huerta could borrow very little money but he was able to obtain a small loan in Europe and was given added courage by the recognition extended to him by the rest of the world. While the special informants of the Wilson administration were appearing all over Mexico, Bryan learned from (H. L.) Wilson that "The matter of recognition as regards Great Britain is now closed."27 Although Speyer and Company of New York, the firm that had handled Mexico's last big loan, warned the Wilson administration that Huerta was the only means of obtaining order in Mexico and that he must have support,28 the recognition by Great Britain deprived

26 Records of the Department of State; Wilson to Bryan, April 22, 1913. R. S. Baker holds that "there was no parallel of Huerta's case with that of a Peruvian President just recognized who ... was ousted not by an ambitious despot who desired to play the role of a Huerta but by members of a Congress, supported by the Army, who were resisting an attempt of the President to exercise unconstitutional power and set up a practical dictatorship." Woodrow Wilson, IV, 251.

27 Records of the Department of State; (H. L.) Wilson to Bryan, May 3, 1913. President Wilson and Secretary Bryan were convinced that Lord Cowdray, who had vast oil investments in Mexico, had influenced the British government in extending recognition. Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 256.

28 Records of the Department of State; James Speyer to the Secretary of the Treasury, William MacAdoo, n.d.
the United States of this means of forcing the Mexican leader to his knees. Speyer and Company was forced to enter the new arrangement in order to protect their interests. The delay in extending recognition by the United States caused paralysis in international exchange on important questions; Huerta sorely needed the added backing of the United States and he deemed the course of his northern neighbor unwise and unfriendly. Important claims could not be discussed because the Ambassador could not deal with the Mexican government on an equal footing.\(^{29}\)

Some influence in the matter of withholding recognition was undoubtedly being exerted by \textit{maderistas} and even members of Madero's family, his wife among them, who had gone promptly to the United States to place the guilt of Ambassador Wilson before high officials. This did not include all

\(^{29}\textit{Ibid.}; (H. L.) Wilson to Bryan, May 8, 1913. It was pointed out by a member of the State Department that recognition must be based on the ability of the government to fulfill its international obligations. The resignation of Madero under duress and his subsequent murder had only the remotest connection, if any, with the main question. Fred M. Dearing, Memorandum on Recognition, April 16, 1913. See also Knox Correspondence, undated memorandum signed J. R. C. (Clark, Counselor in the Department) which held that even if Huerta were \textit{particeps criminis} it could have no legal bearing on recognition and if he were in the United States, could not be extradited under existing treaties. Congressman William G. Sharp of Ohio guessed correctly that President Wilson's policy was not based on lack of confidence in Huerta's ability to produce stability but on the means by which he came to power. Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 141; Sharp to W. Wilson, July 18, 1913.\)
of Madero's family, but the picture of the Ambassador's relations with Madero as painted by some of them, was very black. Rumors reached the Ambassador's ears that he might even be in danger of assassination. Had not Huerta understood Wilson's position, the danger might, indeed, have been great since the Ambassador was isolated from his own government and a show of unfriendliness to the American Ambassador by the Mexican President might have been the signal to someone that he could safely exterminate the former.

Huerta did not, indeed, act unfriendly toward Wilson but he notified the United States publicly that relations would henceforth be confined to routine matters. No important questions would be discussed. It also became public knowledge that Mexican affairs involving the Ambassador were being investigated. Wilson's appeal to the Department that this be stopped in the interest of common decency and fairness fell on deaf ears. He told Bryan that

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30 Ernesto Madero, claiming to speak for the family, as well as for himself, denied that he had charged Ambassador Wilson with working to undermine the Madero government. He said that his relations with Ambassador Wilson were always most cordial. *New York Times*, March 9, 1913.

31 Records of the Department of State; (H. L.) Wilson to Bryan, May 9, 1913. The Mexican Foreign Office notified the Ambassador that the "Madero woman" was giving a dark picture of Huerta and indicating that the maderistas might seek vengeance even on the person of the Ambassador.
his retention at the Mexican post was a matter of no personal interest to him and that the Department should support him in a dangerous situation. He asked that this be brought to the attention of the President. Bryan was away from his office for several days, and no reply was sent until he returned. Not aware that the Secretary's absence had caused the delay, Wilson submitted his resignation — for the second time:

"After waiting patiently," he said coldly, "a week for an answer which should have been sent hither, I am obliged to ask you to immediately present to the President my resignation as Ambassador to Mexico."

Bryan explained to (H. L.) Wilson the next day that he had been absent when the telegram arrived and that he was issuing

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32 Ibid., May 10, 1913.

33 Bryan was away from the Department for a great deal of the time during these days. He needed rest after the inauguration, and he was forced to keep up his lecture tours, he announced, because his salary as Secretary of State did not give him enough money to pay expenses. No doubt he also desired to dodge office-seekers. The press did not deal kindly with his complaint that he needed extra money, retorting that he should have known that the office would require expenditure of personal funds and could have refused it if he did not have the necessary means.

34 Records of the Department of State; (H. L.) Wilson to Bryan, May 16, 1913. File no. 123 W 691/201. Although this was the second formal resignation, it will be remembered that Wilson had given notice a little earlier that he did not care whether he stayed at his post or not. Thus, he had really given the new administration at Washington no less than three opportunities to recall him. Some explanation is needed for the determination of his superiors not to send him any instructions. The only one that occurs to the author is that there was fear that he would carry them out. This would make his later removal appear to be inspired by political motives.
a statement to the press denying the reports that the Department was conducting investigations. This was simply not true except in the sense that no "official" investigation was underway, but it was in the former sense that the Ambassador made his complaint. Bryan also discussed the subject of (H. L.) Wilson's resignation with the President who refused to accept it. Bryan cautioned hesitancy in dealing with this resignation and the desire to use (H. L.) Wilson's influence with Huerta and thus play both ends against the middle was too strong for the President to pass up.

Mexicans could only interpret this action as indicating a desire on the part of the American government for more proof that Huerta could maintain order. Huerta was puzzled that the United States did not recognize him and thus give him the final aid needed to restore the country to Federal control. American Smelting and Refining Company and other large interests in Mexico held no particular brief for Huerta or anybody else but they did want some government recognized. The concern of ASARCO, with heavy investments in that country, was that somebody be recognized in order that


36Woodrow Wilson Papers, File VI, Box 318; Bryan to W. Wilson, May 27, 1913. Wilson ignored a plan urged on him by such firms as the Southern Pacific Railway, Phelps, Dodge and Company and others that he agree to recognize Huerta if the latter would guarantee an election by October 26, 1913. Link, Woodrow Wilson, 111.
payments to Mexican soldiers for "guarding" their property might be regularized.37

The position of the United States became even more untenable as country after country extended recognition to the Huerta government. Almost daily, Ambassador Wilson called the roll of those countries that had presented credentials and we may forgive him the tinge of I-told-you-so that appeared in these dispatches. To an American President who could lecture others on the matter of international rights such information was only a nuisance. The silence of the American government led many Mexicans to conclude that it might possibly favor such schemes as were being suggested by those Americans who counseled annexation of a large part of Mexico by force.

The time was almost ripe for a public condemnation of Ambassador Wilson. The special agents in Mexico were sending back volumes of information whether spurious or otherwise. That the dismissal of Wilson under such circumstances would

37Propertied interests in Mexico were told in many localities that soldiers could not be maintained to guard their holdings unless they received subsistence, which the government could not, at the moment, furnish. This was not a new practice and it was accepted out of necessity, though it was more costly than the centralized police state of Porfirio Díaz, had been.

Governor Colquitt, who had begun hammering at Woodrow Wilson on forceful intervention just as he had done with Taft, said that Americans were having to pay ransom for their liberty. Records of the Department of State; O. B. Colquitt to Woodrow Wilson, July 16, 1913, confidential.
not help the problem at hand other than to emphasize Woodrow Wilson's righteousness before the American people, was apparently not considered. Bryan still urged caution, probably because he wanted to have a try at getting the various factions in Mexico to confer and (H. L.) Wilson could still be useful, but the days of the Ambassador were numbered.

It was a series of reports from William Bayard Hale\(^{38}\) that told President Wilson what he wanted to hear and already believed. The President became more and more impatient that (H. L.) Wilson had not yet "changed his point of view"\(^{39}\) as Woodrow Wilson had already come to the conclusion that Huerta could not be accepted. The Ambassador's pleas

\(^{38}\) Hale was an Episcopalian Minister turned journalist. He had written for *Cosmopolitan* magazine and several other publications and had drafted President Wilson's campaign speeches together with other campaign literature. See *Who's Who in America, 1915-1916*. Since the President did not trust those who had first hand knowledge of Mexican conditions, Hale's lack of knowledge of Mexico must have qualified him in the President's mind to make an objective study. Information from those who were already on the scene was generally taboo.

\(^{39}\) Memorandum from the White House to Secretary Bryan, June 3, 1913, in Woodrow Wilson Papers, File 95. The reference here was to (H. L.) Wilson's dispatch of May 15th in which he characterized the revolutionary situation as getting better. See also Records of the Department of State; (H. L.) Wilson to Bryan, May 15, 1913.

Up to this point, (H. L.) Wilson had no official knowledge of the policy of the administration, although he had not recommended the unreserved recognition of Huerta, but simply that he be recognized unless there were some reason not to do so. The Wilson administration had been silent where the Embassy in Mexico was concerned. Taft Papers (Unassembled), Draft of Proposed Article on Mexico by H. L. Wilson - n.d. (1916?).
for some intelligent basis of representation of the American government were ignored. He was told that the United States expected proof and assurances of an early election, free from coercion, in which Huerta was not to be a candidate, and of absolute amnesty to the opposition. This was, of course, intervention far beyond anything that Taft, Knox or (H. L.) Wilson had ever considered. Mysteriously the Ambassador was cautioned that these views were for his own private information and were not to be given to Huerta! The Provisional President must be given no opportunity to establish the legality of his position.

By now, reports were coming in from Hale who was making himself thoroughly obnoxious in Mexico, while the Ambassador and everyone else wondered why he was there. A report dated June 18th, contained Hale's revelations. Regarding Madero's administration, he had to admit that by 1912, "it was fairly certain that, unless an early change for the better came, a popular revolution might be expected." The President could have learned this by going over his official Ambassador's dispatches. Hale recounted a highly garbled version of the Decena Trágica with stories that the Ambassador had notified reporters as to when the arrest of Madero would take place, that Cepeda had "promised the Ambassador that he should be the first man told when we had done it," and other tales that

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40 Records of the Department of State; Bryan to (H. L.) Wilson, June 15, 1913.
were unaccompanied by verification. The fact that Cepeda was in jail at the time for a savage act of murder was skillfully woven into these accounts in a manner that in the 1950's would become "guilt by association." Hale had discovered, in conversation with Ambassador Wilson, that that individual "exhibits no appreciation whatever of the nature of the deed done the night of February 22nd, after the entire group of men responsible for it had been guests at his house, no suspicion that any responsibility rested upon himself who, in a sober view of the past, might be said to have delivered the men to death." (H. L.) Wilson would not repent!

Having thus damaged his own ability as an investigator seeking facts, and attempted to discredit the Ambassador beyond all reason, he sought to give his report a sprinkling of authenticity and fairness by saying in a contradictory manner that "... it is in my judgement, absurd to picture Mr. Wilson as a malicious plotter." Hale could not have realized just how absurd his own reasoning would appear when he recorded in conclusion to his report this observation:

Trifling, perhaps, in the sum of miseries that have flowed from it, yet not without importance in a way, is the fact that thousands of Mexicans believe that the Ambassador acted on instructions from Washington and look upon his retention under the new American President as a mark of approval and blame
the United States Government for the chaos into which the country has fallen.\(^1\)

Trifling as this view might have seemed to Hale, it was true. But Hale had been sent to gather damaging information and here it was in plenty. President Wilson, who was in New Hampshire, wrote Bryan that as soon as he (the President) returned from his outing he wanted to discuss seriously the necessity of recalling Henry Lane Wilson "in one way or another" so that he could have a talk with him.\(^2\) While this was being considered another report came from Hale estimating that Huerta controlled only a third of Mexico but that he gave no evidence of intending to relinquish power. De La Barra was scored for remaining in office in a government that had not provided satisfactory proof of its innocence of Madero's murder (a naive observation). Hale included some sage comments that must have been music to President Wilson's ears as they included some inviting political philosophy:

> We are, in spite of ourselves, the guardians of order, justice and decency on this Continent; we are, providentially, naturally and unescapably, charged with the maintenance of humanity's interest here. Civilisation and humanity look to us, and have a right to look to us, for protection on this Continent. Civilisation is more important than the conventional claim of

\(^{1}\text{Ibid.}; Hale to W. Wilson, June 18, 1913.}\)

\(^{2}\text{Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 262-263.}\)
nationality. It is more necessary to maintain civilisation than to pay fantastic deference to the formal prerogatives of a Government that has lost the ability to maintain civilisation.

This is no argument for intervention in Mexico. Intervention is not necessary. Firm representations, politely made, as by a perfectly friendly, yet a fully determined and powerful neighbor, would, I believe, save Mexico. To frame the exact plan, to hit upon just the fashion and manner in which the necessary influence can be brought to bear, without involving us too deeply, may take long and hard thought. Then let the Government of the United States give it that thought. But let it not abandon Mexico and the ideals our people have set up here, extinguish the torch, lay down the staff of leadership committed to our hands.

The label "Hale-Wilson Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine" might well be assigned to the above sentences.

Evidently Hale had not been told why Ambassador Wilson was being kept in Mexico City, as the special investigator reported blandly that it was the general belief that the Ambassador was remaining there to look after personal interests! Since just such activity as he was engaging in with the support of the President was causing it, Hale could be highly exact in describing the state of mind of the Ambassador in the midst of this ordeal:

Mr. Wilson has lost practically all his former friends. Virtually every member of the Committee which sent representatives to Washington, in his behalf, in April, (including its spokesman,) has told me that he regarded Mr. Wilson's continual presence here an injury. The Ambassador is the subject of constant snubbing at the hands of
Huerta; and is in a highly nervous state, raging against the indignity of his position, berating his staff and reviling his own Government.

That Wilson's former associates were finding him of no value to them in business and thus dropping him socially was probably true; but Hale shared the mistaken view of an outstanding biographer of President Wilson that it was assumed that the Ambassador would cooperate and that he had failed to do so while "clinging to his office." The assertion that the President disliked personnel changes was also made in order to explain the retention of the Ambassador, but personnel changes were made when political expediency demanded it and Bryan eagerly sought diplomatic positions for deserving followers of the party.

43 Records of the Department of State; Hale to W. Wilson, July 9, 1913. Hale supplied no information that could not have been obtained by the President through regular channels. He was greatly surprised that (H. L.) Wilson did not seem to realize how wrong he (Wilson) had been.

44 Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 255.

45 An important concern of Bryan was to find jobs for his numerous friends in the Democratic Party. He wrote Jerry Sullivan, Receiver of Customs, Santo Domingo, after Sullivan had been there long enough to become acquainted, to know what positions "you have at your disposal with which to reward deserving democrats." Wayne C. Williams, William Jennings Bryan (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1936), 341. See also M. R. Werner, Bryan (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1920), 211.
News that Wilson had invited Huerta to a dinner at the Embassy on the night of Madero's murder, as set forth in Hale's report of June 18th, had caused the President to begin the steps necessary to recall the Ambassador. He wrote Bryan that Hale's document was "indeed extraordinary" and he expressed his desire to discuss with him upon his return (this time the Secretary of State was away from his office) the necessity of "recalling Henry Lane Wilson in one way or another perhaps merely for consultation until we can have a talk with the man himself." This was followed two days later by a message to Bryan in which the President said that after reading Hale's report, he hoped more than ever that Bryan would consider the possibility of recalling (H. L.) Wilson and leaving affairs in the hands of O'Shaughnessy, who was recommended by Hale as a "perfectly honest" man. After four months, an "honest man" was finally to be put in charge of the Embassy at Mexico City. And if Hale

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46 See note 41. Hale had arranged his phrases carefully so as to give the coincidental meeting at the Embassy and the later shooting of Madero undue significance. John Lind also believed that there was a connection between the two events.

47 Records of the Department of State; Woodrow Wilson to Bryan, July 1, 1913, confidential. File no. 812.00/7861.

said he was honest, then he was honest. The implication was, of course, that the Ambassador was dishonest, yet Hale, in his personal references to him had pointed out his sincerity. Without all of this fanfare, all that the President needed to have done was to accept one of the resignations being pressed upon him by the Ambassador himself!

The actual situation in Mexico had little bearing upon this immediate drama. As has been shown, Huerta could not have satisfied the Washington government under any circumstances short of surrender of sovereignty. The concern of the moment was with punishment of someone for Madero's death and Huerta looked like the most likely target. The Ambassador was embarrassed by being ordered to spend the Fourth of July in Vera Cruz so as not to compromise the stand of the administration. The Mexican newspapers, however, centered their criticism on (H. L.) Wilson. Additional material was supplied them by the Wilson-Bryan information-collectors (there were no titles), among them, Bryan's Reginaldo F. del

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Valle of Los Angeles. Del Valle, whose letters were eagerly devoured by Bryan, asserted at Mexico City that he had no official status but that he had been sent from Washington to get first-hand information for the use of the American government. He echoed the President by announcing the end of "dollar diplomacy," saying that Woodrow Wilson and Bryan would not be influenced by anyone with a personal interest at stake in the Mexican situation.

(H. L. Wilson, knowing that he was being ignored at Washington, beset by a host of amateur political sleuths,

50 Del Valle squirmed when queried by the Mexican press as to his status. He said that he had come to conduct "interesting investigations," but that while he was not an envoy, he was on a mission for the State Department and his commission had been entrusted to him by his friend, President Wilson. El Diario, Mexico City, July 7, 1913, enclosure in Records of the Department of State; H. L. Wilson to Bryan, July 15, 1913. File no. 812.00/3165.

A tragi-comical note was introduced in the following amusing picture of professional jealousy between two "unofficial" agents in Mexico with the same mission. Hale telegraphed Bryan that del Valle was giving elaborate newspaper interviews and acting like a plenipotentiary, allowing himself to be described as the next Ambassador. Bryan admonished del Valle to keep away from the newspapers. Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 141; Bryan to W. Wilson, July 8, 1913. Hale told the President that del Valle could not be taken seriously. Records of the Department of State; William B. Hale to Woodrow Wilson, July 9, 1913.

51 Mexican Herald, July 8, 1913. It was the announced policy of the administration at Washington not to retain anyone at a foreign post who had engaged in business activity at that post.
and lacking influence over Huerta\textsuperscript{52} sounded for the last time the note he so often played upon during the Madero regime. Complaining that the United States should either recognize the Mexican government or close its diplomatic establishment,\textsuperscript{53} he reported the increase of anti-American-ism\textsuperscript{54} and urged that strong measures be taken. The Department was told that no business could be done with the Mexican government as officials from bottom to top had instructions to ignore American matters.\textsuperscript{55} "A strong and aggressive attitude should be assumed at Washington," he wrote as Mexico planned a big welcome for the new Japanese Minister.\textsuperscript{56} Americans were beginning to show lack of faith in the desire of their government to do anything for them. Some were leaving the country (a fact confirmed by Hale) while others were seeking the aid of other foreign diplo-

\textsuperscript{52}The fact that (H. L.) Wilson developed no close personal friendship with Huerta, so well borne out in the diplomatic correspondence, was either misunderstood or ignored because it did not fit the accepted belief that the Ambassador had placed Huerta in power.

\textsuperscript{53}Records of the Department of State; (H. L.) Wilson to Bryan, July 9, 1913.

\textsuperscript{54}In addition to Wilson's dispatches see \textit{New York Times}, July 13, 1913.

\textsuperscript{55}Records of the Department of State; (H. L.) Wilson to Bryan, July 11, 1913.

\textsuperscript{56}Ibid., July 12, 1913, confidential.
Among those Americans leaving Mexico during the middle of July was the American Ambassador himself, finally recalled after four months. The motive behind this was puzzling to contemporaries. They guessed that some European nation had forced the President's hand but few really knew the true reason.

The Ambassador left Mexico on July 18th on the Ward Line steamer, Mexico, never to return. Traveling in company with del Valle, (H. L.) Wilson learned that Bryan's agent was at least in earnest. The two men enjoyed each other's company. Upon reaching the States the Ambassador was directed to come immediately to Washington. Emeterio de la Garzia, who styled himself "confidential agent" of the Huerta government deliberately scheduled his exodus to coincide with that of Ambassador Wilson from Mexico, remarking "Thank God Ambassador Wilson has been recalled." Garzia had been as thoroughly ignored as had Wilson.

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57 Ibid., July 13, 1913, confidential.
58 Bell, Political Shame, 354.
59 Records of the Department of State; File no. 123 W 691/220.
60 New York Times, July 17, 1913.
Did the Ambassador know that he was about to be dismissed or did he suppose that if he gained the ear of the President he could bring him around to the Taft policy? He gave every indication that he expected to return. The Mexican press had been told that he would be back in three weeks and he announced in New York that he could think of no reason why he should be removed. It looks as though he had taken the President's reluctance to accept his resignation at face value. Perhaps a policy was in the making. If so, he was willing to help put it into effect. It must be remembered that he was a career diplomat with much experience that could be useful. If the President was sincere in wanting to stabilize conditions in Mexico he could not safely ignore one who had been so close to things for such a long time. But there were rumors that England might be reconsidering her recognition of Huerta and the New York Times reported on the 22nd that from official sources there was enough information to imply that the Ambassador would not return to his post.

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61 Walter Hines Page, Ambassador to the Court of St. James, wired Bryan confidentially on the 17th of July, that there was talk of a reversal of policy in Parliament and even of joint intervention with the United States in Mexico. Page said later that opinion was divided along financial lines rather than party lines. Bryan hastened to warn Page not to issue a statement on these matters without further instructions and not to encourage the idea of joint intervention. Records of the Department of State; File nos. 812.00/8067 and 8231.
On the way to Washington, Wilson had received a petition from the Mexican colony at Havana asking him to counsel against the recognition of Huerta. These people credited him only with having been mistaken in his view of the Mexican President, and thus he could be forgiven. Upon reaching New York, the Ambassador let it be known that he would give the press all of the information he could within the bounds of propriety. And talk he did! Asked about his view of Huerta, he replied enigmatically that no man knew what his views were "as to the right or wrong of the Huerta cause" but he expounded at length on conditions in Mexico and the necessity of recognition. He insisted that Mexico was basically stable. It must have been embarrassing to the President to have Wilson talking so freely, especially as he even criticized the wisdom of the Department of State's letting del Valle have the communications code which he had seen the latter use at Havana. Also, since the Ambassador had been retained at his post, the public might be led to believe that he expressed the views of the Wilson administration. The Ambassador was reported as openly criticizing the sending of special envoys such as Hale and del Valle to

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That the President's intention was not known is illustrated by a statement of the Army and Navy Journal in an editorial which proclaimed that the visit of Ambassador Wilson should strike the hour for reading Mexico the same lesson that had just been read to Nicaragua. While waiting to see the President, Wilson briefed the Department on affairs in the Latin American republic and prepared a special memorandum for the President to read in order to be able to talk more intelligently about the situation. This last hopeless task was a complete waste of time. The President had made his decision long ago and had no intention of reading or hearing anything Henry Lane Wilson had to say.

A fifty minute conference with the President was finally held on July 28th. After a cool greeting, the Ambassador realised that his visit was useless. The President gave little evidence of even listening to him. He wanted

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64 Ibid., July 27, 1913. The White House was informed in October that he had given his correspondence with the State Department to the New York American and the New York Sun. Edward Lyell to Joseph Tumulty, Woodrow Wilson Papers (502-H. L. W.) and undated telegram, Harvey P. Bittner of the Spokane Chronicle to President Wilson, October 16, 1913, in the same place.

only one version of the story and he already had it. The President was also responsible for stopping the diplomat's testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He did appear briefly before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations but was asked no significant questions.

The New York Times of August 5th, carried two announcements that were given out by the State Department in rapid succession on the previous day. The first was the resignation of Henry Lane Wilson and the second was the news of the Lind mission to Mexico. Bryan's statement to the press read:

Ambassador Wilson's resignation has been accepted to take effect October 14.
The part which he felt it his duty to take in the earlier stages of the recent revolution in Mexico would make it difficult for

66 Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 313. See also New York Times, July 29, 1913 and August 1, 1913. The Times editorialized that (H. L.) Wilson had been shamefully misrepresented since his return and "... by the President's orders has had words put in his mouth..." President Wilson may have been influenced also by an assurance of the Carranza forces that if the embargo were lifted they would be in control of Mexico in sixty days. Records of the Department of State; I. L. Pesqueira, Governor of Sonora and Alvaro Obregón, Commander of Constitutional Forces of Sonora to President Wilson, July 27, 1913. Needless to say, the lifting of the embargo did not affect this state of affairs. John Lind was summoned to Washington on the day of the conference; Stephenson, John Lind, 214.

67 New York Times, August 2, 1913. When asked for comment on the statements of some Mexican governors, (H. L.) Wilson replied: "I do not want to say anything that is contradictory to the views of the President of the United States."
him to represent the views of the present Administration in view of the situation which now exists. 68

Bryan could not, of course, add that the "situation" that existed was the fault of the administration and not that of Henry Lane Wilson. The former Ambassador was not allowed to return to Mexico even to collect his belongings. The Department of State jumped at an opportunity to take the usual step of guaranteeing him a fair price for his property in the Embassy.

Thus a diplomat with years of service and experience was abruptly dismissed. If he ever had occasion to feel that he had been wrong or negligent, morally or otherwise, he never expressed it publicly. In speeches and writing, he persistently defended his policy, contending that he had acted according to what he and other members of the Diplomatic Corps believed to be the best course. He never apologised in the least for his attitude toward Madero and so far as the Mexican policy of Woodrow Wilson was concerned, it finally resulted in the armed intervention in Mexico that

Taft, Knox and Henry Lane Wilson had foreseen. 69

The former Ambassador had come to believe by 1919, that the only solution to the Mexican problem would be armed intervention, at least down to the 22nd parallel. This portion, rich in resources, but extremely unruly, could then be reorganized as a separate state or joined in a new union with the "civilized" part of Mexico south of the 22nd parallel. Wilson, "What Must Be Done With Mexico; The Obligations of the United States In Our Illiterate and Bandit-Infested Neighbor Nation," The Forum, September, 1919.
EPILOGUE

It is believed that sufficient evidence has been presented to warrant the conclusion that the traditional view of Henry Lane Wilson in diplomacy in Latin America demands some revision. In the first place, his contribution to Chilo-American friendship and trade deserves more notice than has, hitherto, been given. Secondly, his pessimism regarding the institution of immediate democracy in Mexico was not unusual at the time. He was a typical agent of "dollar diplomacy" in this respect. Thirdly, while his extreme bitterness toward Madero is freely admitted, his impatience with that Mexican leader was not without some justification. It has been shown that Madero's regime was, in many respects, a failure.

Lastly, the foregoing account indicates that previous estimates of the role of Henry Lane Wilson in Mexico have failed to consider Wilson's side of the question sufficiently. Furthermore, the easy assertion, by the fairest and most recent presentation of Wilson's work in Mexico, that he followed a stronger policy toward Madero than did Taft and Knox, should be more carefully considered. Wilson did not

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2Cline, *United States and Mexico*, 128-134.
fully understand that Taft and Knox had revised their stronger policy in the declining days of the Taft administration. Thus, Wilson did appear to be making his own policy in the early weeks of 1913. Also (H. L.) Wilson's desire to recognize Huerta was in accord with standard international practice and with the traditional recognition policy of the United States. Some explanation should be made, however, as to why Wilson was so badly misunderstood.

Henry Lane Wilson was a man who had something of a natural facility for arousing controversies around himself. If he made a good many friends, he also made enemies by a somewhat self-righteous attitude. Although he had a tendency to act impulsively, he would seldom admit that any action of his had been unwise or ill-considered. He soon learned to take full advantage of the inaccuracy that often characterizes the press to deny anything that might constitute unfavorable publicity. He was one of those people who could not tolerate disagreement with his own attitudes and opinions and occasionally imputed unwholesome motives to those who criticized him. A middle-aged man with fine facial features, a slightly bald head (during his diplomatic service he began wearing a toupee and had, by the time he was transferred to Mexico, acquired a thick moustache) and a fast walk, he could show, at times, a keen sense of humor and a shrewd, analytical mind. He was rather small of stature and did not possess an overly strong constitution. His sartorial appearance was usually neat and
correct. He had little difficulty in making the transition from an ordinary lawyer and political office seeker to diplomat. Robert Hammond Murray, a newspaper reporter, gave a description of Wilson's physical and mental characteristics. Although Wilson seems not to have borne a grudge against Murray, the latter was obsessed by a rather suddenly acquired dislike for the former Ambassador. It seems that Murray had been expelled from the Embassy by the Ambassador for such "ungentlemanly conduct" as scaring the ladies of the Embassy by giving exaggerated reports. The author suspects that Murray may have been poking fun at Wilson. At any rate, the chief historical value of Murray's comments lies in his description of the Ambassador which enables us to see him through the eyes of one who was not particularly impressed with his personality.

Murray relates that Wilson was a "broken real-estate speculator in the State of Washington" when he entered the diplomatic service and that brother John L. kept him there. He describes Wilson as a "... neat gray little man with a fox-like face, a perfect toupee, admirable clothing, stoop-shouldered, truculent, a trotting walk, a sniggering laugh, broad, black prince-nes ribbon ...," and adds that he had an unfortunate facility for getting into messes. Murray conceded though that this implied no moral lapses or, until his service in Mexico, professional lapses. Wilson, says Murray, was given to "... infirmities of temperament, lack of tact
and extravagant conception of what was due to his position in
deferece and precedence." He was "... irascible, touchy,
peevish, nervous, egotistical. ... [and] vain ..." and
"... rowed with people over trifling things." Murray adds
further that the Mexican officials referred to him as "chico"
meaning that he was inclined to exhaust his energies in con-
sideration of matters that had no importance in eyes other
than his own. ³ One of his colleagues in Mexico describes
Wilson as an "... hombre flaco, de mediana estatura;
nervioso, impaciente, impresionable; facciones dura y sem-
blante seco; bigote gris; mirada penetrante; y los cabellos
en gran pobreza, dividas en raya sobre la mitad de la
frente." ⁴

Those who were associated with Wilson in the Department
remember him as a man with much intellectual ability and as
a gentleman of the "old school" of diplomats. The late
Honorable William R. Castle⁵ who knew him "only slightly"
told the author that Wilson was the kind of man who was very

³Murray, "Huerta and the Two Wilsons," in Harpers
Weekly, March 25, 1916. Murray's articles for Harpers
Weekly were designed to raise the circulation of the publi-
cation and were of a highly sensational character.

⁴Stirling, Los Ultimos Dias, 534.

⁵Castle was appointed Undersecretary of State in
1930. His connection with the Department of State began
after Wilson's active service but he seems to have known
Wilson well enough to have formed this careful judgement.
prejudiced in his thinking but that he was often "right in a somewhat belligerent manner which irritated other people." Castle observed that this may have prevented him from being as valuable to the service as might have been the case.\(^6\) He was ambitious to be accepted in the higher circles of society and politics; he enjoyed the deference paid him because of his position by the upper class families of Latin America. He often magnified out of all proportion to their real worth honors paid him and at times lacked the ability to laugh at himself, but this should not be allowed to obscure the fact that praise of his character and work was often honestly given or that he was often due outstanding tribute. His shortcomings in this respect were seldom anything more than those that might ordinarily be attributed to an ambitious man anxious to rise to greater heights of esteem and financial security. He may well have been, because of earlier experiences, overly anxious to prove that he was a worthy individual. Although he could recognize and appreciate loyalty in his underlings he was often impatient with the more independently minded ones, especially when their opinions were at variance with his or when they were slack in their duties. His expressions of appreciation were often reserved for those who had been chosen by himself or with his approval.

\(^6\)Castle to the author, October 14, 1949. See also Marvin W. Will, a former employee of the State Department, to the author, February 23, 1956. Will expressed no reservations in his frank praise of Wilson's service, stating that he was prejudiced in favor of the "old school" of diplomats.
Wilson's resignation was effective in October of 1913. He continued to follow affairs in Mexico with interest and deplored more and more the blundering policy of President Wilson, the results of which, vindicated his own approach as a servant of the Taft administration. He was occasionally invited to make speeches on conditions in Mexico and was rapidly forced into an unpleasant defense of his own position, even to the extent of suits in court. The fact that he favored Huerta's ascendency at the time of the breakdown of Madero's government led to the implication that he had been darkly involved with Madero's downfall and even his assassination. Those who sympathized with the legitimate demands of the Mexican revolutionaries welcomed such a picture of the reactionary American Ambassador and gave utterances to exaggerated and even patently false versions of his role in Mexico, some through deliberate distortion, others by simply accepting these extreme verdicts without question.

Wilson settled down after 1913, to a rather routine life of business and politics. He served as attorney for the Pantepec Petroleum Company whose president was W. B. Buckley, a close friend. He had presented some problems regarding the oil business to the Mexican government on behalf of Buckley and other oil men while in Mexico and was in a position to be of further service to them. There is ample testimony to the fact that Wilson did not make use of the Embassy in these matters in any improper way. He became associated with,
among other organizations, the League to Enforce Peace headed by ex-President Taft and even presided over the Indiana branch of the League for a while but resigned as a result of dissensions in the leadership in that state. He continued to give advice to congressmen and others who sought it and was called to testify before a congressional committee in 1920, on conditions in Mexico. He was discussed for appointment to another diplomatic post during the Coolidge administration but for some reason the appointment was never made. Except for a few years in California, he lived in his established residence in Indianapolis until his death in 1932.

7 The former Ambassador continued to arouse hostility in his associates. He withdrew from the Indiana Branch of the League to Enforce Peace, telling Taft that the Democratic faction was gaining ascendancy and that more and more of Woodrow Wilson's philosophy was creeping into the League. There were also some Republicans in the leadership in Indiana who felt that (H. L.) Wilson's resignation would be a help instead of a hindrance. Taft Papers (Unassembled); C. C. Michener to Taft, January 27, 1917, and correspondence between Taft and H. L. Wilson.

8 See Who's Who in America, 1932-33. He received the A.M. and LL. D. degrees from Wabash College in 1930 (undoubtedly honorary). He belonged to the Society of Colonial Wars, the Loyal Legion, and the National Institute of Social Sciences of New York; also he was a fellow of the Geographic Society of New York and President of the Society of Caucasian Republics in America.
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Volume 28: 612.00/6376-6625, February 25, to March 14, 1913.

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Volume 30: 612.00/6851-7075, March 24, to April 12, 1913.

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Volume 32: 612.00/7351-7600, May 3, to May 25, 1913.

Volume 33: 612.00/7601-7830, May 24, to June 18, 1913.

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Miscellaneous documents, filed loosely in cardboard cartons, pertaining to the American Embassy in Mexico, 1910-1929:

File 124.0666-124.121/30, (Grounds and Building, c1906-1930).

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File 312.11/731-859, (Box no. 3704).

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File 312.11/1002-1278.

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Records in the Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.:

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Correspondence of Philander C. Knox, Volume 9, October 4, to December 7, 1909; Volume 10, December 21, 1909, to July 10, 1910; Volume 13, January 15, to March 21, 1911, and; Volume 20, December 6, 1912, to May 25, 1914.

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Papers of Woodrow Wilson, File VI (502-509), Box 350.
**Documents: Wilson.** This is a bound volume of miscellaneous papers concerning Henry Lane Wilson. It is the property of Warden McKee Wilson, a son. Besides the published matter, which will be cited elsewhere, it contains a typewritten draft of a speech by Wilson entitled "The Pretext of Idealism in our Mexican Policy," n.d., and a translation of an article from La Tarde, Santiago, Chile, January 2, 1902, describing a spontaneous demonstration in Wilson's honor.

**PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS**

**Facts:** Submitted by the Committee of the American Colony to President Wilson and Secretary of State Bryan relative to the Mexican Situation and the Record of the Honorable Henry Lane Wilson in Connection Therewith; "Copy of a letter addressed to the Honorable Henry Lane Wilson by Mr. George W. Cook, Chairman of the Executive Committee"; "Copy of a cable sent to His Excellency the Honorable Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States. . . .", and; "Copy of the memorandum of the argument placed in the hands of His Excellency the Honorable Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States and His Excellency the Honorable William J. Bryan, Secretary of State by the Committee sent to Washington by the American Colony of Mexico City to request the Washington Government to retain His Excellency the Honorable Henry Lane Wilson as Ambassador to Mexico."


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VITA

The author was born in Coushatta, Louisiana, September 8, 1920, the son of Elmer W. Masingill and Mary Leona Sibley. He attended public schools in Coushatta, Parish of Red River, being graduated from High School in 1937. He entered the United States Army in February, 1942, and attained the rank of Staff Sergeant before receiving an honorable discharge in December, 1945.

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