MEXICO:
THE FORGOTTEN ISSUE OF THE
REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL
CAMPAIGN OF 1916

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
California State College, Hayward

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in History

by
Paul Rinetti
November, 1971
MEXICO: THE FORGOTTEN ISSUE OF THE
REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL
CAMPAIGN OF 1916

by
Paul J. Rinetti

Approved:

Date:

Committee in Charge

11
With Woodrow Wilson's inauguration as President of the United States in 1913, the course of relations between the United States and Mexico underwent a dramatic change. Wilson's predecessor, Republican William Howard Taft, had dealt with turbulent Mexico, a country torn by the violence of military revolution since 1910, with traditional diplomatic methods. Wilson saw the role of the United States as a crusader for liberty and justice and applied this concept to United States-Mexican relations.

The leaders of the Republican Party grew gradually disenchanted with Wilson's application of these diplomatic concepts to Mexico. In April, 1914 Republicans openly broke with the President when he directed the United States Navy to seize the Mexican port of Vera Cruz. For the next two years in Congress and in the press the Republican Party expressed open disagreement with Wilson's foreign policy.

In 1916, a presidential election year, the Republicans and their presidential candidate, Charles Evans Hughes, sought to develop what they saw as Wilson's failures in Mexico into a significant campaign issue. The Democrats responded by questioning Hughes alternatives and intimated that the Republicans desired a military invasion of Mexico.
In the light of horrors of the war in Europe, the American electorate grew more concerned with future peace than past diplomatic errors, and Mexico as a Republican issue ultimately failed.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I. <strong>THE PARTING OF THE WAYS</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II. <strong>THE BREACH WIDENS</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III. <strong>THE ISSUE OF MEXICO IN THE ELECTION OF 1916</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKS CITED</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

In the months prior to Woodrow Wilson's inauguration in 1913, the revolution in Mexico, which began in 1910 and continued in its military phases for a decade, increasingly became an issue of concern in Washington, D.C. as it affected the foreign policy of the United States. President-elect Wilson demonstrated little interest in this Mexican problem. A relatively new political figure, Wilson entered politics in 1910 as a candidate for the governorship of New Jersey. Prior to that time scholarship occupied his concern as he had served as a member of the faculty and as president of Princeton University. Although a professor of political economy Wilson's background offered little practical experience in initiating or directing the foreign policy of the United States. During the lame-duck period following the 1912 national election, while President William Howard Taft served out his term and Wilson prepared to assume the presidency, the differences in their attitudes toward Mexico were evident. Wilson described the affects of the Mexican revolution on the United States as a serious matter but not of such seriousness to direct his attention away from the "really fundamental things", such as, the tariff,
the currency, and the pending extra session of Congress.¹

Taft, meanwhile, recognized the problems in store for Wilson in Mexico even if the President-elect did not. From the outset of the revolution in Mexico, Taft determined not to use force against the southern republic under almost any provocation, and he made no overt or covert attempts to influence the outcome of the revolt. On March 14, 1912, Taft augmented his stand of strict neutrality by issuing an arms embargo to prevent arms from reaching either side in Mexico in the hope that such action would hasten the end of hostilities.² In the light of his experience with Mexico, Taft told friends that he "realized what a difficult thing it would be for the new administration to gather up the reins of government and understand the conditions in the southern republic in a few weeks or a few months."³

Wilson selected William Jennings Bryan as his Secretary of State. In choosing Bryan because of his influence within the Democratic Party, Wilson added little in the way of diplomatic expertise to his cabinet. Bryan's

---


² Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 128-134.

views of international affairs were compatible with those of Wilson. Both men eschewed the traditional approach to foreign policy which based itself upon the promotion of the national interests of the United States and its citizens abroad. Wilson sought to apply to foreign affairs the same basic policy he proposed for domestic affairs: the end of government's use as a tool of special interests and the use of justice as the guiding light of government. He felt that the United States should be concerned with liberty and justice in its dealings with foreign nations and not the desires of investors.4

In applying these general concepts to the particular situation of Mexico, a new policy came into being. Where Taft withheld recognition of President Victoriano Huerta on the condition that "outstanding matters" between the United States and Mexico should first be dealt with "in a satisfactory manner,"5 Wilson viewed recognition as an act of approval. The traditional approach to recognition since


5United States National Archives, Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, Decimal file 812.000/6325A (microfilm).
the time of Thomas Jefferson had been the recognition of de facto foreign regimes. Wilson, in wielding recognition as a moral sword, broke with this tradition, and in Mexico the method of Huerta's rise to power, a coup d'etat resulting in the death of his predecessor, precluded the possibility of the United States recognizing the new government. The goal of Wilson's foreign policy in Mexico became the removal of Huerta and the establishment of a constitutionally formed government. The interests of United States citizens residing in Mexico and their investments became an issue of secondary importance to Washington.6

In Mexico City Henry Lane Wilson, a staunch Republican diplomat who had been appointed Ambassador to Mexico early in the Taft administration, urged the Wilson administration to recognize the Huerta government. The Ambassador, a favorite of the foreign colony in the Mexican capital because of his vigorous support of foreign investors there, rapidly fell into disfavor with the President and Secretary Bryan.7 President Wilson suspected

the United States Embassy of involvement in Madero's overthrow; he opposed the Ambassador's recommendation to recognize Huerta; and he viewed Henry Lane Wilson's support of foreign investors as injurious to the development of Mexican liberty. The ambassador represented the antithesis of Wilson's "missionary diplomacy".

The simple solution, recall of the ambassador and his replacement by a sympathetic appointee, did not constitute a solution for Wilson as appointment of a new ambassador would be considered as an act of recognition of the existing government. To circumvent Washington's dependence upon an unreliable embassy, the administration's novel diplomacy took the unorthodox form of sending special agents into Mexico to act as observers for the President and the Secretary of State. Secretary Bryan sent Reginal Del Valle, a Californian of Mexican extraction, into northern Mexico as a secret agent. Bryan commissioned him to confer with the constitutionalist forces of Carranza and then to proceed to Mexico City. Del Valle failed to keep his mission to Mexico City a secret, and Bryan recalled him. The President sent journalist William Bayard Hale, his campaign biographer

and close friend, as his confidential agent to Mexico City. Hale's qualification lay in his agreement with the President rather than his knowledge of Mexico or diplomacy. Bryan instructed him to pay particular attention to Ambassador Wilson's role in Madero's overthrow. Hale reported the Huerta coup occurred only because of the ambassador's support. The report confirmed the President's suspicions and assured the ambassador's removal.  

Although privately active on the Mexican problem, the President remained publicly silent. His inaugural address on March 4, 1913 made no mention of problems in the southern republic. Aside from his disclosure to the press that Huerta would not be recognized by the United States, Wilson made no position statements. Congress along with the public depended upon press reports for information on Mexico. The arms embargo which President Taft had decreed in March, 1912 remained in effect although it was not publicly reaffirmed.

In June, as Hale arrived in Mexico, Republican unrest over the President's reluctance to inform the Congress of his Mexican policies surfaced in the Senate. Republican Senator Albert B. Fall of New Mexico, long an investor in Mexican ranches and mines, chose the arms embargo as the

---

9Grieb, U.S. and Huerta, pp. 80-82.
issue with which to introduce the Mexican question on the floor of the Senate. Fall proposed the repeal of the joint resolution of Congress of March 14, 1912, which empowered the President to prohibit the exportation of arms and materials of war to Mexico. Although Senator Augustus Bacon, Democratic chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, quickly tabled the measure, Fall used the resolution to open discussion on Mexico and to present State Department figures on the amount of United States' capital invested in Mexico.  

On July 16, 1913, Bryan recalled Ambassador Wilson for "consultations". The next day Fall proposed that the constitutional rights of the citizens of the United States to "the full protection of the United States Government" should go with them throughout the world. Senator John Kern, Democrat of Indiana, opposed the resolution although Fall explained that the measure quoted a plank in the 1912 Democratic platform. Fall argued the need for such a resolution, but he assured the Senate that Mexico was not a

---

10 Congressional Record, 63rd Congress, 1st Session, pp. 2222-2237. Fall set U. S. investment in Mexico at $1,057,770,000. or 43% of the total wealth of Mexico. He listed England at 13%, France at 5%, and Mexico at 32% of the capital wealth invested in Mexico.
partisan issue. The measure was tabled.\textsuperscript{11}

It soon became apparent to the administration that nonrecognition in itself would not topple Huerta, and Wilson's novel diplomacy entered a new stage. Bryan received the resignation of Henry Lane Wilson on August 5. Unable to appoint a new ambassador, control of the embassy fell to the Charge d'Affaires, Nelson O'Shaughnessy. The President sent John Lind, a friend and supporter of Bryan who had served as a member of Congress and as Governor of Minnesota, to Mexico City as his personal representative to act as an advisor to the Embassy. Lind had no experience in diplomatic service, did not speak Spanish, and was an "implacable anti-Catholic".\textsuperscript{12} The President privately instructed him to meet with General Huerta and influence him to accept Wilson's confidential proposal that:

(a) There should be an immediate and scrupulously observed armistice in Mexico.

(b) There should be an early and free election in which representatives of all factions agree to take part.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, 2548-2549, 2591-2600.

(c) General Huerta should bind himself not to be a candidate for President of Mexico.

(d) All parties would agree to abide by the results of the election and cooperate in supporting the new administration.\textsuperscript{13}

Shortly after Lind left for Mexico, Republican concern for conditions in Mexico again became apparent. On August 7, 1913, Senator Clarence Clark, Republican of Wyoming, proposed a resolution which called for "a full and complete investigation of the conditions of American citizens in the Republic of Mexico." Clark complained that while the President had sent his third confidential messenger to Mexico, the Senate remained uninformed on the situation in Mexico and dependent on the press for information. He reminded his colleagues that there was no matter "more important than the protection of American citizens."\textsuperscript{14} Senator Bacon requested that the matter be referred to his committee, feeling it imprudent to discuss affairs in Mexico at a time when the President's personal representative was trying to arrange peaceful results there. When Clark


\textsuperscript{14}Congressional Record, 3171.
remained adamant in pursuing the resolution, Bacon warned that such a resolution might be construed as a partisan attempt to embarrass the President. Clark hastened to reaffirm his support of the President and the matter was tabled.15

Since Lind's mission had no diplomatic status, Huerta refused to receive him, sending Lind instead to the Foreign Minister, Federico Gamboa. The resulting conference ended with Gamboa criticizing the President of the United States for interfering with the sovereignty of Mexico.16

As it became apparent that Lind's mission would not settle matters in Mexico, Republican Senator Boies Penrose of Pennsylvania offered a more bellicose alternative. In a resolution proposed in the Senate on August 21, Penrose included a request that the President place United States troops in Mexico at his discretion for use as a constabulary. Bacon, with the support of Henry Cabot Lodge, the ranking Republican member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, quickly tabled the measure. Republican Senators, including Albert Fall, took the opportunity to reaffirm their support of Wilson's efforts in Mexico. But Senate minority leader, Jacob Gallinger of New Hampshire, expressed

15 Ibid., 3171-3175.
his concern over the administration's secrecy about Mexican affairs. He felt it might be well for the President to "take the Senate into his confidence." 17

Senators Fall, Clark and Penrose proposed their respective resolutions as a response to press disclosures of Wilson's independent action in Mexico. The Senate's Republican minority used the proposed legislation as a method to remind the executive that the Senate desired to be informed and consulted on matters of foreign policy. Their ready willingness to support the President demonstrated that they subscribed to the position that foreign problems should not be transformed into partisan issues. Their purpose, as Gallinger had pleaded, was to gain information.

Wilson soon responded to Gallinger's request. Aware of the Senate's growing unrest as the press reported the failure of the Lind mission, the President gave his first public address on Mexican relations. Speaking before a joint session of Congress on August 27, 1913, Wilson outlined the basis of his Mexican policy. In speaking of the priorities of his administration in dealing with Mexico the President said, "The peace, prosperity, and contentment of Mexico mean more, much more, to us than merely an enlarged

17 Congressional Record, 3567-3570.
field for our commerce and enterprise. They mean an enlarge-
ment for the field of self-government." Further, the
government in Mexico must be "the product of a genuine
freedom, a just and ordered government founded upon law." Wilson, for the first time, publicly revealed the nature of
Lind's mission by disclosing his instructions to his spokes-
man and representative. He admitted its failure, which he
blamed on Mexican misunderstanding of the intentions of the
United States. In the future, the policy of the United
States toward Mexico would be distinguished by patience
and self-restraint. He earnestly urged all citizens of
the United States to leave Mexico at once. Wilson promised
that the United States should aid neither side in the
struggle in the southern republic, and announced publicly
that he deemed it his duty to exercise the authority of the
law of March 14, 1912, which forbade the exportation of arms
or munitions of war from the United States to any part of
the Republic of Mexico.  

Wilson's pronouncement met with restrained approval
from the Republican senators. Senator Wesley Jones of
Washington characterized this reaction in stating, "I am

18 Wilson, New Freedom, p. 45.
19 Ibid., p. 46.
20 Ibid., pp. 48-51.
with the President in any effort to preserve the peace. I may not agree with him in all his methods, but right or wrong he will have my support." Senator Fall was not as generous. While he endorsed the President's desire for peace, Fall disagreed with his remarks concerning citizens residing in Mexico. He felt it the duty of the United States to protect her citizens, and he objected to Wilson's request that they leave their property in Mexico. Henry Cabot Lodge struck a more diplomatic chord by commenting only on the arms embargo and non-intervention, areas in which he agreed with Wilson. Another important Republican voice on foreign affairs, Senator Elihu Root of New York, refused to comment at all. 21

Through the month of September, Washington negotiated with Huerta, encouraging him to yield to a constitutionally elected government. When Huerta announced that elections would be held on October 26, the administration's hopes for an end to the Mexican problem soared. Wilson's dream ended abruptly on October 10 when Huerta imprisoned 110 members of the Chamber of Deputies who voiced opposition to him. Wilson announced that due to this outrageous act the United States would not recognize the outcome of the

In a subsequent speaking tour, the President indicated that his August 27 position of non-involvement would soon give way to a more active and bellicose stance. On October 25 in an address at Swarthmore College, the President stated:

I would like to believe that all this hemisphere is devoted to the same sacred purpose and that nowhere can any government endure which is stained by blood or supported by anything but the consent of the governed.\(^2\)

He called upon the young men of the college and the nation to be prepared for action when he asked:

How many of you will volunteer to carry these spiritual messages of liberty to the world? How many of you will forego anything except your allegiance to that which is right? We die but once, and we die without distinction if we are not willing to die the death of sacrifice.\(^4\)

On the same day, in Philadelphia, he spoke of the United States' duty to spread liberty: "...let us remind ourselves that we are the custodians, in some degree, of the principles which have made men free and governments just."\(^5\)

\(^3\)Wilson, New Freedom, p. 56.
\(^4\)Ibid., pp. 56-57.
\(^5\)Ibid., p. 63.
In a famous address at Mobile, Alabama, on October 27, Wilson outlined in broad terms his Latin American policy. Although he did not specifically mention Mexico, much of what he said applied to the Mexican situation. The President took this opportunity to speak against Latin America's "subordination...to foreign enterprise" and assured Latin Americans that "the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest."26

On October 29, when asked by the press to respond to the President's recent addresses on the foreign policy of the United States, Idaho's Senator William E. Borah, Republican insurgent and member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated that "as a government and as a nation we are without a foreign policy." He described Wilson's actions as "nebulous hesitating, and undefined" and that "our standing with the other countries of this continent is greatly in peril."27 Senator Penrose was more specific in his criticism. He characterized the administration's policies in Mexico as "indifferent" to citizens and "ignorant" of international relationships, particularly citing the use of unofficial representatives like Hale and

26 Ibid., p. 67.
Lind. Penrose opposed intervention but still favored the use of the army as a constabulary "to protect the lives and property of American citizens." 28

Wilson called select members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to the White House on November 9 to discuss his policies toward Mexico. William Borah and Porter McCumber of North Dakota represented the Republicans. In interviews after the meeting both men refused to repeat the President's words but did offer the recommendation that the arms embargo be raised. Borah questioned the wisdom of Wilson's policy toward Huerta as he saw "no responsible person or persons to establish a government in his place." 29

Not all Republicans disagreed with Wilson's policies. In late November, Senator George Sutherland, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from Utah, gave a public statement in which he said, "I sympathize with the attitude of the administration and I believe that the policy that had been adopted by the President will eventually work out..." He specifically agreed with Wilson's views on the recognition of foreign nations. 30 Senator George Oliver of Pennsylvania also expressed support for the administration.

28 Ibid., October 31, 1913.
29 Ibid., November 10, 1913.
30 Ibid., November 20, 1913.
He hoped intervention would not occur but he recalled, "We may squabble among ourselves, but on any question of an outsider we are united and parties are forgotten."  

As 1913 drew to a close, talk of intervention in Mexico by the United States increased. In a speech to the New York Peace Society, ex-President William Howard Taft warned of the detrimental effects intervention would have on the United States. In behalf of Wilson he said, "All that those of us not in the Government can do is to support the hands of the President and the Secretary of State." 

Wilson's meandering policies took another dramatic turn when the changes the President alluded to in his October speeches became fact in February 1914. On February 3, Wilson rescinded the arms embargo with an executive proclamation. The President hoped that strengthening the forces against Huerta would hasten his defeat. But permitting foreign support to the Constitutionalist forces under Venustiano Carranza, Wilson caused Mexican bankers, the landed aristocracy, and the Church to swing their support and power to Huerta.

---

31 Ibid., November 20, 1913.
32 Ibid., December 12, 1913.
33 Wilson, New Freedom, p. 89.
The Republicans reacted to the end of the arms embargo with measured restraint. Henry Cabot Lodge characterized the G.O.P. position in stating to a New York Times reporter, "I would rather not comment on the announcement, but I try to sustain the President in his foreign policy." While Taft urged "all good citizens" to refrain from embarrassing Wilson by criticizing him in this "very difficult situation," Henry Lane Wilson accused the administration of attempting to place a hand-selected candidate as president of Mexico.

A month after Wilson's proclamation, Senator John D. Works, Republican insurgent from California, ended the "gentleman's agreement" which banned criticism of the administration's foreign policy. In a two hour speech before the Senate, Works critically reviewed Wilson's first year as President. The California senator termed his final item of consideration, the administration's Mexican policy, a "dark page in our history." Works was particularly critical of the faulty logic which had directed Wilson's unorthodox foreign policy. The use of private representatives, he felt, "made us as a government look

---

36 Ibid., February 6, 1914.
ridiculous." He further questioned why, if Huerta was just a private citizen, should the Lind mission be sent to him. He termed the President's binding Huerta not to be a candidate as a "highly unreasonable and presumptuous" demand. In addition to being critical of the administration's methods, Works objected to Wilson's failure "to protect our own people down there." 37

Works received support from conservative Senator Fall, who on March 9 delivered a scathing denouncement of the administration. Fall initially criticized Wilson for refusing to furnish the Senate with information on the numbers of citizens of the United States killed in or driven out of Mexico, and he questioned what was being done to protect those remaining. The New Mexican then recalled 63 instances of outrages committed in Mexico against United States citizens residing there. Fall called for the immediate "use of the land and naval forces" of the United States "for the protection of our citizens and other foreigners in Mexico." This occupying force would restore peace to Mexico so that the Mexicans might establish a government "under their own laws and customs, without interference from ourselves or others." Senator Benjamin

---

37 Congressional Record, 4404-4405.
Shively of Indiana, Democratic member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, rebutted Fall, arguing that "the demand for intervention presents no persuasive appeal to the...people of the United States." Ironically, intervention would soon become the Democratic policy. 38

In April, President Huerta remained firmly in control of the government in Mexico City. Wilson's attempts to force his removal by diplomacy and sanctions had failed. On April 9, an event occurred which opened to Wilson the opportunity to use the one method he had been unwilling to use, armed intervention.

On April 9, 1914, a whaleboat flying the American flag left the U.S.S. Dolphin at anchor in the harbor of Tampico to enter the city for the purpose of purchasing fuel. Tampico was under siege by the Constitutionalists. General Ignacio Morelos Zaragoza, in command of the city's defense, had closed certain areas of the city to persons without a pass. Into one of these restricted areas entered the Dolphin's whaleboat. As the boat reached dock, a group of Tamaulipas State Guard troops arrested the American sailors and brought them to Colonel Ramon Hinojosa. Colonel Hinojosa planned to detain them until he could

38 Ibid., 4511-4530.
obtain a release from General Morelos Zaragoza. 39

When Lieutenant Commander Ralph K. Earle, captain of the Dolphin, informed Morelos Zaragoza of the incident, the general apologized for the inexperience of his men and ordered the release of the American sailors whom the Mexicans had detained for about an hour. Rear Admiral Henry T. Mayo, commander of the American fleet at Tampico, rejected the oral apology of General Morelos Zaragoza as insufficient retribution. Admiral Mayo felt that "taking men from a boat flying an American flag was a hostile act not to be excused." Mayo demanded a formal disavowal of and apology for the act, severe punishment for the officer responsible, and a twenty-one gun salute to the American flag which his ship would return. Mayo took this action without the approval of either Washington or his immediate superior at Vera Cruz, Rear Admiral Frank Fletcher. 40

Wilson, who was on a holiday at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, when informed of Mayo's action, concurred stating, "Mayo could not have done otherwise." 41

40 Ibid., pp. 24-28.
41 Grieb, U.S. and Huerta, p. 145.
The President returned to Washington on April 14, adamant in his desire to have the salute fired. On April 15, Wilson called Senators Shively and Lodge and Representatives Henry Flood and Henry Cooper of the congressional committee on foreign affairs to the White House to discuss the impending crisis at Tampico. After informing the group that he "might be obliged to use the Navy and Army," Wilson asked if he should "call on Congress for authority." Although he had the "power undoubtedly to act or take possession of a port for protection of American lives and property without action by Congress," Lodge advised him that since Congress was in session he should ask it for an "authorizing resolution." The President expressed his agreement.

At this time it appeared that Republican sentiment was with the President. To the press Lodge expressed complete approval of the President's actions. He felt the demand for the salute was in accord with the precedent.

---

42 Senator William Stone of Missouri, who was the ranking Democrat and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was ill and Senator Shively filled in as acting chairman and ranking Democrat.

The New York Times states, "Lodge is anxious to show that the Republicans are nearly unanimous in their support of the President." However, insurgents Borah, Works, and George Norris of Nebraska expressed dissent. Borah warned that armed intervention in Mexico would be "the beginning of the march of the United States to the Panama Canal."  

Meanwhile, in Mexico City Charge O'Shaughnessy secured a concession from Huerta, whereby he would agree to a simultaneous Mexican-United States salute at Tampico. When informed of this development on April 18, Wilson rejected the compromise realizing that a salute constituted a form of recognition. Instead, the President answered Huerta with an ultimatum in which he demanded that either Huerta fire a salute by 6 p.m. April 19, or on April 20 Wilson would appear before Congress to request a resolution "to enforce the respect due the nation's flag."  

At this point Republicans began to reassess their support of Wilson. While Republican senators generally had no qualms about intervening in Mexico, they felt the President's

---


45 Baker, Life and Letters, IV, 322.
statement limiting justification to respect for the flag to be insufficient. Senator McCumber, who four days earlier had expressed agreement with Wilson, characterized this attitude by saying, "I do not mind intervention on grounds which justify it, such as the killing of American citizens and the confiscation of their property, but I do not like the present excuse."

On April 18, United States Consul William W. Canada at Vera Cruz cabled Bryan that the German freighter Ypiranga would arrive at the port shortly with two hundred machine guns and fifteen million rounds of ammunition for the Huertista forces. In order to stop delivery of this cargo to Huerta, Wilson decided to occupy Vera Cruz instead of Tampico. Seizure of Vera Cruz had the added benefit of removing from Huerta's control one of his main sources of revenue, the customs house of Mexico's major port. Wilson ordered Mayo to withdraw from Tampico and proceed south to join Fletcher at Vera Cruz.

---


48 Quirk, An Affair of Honor, pp. 69-70; Griebs, U.S. and Huerta, pp. 151-152.
On April 20, the President prepared to deliver his promised address on the Tampico incident to a joint session of Congress. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon, Wilson invited Shively, Lodge, Flood and Cooper to the White House where he read for their approval the message he would give Congress an hour later. In what was a rather brief address, he recounted the grievances against General Huerta and stated that should armed intervention occur, the United States would "be fighting only General Huerta and those who adhere to him." Wilson reassured the Mexican people that the United States had "no thought of aggression or selfish aggrandizement." Lodge thought the message "weak and insufficient." He advised the President "to speak of protection to the lives and property of American citizens." Wilson felt that such grounds "would widen too much and lead to war." Lodge countered that it was "war in any event."

When Wilson delivered the message to Congress, it excited less enthusiasm than expected. The House of Representatives, after a four hour debate, approved the President's proposal with only 37 dissenting votes. In

50 Lodge, Senate and the League, pp. 13-14.
51 New York Times, April 21, 1914.
the Senate, however, approval was more difficult. While the House debated the resolution, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee assembled to discuss Wilson's proposal. Lodge recalled that there was "unanimous" objection by the committee to the President's personal reference to Huerta in his resolution. After discussion there was "general and informal agreement" to an alternate resolution drafted by Lodge with a preamble by Root which set forth "broad international grounds" for intervention. The Senate recessed at six o'clock to await the House's proposal. Wilson, concerned by the length of the debate in the House, came to the Capitol during the recess to urge Democratic senatorial leaders to pass his resolution. The Senate received the House resolution at 9:45 p.m. Shively proposed that it be unanimously accepted, but Lodge objected. The Senate referred the matter to the Foreign Relations Committee and adjourned until 12:10 a.m., April 21.

In committee, Senator Claude Swanson, Democrat of Virginia, offered an amended version of the Lodge resolution

53 Baker, Life and Letters, IV, 327.
54 Congressional Record, 6910.
as a substitute for the House proposal. Swanson's amendment, which eliminated Root's preamble, received the approval of the majority of the committee. Lodge felt that without the preamble the United States was "left to go to war in silence as to the real and only truly justifying international grounds." 55

The Senate assembled at 12:10 and received the committee's amendment. Shively asked for immediate consideration which required unanimous approval. Henry Lippitt, Republican senator from Rhode Island, objected. This would have delayed consideration until April 22, but he agreed to withdraw his objection if the Senate would adjourn until noon. The Democrats agreed to postponement. Lodge introduced the alternative preamble written by Root before adjournment, and the fight was on. 56

At noon, when the Senate reassembled, Lodge took the floor and opened the debate. He declared that intervention must be based on broad and sufficient grounds and defined the Republican position by stating:

If we intervene in Mexico it must be for the protection of American citizens; it must be in the hope that by our intervention we shall try at least to bring back peace and order to that distracted country, for which we have no feeling

56 Congressional Record, 6964.
but one of friendship. It must not be that we go there to take down one man and set up another.57

During the afternoon session, no less than six other Republican senators spoke against the administration's proposal and the direction of Democratic policy toward Mexico. Foreign Relations Committee members Porter McCumber and William Smith of Michigan were vocal in their criticism of the President. McCumber reinforced Lodge's argument, stating, "We cannot afford to make war for a trivial offense."58 Smith attacked the logic which refused to recognize Huerta as anything more than a private citizen and yet would demand a salute from him. The afternoon passed and the Senate, as it recessed at 5:50 p.m., seemed no closer to resolving its debate. Only an amendment by Senator Works calling for the acceptance of the Mexican apology as sufficient retribution had been dealt with and voted down.59

Wilson, who was committed to stopping the delivery of Ypiranga's cargo to Huerta, could not wait for the Senate to conclude its deliberations on the resolution.

57Ibid., 6966.
58Ibid., 6974.
59Ibid., 6978, 6973-6974.
Early on the morning of April 21, Wilson had authorized Admiral Fletcher to seize the customs house at Vera Cruz. By evening, early reports of the resistance encountered by Fletcher and the resultant deaths reached Washington.60

When the Senate reconvened at eight o'clock, the events at Vera Cruz were common knowledge. In a brilliant speech, Elihu Root got to the heart of the matter, analyzing just what Wilson asked the Senate to do. As the seizure of Vera Cruz was already a fact, the Senate was not asked to authorize action, but to justify it. Root rejected as insufficient the justification supplied by the Foreign Relations Committee proposal:

We learn tonight that Vera Cruz has fallen, that four American marines lie dead in that city, and that twenty-one lie suffering from wounds. Is there nothing but this dispute about the number of guns and the form and ceremony of a salute to justify the sacrifice of those American lives?61

Root contended that the alternative amendment introduced by Lodge offered sufficient justification. By recalling the loss of lives and property by citizens of the United States in Mexico, it provided the only grounds broad enough for intervention. Furthermore, it alone illuminated the real purpose for intervention:

60Baker, Life and Letters, IV, 329.
61Congressional Record, 6985-6986.
The real object to be obtained by the course which we are asked to approve is not the gratification of personal pride; it is not the satisfaction of an admiral or a Government. It is the preservation of the power of the United States to protect its citizens...

Democratic rebuttal accused the Republicans of taking "partisan advantage of the situation." For the first time Republican response to this accusation did not entail denials of partisanship or pledges to support Wilson's policies.

Voting on the pending amendments substantiated the indications that "the parting of the ways" had occurred between Democratic and Republican policy toward Mexico. When Lodge's amendment finally came to a vote the Senate defeated it 36 to 47 with only insurgent Republicans Robert La Follette of Wisconsin and Albert Bristow of Kansas voting with the Democrats. La Follette also offered an amendment which stated that the United States had no desire to control Mexico, only to pacify and withdraw. It was also defeated on a strict party line vote 39 to 44.

---

62 Ibid., 6987.
63 Ibid., 6995.
64 New York Times, April 22, 1914.
65 Congressional Record, 7008.
Jacob Gallinger offered two other amendments which attempted revisions of the Foreign Relations Committee proposal. The first, which declared that the President was justified in the employment of armed forces in Mexico to protect American citizens and enforce his demands, received unanimous Republican support but was defeated 40 to 43. The second, which deleted some of the language of the first, met defeat 38 to 45.66

Late in the session the Senate voted on the Foreign Relations Committee draft and passed it by a vote of 72 to 13. The thirteen dissenters were a curious mixture of insurgents and conservatives, but without exception were Republicans.67 Although the Republican minority was unable to stop passage of the administration-supported measure, it did serve notice that intra-party unity had been achieved. Equally important, the Senate fight had signaled that Republican opposition to Wilson's Mexican policy would be open and direct. Republicans would no longer be cowed by accusations of partisanship. Mexico was a partisan issue which would be developed.

66Ibid., 7007

67New York Times, April 22, 1914. The thirteen who opposed the resolution were Brandegee, Conn.; Bristow, Ks.; Dillingham, Vt.; Gallinger, N.H.; La Follette, Wisc.; Lippitt, R.I.; Lodge, Mass.; Norris, Neb.; Oliver, Pa.; Root, N.Y.; Smoot, Utah; Weeks, Mass.; and Works Calif.
The United States gained control of Vera Cruz at a price. Mexican casualties totaled 126 killed and 195 wounded, while the United States suffered 19 dead and 71 wounded. Inspite of the bloodshed, Mexico never saluted the United States flag and Huerta received the arms of the Ypiranga which landed at Puerto Mexico instead of Vera Cruz.68 On April 25, Argentine, Brazilian, and Chilean envoys in Washington offered to mediate the dispute. Wilson eagerly accepted the offer as it presented an honorable means for ending the conflict which cost far more in lives lost than the President envisioned.

CHAPTER II

THE BREACH WIDENS

On April 25, 1914, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile offered to mediate the dispute between the United States and Mexico over the occupation of Vera Cruz. President Wilson accepted the offer the same day. Of the two Mexican factions invited to the conference, President Huerta alone accepted. Venustiano Carranza, while he agreed with the principle of mediation, rejected the mediators' request that he declare a cease-fire and refused to participate. The conference, without Constitutionalist representation, assembled at Niagara Falls on May 20. Wilson viewed the conference as a means of accomplishing what the seizure of Vera Cruz had failed to do - the elimination of Huerta.¹ By May 23, Huerta indicated to the conference his willingness to resign.² Carranza, who would not hear of the Niagara Conference deciding Mexico's future, refused to cooperate with the conference and continued to press the attack

independently.3 On July 1, the participants in the conference signed protocols which provided that the composition of a future provisional Mexican government would be decided in negotiations between the contesting Mexican factions. The United States agreed to recognize this government.4

Huerta, weakened by the loss of Vera Cruz and the continued success of the Constitutionalist forces driving toward Mexico City, resigned the presidency, and on July 15 he left Mexico for exile. On August 20, Carranza triumphantly took control of Mexico City.

Earlier in the year, in May, Pancho Villa and Carranza had agreed to the idea of a convention of revolutionary factions which would choose Huerta’s successor. Villa was determined to gain the presidency for himself and made this evident by undertaking hostilities against Carranza on September 23, three weeks before the convention was to assemble. The Mexican convention met at Aguascalientes from October 12 to November 12, 1914.5 Villa dominated the

meeting and so effectively coerced Carranza with his army that the "First Chief" withdrew. The United States, again the victim of misinformation, viewed these events as indications of an increase in Villa's power and agreed to support the choice of the convention. Pancho Villa, emerging from Aguascalientes as the choice of the convention and with the added respectability of United States support, moved to take the capital. An eminent American historian has observed that in supporting Villa, Wilson "could have made no more unrealistic decision or worse diplomatic blunder." 6

Carranza fled Mexico City for Vera Cruz, recently abandoned by United States forces. While Villa occupied the capital, Carranza continued his opposition and began reorganizing his forces.

Back in the United States in the summer of 1914 the Republican Party looked with anticipation toward the November congressional elections when it might make political hay of the administration's Mexican policies. Upon his return from Europe on June 24, Theodore Roosevelt began the attack in a prepared speech to the awaiting press corps. Roosevelt

described the administration's Mexican policy as a "course wavering between peace and war, exquisitely designed to combine the disadvantages of both." On July 11, in a letter by which he resigned from the position of contributing editor of Outlook, the Colonel indicated that his future plans included active campaigning against the administration's foreign policy, a course which he said resulted in the abandonment of the interest and honor of America."

In July other Republican voices joined Roosevelt in decrying Wilson's Mexican policy. F. W. Mondell, Republican congressman from Wyoming, accused the administration of following a policy "which leads to intervention as certainly and inevitably as though it were thus planned and purposed." In a published article former ambassador to Mexico Henry Lane Wilson, cited no less than seven errors by the Wilson administration in its dealings with Mexico. Outlook reminded its readers that our prime concern in Mexico should not be what

---

8 Theodore Roosevelt, Outlook, July 11, 1914, p. 236.
leader or faction had supremacy, but "how this country may best aid in making Mexico safe for American and other foreign life and property." 11

With the outbreak of World War I in Europe in late July and early August, 1914, the use of Mexico as a campaign issue in the mid-term elections abated. At this time Roosevelt silenced his attacks on the administration's Mexican policy at the request of those candidates for whom he was campaigning. 12 Harper's Weekly offered the opinion that the European war made Mexico an ineffective issue because events in Europe made the country "shudder at what might have happened in Mexico." 13

The November congressional election reduced the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives from 141 to 19. In the Senate, however, there was no change in numerical strength, 53 Democrats, 42 Republicans and 1 Progressive. 14 The Boston Transcript credited Republican

11Outlook, July 25, 1914, p. 690.
success in the election to the people seeing through "Democracy's sham slogans" and realizing that "peace in or with Mexico is a colossal fake." 15

After the election, the Democrats continued their attempt to nullify Mexico as an issue of national concern. In his second annual address to Congress, delivered December 8, 1914, Wilson considered the war in Europe and self government for the Philippines as international issues which should concern the third session of the 63rd Congress, but he did not mention the problems in Mexico. 16

Theodore Roosevelt recognized the need to reopen Mexican affairs as a Republican issue. In a letter to Senator Henry Cabot Lodge he explained his silence on the matter during the campaign, but with the elections passed the Colonel promised that he would "smite the administration with a heavy hand" for its actions in Mexico. 17 In the lead article of the magazine section of the Sunday New York Times he made good his promise, charging that in Mexico Wilson

15 Quoted in "Republican Revival," Literary Digest, November 14, 1914, pp. 937-938.


17 Roosevelt and Lodge, Roosevelt-Lodge Correspondence, II, 449.
had violated the promises of non-interference given at Swathmore and Mobile. While the President had refused to interfere on behalf of his own citizens in Mexico, he had interfered to the extent that he had placed one faction in power in place of another faction. In writing of the seizure of Vera Cruz he said, "...it was entirely purposeless, has served no good object, has achieved nothing, and has been abandoned by President Wilson without obtaining the object because of which it was nominally entered."\textsuperscript{18}

Lodge was pleased with the tone of Roosevelt's article. He revealed that he too had experienced pressure to remain silent during the campaign, but promised now to join Roosevelt in the attack on Wilson and Bryan.\textsuperscript{19} On January 6, 1915, Lodge read Roosevelt's article into the Congressional Record. In the speech which followed he chided the President for failing to consider Mexico in his annual message to Congress. In recounting the course of events in the southern republic from the fall of Diaz to the present, Lodge described the President's commitment to drive Huerta from power as personal animosity, not a

\textsuperscript{18}New York Times, December 6, 1914.

\textsuperscript{19}Roosevelt and Lodge, Roosevelt-Lodge Correspondence, II, 448.
rational policy. With reference to Wilson at the time of Vera Cruz, Lodge contended that the President had two choices. He could have exerted pressure on Mexico through international law, treaties, and the comity of nations, or he could have invaded Mexico with sufficient force to take possession of the country and pacify it. Wilson did neither. The result was chaos, anarchy, and the collapse of the social order which had cost the United States an enormous amount in capital investments and "between one hundred and fifty and two hundred American lives." 20

Senator William Stone of Missouri, Democratic chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, answered Lodge by charging him with the old bugaboo of attempting to make a partisan issue out of a matter of international relations. Senator Borah answered Stone by recalling that during the Taft Administration, Stone had spoken out in favor of intervention. Borah cited appropriate selections from the Congressional Record which revealed that although the President informed Stone that such discussion embarrassed the administration, the Missouri senator ignored the President's request. Thus Stone, himself, was guilty of making a partisan issue of Mexico long

20 Congressional Record, 63rd Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 52, 1016.
before Lodge's speech.21

On January 8 at Indianapolis, Indiana, in a speech to commemorate Jackson Day, Woodrow Wilson delivered an address which proved to be a virulent attack on the Republican Party. The speech, heavy with partisan rhetoric, accused the G.O.P. of, among other things, not having a new idea in thirty years. Even more unusual was the fact that in such an obviously partisan vehicle the President would yield to the mounting pressure and speak about the issue he had worked to keep separate from partisan politics, his policies toward Mexico. With regard to his future course in Mexico, the President said:

The country is theirs. The government is theirs. The liberty, if they can get it, and Godspeed them in getting it, is theirs. And so far as my influence goes while I am President nobody shall interfere with them.22

Wilson also saw fit to criticize the press' growing impatience with "watchful waiting" by saying:

With all due respect to editors of great newspapers, I have to say to them I never take my opinion of the American people from their editorials. So that when some great dailies not very far from where I am temporarily residing thundered with rising scorn at watchful waiting, Woodrow sat back in his chair and chuckled, knowing that he laughs best who laughs last; knowing, in short, what were the temper

21 Ibid., 1057-1059.

22 Wilson, New Freedom, p. 248.
and principles of the American people.\textsuperscript{23}

The Republicans were not long in answering. In the Senate on January 13, Senator William Borah responded to the President with what the \textit{New York Times} termed "the severest criticism of President Wilson's administration yet heard in Congress."\textsuperscript{24} Borah expressed his disapproval with the President for delivering a biased speech "at a time when this country had sore need of united wisdom and patriotism to deal with those matters which have been rendered delicate by reason of foreign conditions." He charged Wilson with making Mexico a partisan issue and reacted to the President's "hands off" pledge by lamenting, "that was not the policy from the beginning." Borah recalled the administration's policies toward Mexico had resulted in death, destruction, and interference, but had not provided for the protection of the lives and property of citizens of the United States residing in Mexico.\textsuperscript{25}

Senator Joseph Robinson, Democrat of Arkansas, demanded of Borah the alternative he would have followed in place of the administration's unacceptable course. Borah

\textsuperscript{23}\textit{Ibid.}


\textsuperscript{25}\textit{Congressional Record}, 1500-1503.
responded by stating that the policy of the United States toward Mexico should be to allow the Mexicans to choose whatever government they wish, but to demand that the lives and property of the citizens of the United States in Mexico be protected. If necessary the United States should be prepared to use force to see to it that these conditions are fulfilled for he felt that there are some things dearer than peace. Borah said, "We cannot have peace, we cannot have honor, unless we are prepared to protect our own citizens." 26

Theodore Roosevelt continued to use magazine pieces to attack the administration's Mexican policies. In an article on preparedness in Everybody's Magazine, the Colonel characterized Wilson as "the great apostle of pacifism and antimilitarism." He showed the irony in this description by recalling that Wilson "invaded a neighboring state, with which he himself insisted we were entirely at peace, and occupied the most considerable seaport of the country." Roosevelt asserted that "in all our history there has been no more extraordinary example of queer infirmity of purpose in an important crisis" and that this invasion of Mexico "had not accomplished one single thing." 27

26Ibid.
The press' impatience with "watchful waiting," which the President had mentioned in his Jackson Day address, continued to grow. The Independent, long a supporter of "watchful waiting," criticized that Wilson "has repeatedly, tho spasmodically, acted in quite another way." In demonstrated a growing agreement with Borah's program by advocating "a broad, clear-sighted, firm program for the protection of American and international interests in Mexico." The editor of the North American Review, Colonel George Harvey, also expressed displeasure with the speech which he termed "ill-timed and ill-judged." Harvey warned that in the light of the fervor of the Republican attack, "the Republican team has yet to be convinced that the President's chuckle at the prospect of laughing last is fully warranted."  

---


29 George Harvey had supported Woodrow Wilson's political career since 1906. In that year he influenced the New Jersey Democratic organization to consider Wilson as a candidate for governor. Harvey supported Wilson for president in 1912 but became an outspoken critic of Wilson after his election. Wilson's Mexican policies played an important role in Harvey's transformation from supporter to critic.

In the March issue of *Metropolitan*, Theodore Roosevelt again attacked the logic of a foreign policy which would refuse to shed the blood of American soldiers "to protect American citizens and put a stop to anarchy and murder", but would shed their blood "to put one bloodstained bandit in the place of another bloodstained bandit." The President's promise of inaction, Roosevelt warned, will allow bandits to continue their pillage of the week and helpless.\(^{31}\)

On February 22, 1915, Republican Senator Albert B. Fall of New Mexico recommended to the Senate that the United States should send a police force to Mexico to enforce the recommendations made by A.B.C.\(^{32}\) observers. He said that this force should preferably be organized with the support and assistance of the A.B.C. powers, but the United States should be prepared to police Mexico alone if necessary. This proposal met with no Democratic response. Fall further criticized the President and the Secretary of State for failing to understand the threat to peace in this

---


\(^{32}\)Argentine, Brazil, and Chile.
The Sixty-third Congress finished its labors and adjourned on March 3, 1915. Without the rostrum which the Senate provided, Republican leaders kept the Mexican issue alive by delivering political addresses on the subject throughout the country. In a speech before the Burgess Corps in New York City on March 24, Senator Reed Smoot of Utah described Wilson's Mexican policy as a "rank failure." He declared that at the time of the occupation of Vera Cruz the Government at Washington should have gained military control of the country to restore peace and order. Instead, the President replaced Huerta with another cutthroat.

On April 5, Progressive Republican Senator Albert Cummins of Iowa delivered a political address of a similar vein at Denver, Colorado. He charged that the "Administration blundered in its Mexican policy by proceeding on the theory that it could force an election and a stable Government in Mexico." He stated that Mexican leaders were "nothing but

---

33Congressional Record, 4275, 4283.
34The Burgess Corps of Albany, New York, was described by the New York Times as "one of the oldest military organizations in the country."
bandits" and the President's "indefinite policy" has aided them. 36

In May, 1915, it appeared that the war in Europe would become the dominant foreign affairs issue in the United States. On May 7, a German submarine torpedoed and sank the British passenger liner Lusitania which resulted in the death of 128 Americans. In the midst of the public outcry which followed this tragic event, Senator Borah contrasted the sinking of the Lusitania with the course of events in Mexico. Borah stated, "...to my mind the sinking of a steamship of a foe upon which happens to be found American citizens is by no means to be compared with the act of hunting out, robbing, assaulting, and murdering American citizens in a neighboring country." He further reminded the nation that more citizens had been killed in Mexico than had died on the Lusitania, and urged a bold policy which would not allow citizens to be murdered. 37

In Mexico, meanwhile, the situation continued to change. Carranza's Constitutionalist forces, under the command of General Alvaro Obregon, continued to grow stronger. In the United States, President Wilson, who had pledged his neutrality on events in Mexico in his address at

36 Ibid., April 6, 1915.
37 Ibid., May 9, 1915.
Indianapolis, decided he needed more information about the direction of the revolution. In early February he commissioned Duval West of San Antonio, Texas, a former United States Attorney, to go to Mexico to act as his "secret agent" and observe conditions in the southern republic. Between April 6 and April 15 two crucial battles raged between the forces of Villa and Carranza at Celaya. The result was a decisive defeat for Villa. West somehow missed the significance of the outcome of events at Celaya. He reported to Wilson that no faction was strong enough to gain control of the country and establish order.38

Acting upon this inaccurate advice, Wilson again revised his policy toward Mexico. The President, in a statement to the press on June 2, declared incorrectly that "Mexico is apparently no nearer a solution of her tragical troubles than she was when the revolution was first kindled." In considering future action, Wilson abandoned the position of complete neutrality he had pledged at Indianapolis in January. In what amounted to a complete reversal of policy, the President threatened the factions in Mexico accordingly:

---

I, therefore, publicly and very solemnly, call upon the leaders of factions in Mexico to act, to act together, and to act promptly for the relief and redemption of their prostrate country. I feel it to be my duty to tell them that, if they cannot accommodate their differences and unite for this great purpose within a very short time, this Government will be constrained to decide what means should be employed by the United States in order to help Mexico save herself and serve her people.39

The resignation of Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan in early June further affected the course of future policy toward Mexico.40 Senator Fall, a constant critic of the Secretary of State, commented that Bryan's resignation would indicate to other nations that the United States "no longer is bluffing." He urged that former senator and secretary of state Elihu Root be selected as Bryan's successor.41 Wilson, however, chose Robert Lansing, a Counselor for the State Department with long experience in the practice of international law, to replace him. Where Bryan had supported Wilson's initiatives, Lansing proved to be more vigorous and independent in directing Mexican


40 Bryan resigned as Secretary of State due to a controversy with Wilson over a note to Germany about the sinking of the Lusitania.

He organized a conference composed of representatives from the United States, the A.B.C. countries, Guatemala, and Uruguay to meet in August to discuss the problem of Mexico. On August 11 this group addressed itself to all generals, governors, and other leaders known to be exercising civil or military authority in Mexico. They called for these people to meet to mediate their differences for the purpose of organizing a provisional government and preparing for a general election. 43

In commenting on this pronouncement, the North American Review's editor, Colonel George Harvey, stated that the "very short time" which Wilson referred to on June 2 ended on August 8 "the date of our second formal intervention" in Mexico. In a scathing paragraph Harvey summarized the Republican argument with Wilson's Mexican policy thusly:

Nobody has ventured, and none now would venture, to question the excellence of President Wilson's intentions. Throughout all of his backing and filling, his repeated intervening without making his interference effectual, his alternating laying and lifting embargoes, his vague threatenings promptly rendered abortive by assurances that he would not employ force, his subsequent using of the army and navy upon an absurd pretext, only to withdraw them at the moment when a restraining

42 Link, Wilson and the Progressive Era, p. 133.
43 Wilson, New Freedom, pp. 359-360.
influence was most needed; his petulant defying of public journals which were only performing their duty, his prospective chuckling as the one who laughs last, his cynical abandoning of both Mexican and American to their fate because, forsooth, Europeans also were spilling blood, his strident pledging to leave the tortured country alone and to compel all others to do likewise, only to resume meddling as soon as a disfavored faction seemed likely to gain ascendancy - throughout all of these turnings, twistings, and incredibly inconsistent doings there has never arisen a doubt of the sincerity of his purpose to "serve Mexico" and to "serve mankind." 44

During September in addresses around the country, various Republican spokesmen upbraided the administration's policies in Mexico. On September 6 in a speech before the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, William Howard Taft charged that the policy followed in Mexico had dragged on to the detriment of all concerned. On the nineteenth, Senator William Smith of Michigan delivered a preparedness address which scored the administration for not enforcing the embargo on arms for Mexico. In St. Louis on September 28, Senator John Weeks, of Massachusetts claimed that the people were silent on Mexico because they did not want to embarrass the President; not because they supported him. 45

By October it was apparent in Washington that Carranza's power in Mexico had grown considerably stronger while that of his adversaries had weakened. On October 19 the United States in conjunction with eight Latin American countries agreed to recognize Carranza and all of the states involved expressed confidence in his ability to create a stable Mexican government. At the same time, Secretary Lansing announced an embargo on shipments of munitions of war from this country to Mexico. 46

From October to December, 1915, it appeared as though Wilson had effectively disarmed the concern of the nation on the issue of Mexico. On December 7, in his first speech before the newly assembled Sixty-fourth Congress, the President delivered his annual address to the Congress. Unlike the annual address of the previous year, Wilson spoke directly on the subject of Mexico. He revealed the confidence he felt in the success of his foreign policy by asserting the opinion that the United States had stood the test of Mexico. In considering the future he promised to aid and befriend Mexico but not to coerce her. He also lauded the success and heralded the future of Pan-Americanism

in dealing with the hemisphere's problems.\textsuperscript{47}

Congress reconvened from its holiday recess on January 4, 1916. On the following day, Senator Fall, responding to the administration's nomination of Henry P. Fletcher\textsuperscript{48} as ambassador to Mexico, attempted to revive the Mexican issue. Fall offered a ten-point resolution which requested that the President inform the Senate of conditions in the southern republic. Among other things, he specifically questioned what government existed in Mexico and what assurances it had made for the safety of the lives and property of citizens of the United States. In the discussion which followed, Fall charged that the President had "dared to ignore the coordinate branch of the Government, the Congress of the United States...in almost every instance."

Senator Lodge also questioned the President's secrecy and asked, "Where is our ambassador going?" The Democrats, led by Senator Stone, refused to challenge the Fall resolution, and it passed without opposition.\textsuperscript{49}


\textsuperscript{48}Henry P. Fletcher, the former ambassador to Chile, was confirmed as ambassador to Mexico on February 25, 1916.

\textsuperscript{49}Congressional Record, 64th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 53, 501 and 590-603.
Any hope Wilson may have had of avoiding another confrontation with the Republicans over Mexico ended abruptly with news of new atrocities south of the Rio Grande. Reports indicated that on January 12, 1916, Villista forces had assassinated sixteen United States citizens at Santa Ysabel, Chihuahua. The news left the Senate shaken. Regular business was suspended to allow discussion of events in Mexico. Senate minority leader Jacob Gallenger called for the end of "watchful waiting" and advised that "our Government should take summary means to protect the lives of American citizens in that ill-fated country." Senator Borah was more explicit. He stated if Carranza were unable to provide immediate protection for "American citizenship in Mexico" the United States should "intervene in Mexico for the purpose of protecting American rights and American citizens."

In the press the following day Theodore Roosevelt called for the United States to send the regular army under the command of General Leonard Wood to Mexico to protect Americans living there. He blamed the outrages committed there on Wilson's policy of "watchful waiting."
When the subject of Mexico came up on the Senate calendar on January 14, normally passive Republican Senator John Works of California offered a three-point resolution. It authorized and directed the President to intervene in Mexico, it pledged protection for the lives and property of United States citizens there, and it proposed that United States forces remain there until a stable and efficient government was established. Response was forthcoming from both Senator Stone and Senator J. Hamilton Lewis of Illinois. Stone charged that the Republicans were embarking on a dangerous adventure in striving to make the tragedy in Mexico a subject of partisan politics. Lewis also charged partisanship and offered an alternative resolution. He proposed that the President be authorized and empowered to order the army to Mexico to cooperate with a Mexican force there which the President determined appropriate for the purpose of defending United States citizens. Both resolutions were referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. On January 18, Republican Henry Lippitt of Rhode Island offered a resolution in the Senate that authorized and instructed the President to use the Army and Navy of the United States to protect American lives and property in Mexico. Stone responded critically to Lippitt's bellicose attitude and expressed the hope that his position was not characteristic of the Republicans. This resolution was also referred to
the Foreign Relations Committee.\textsuperscript{52}

On February 2 in a preparedness speech at Kansas City, President Wilson spoke in favor of increased army strength for the purpose of preventing bandits from raiding across the border of Mexico into the United States.\textsuperscript{53}

Wilson's request proved prophetic as Villa continued to be a thorn in the President's side. On March 9, Villa's forces raided the town of Columbus, New Mexico, killing nineteen Americans.

The following day, Senators Porter McCumber, Republican of North Dakota, and Albert Fall introduced resolutions on the Columbus raid. McCumber asked the Senate to direct the President "to hunt down and destroy the murdering bands" and to "use any force necessary" to overcome opposition by Mexico from carrying out this purpose. Senator Fall, meanwhile, called for the Senate to "authorize and direct" the President to "use the land and naval forces of the United States and to call into service 500,000 volunteers" to protect the lives and property of citizens of the United States and to establish a constitutional government

\textsuperscript{52}Congressional Record, 1060-1069; 1188-1191.

in Mexico. Senator Stone effectively halted further discussion of the matter by objecting to immediate consideration of the resolutions. The cabinet was in session that morning and Stone hoped to delay Congress until the President could offer recommendations.

That evening, February 3, 1916, the State Department informed the press that "An adequate force will be sent at once in pursuit of Villa with the single object of capturing him and putting a stop to his forays." The statement further promised to respect the sovereignty of Mexico and to act with the aid of the constituted authorities in Mexico. On March 15, a "punitive expedition" under the command of Brigadier General John J. Pershing crossed the border near El Paso, Texas, in search of Pancho Villa.

The Mexican issue, which appeared to have been minimized in the last months of 1915 blazed anew as the presidential election year began. Not only did citizens of the United States in Mexico and their property continue to be

---

54 Congressional Record, 1060-1069; 1188-1191.


the victims of Mexican violence, but Mexican bandits had attacked and killed Americans in the United States. The Republican Party, which remained divided on many important issues, hoped to exploit the Mexican issue as it provided an area on which all factions of the Party agreed and in which Wilson's constantly changing policies had failed miserably. Wilson had failed to bring peace or a constitutional government to Mexico; he had failed to protect American citizens there; his Vera Cruz intervention had not achieved the desired results; and in the important political year of 1916 he again deployed the armed forces of the United States on foreign soil. Having found a common issue, the Republicans looked forward to the task of finding a candidate who could defeat Wilson.
CHAPTER III

THE ISSUE OF MEXICO IN THE ELECTION OF 1916

In the early months of 1916 the Republican presidential campaign began to take shape. It came as no surprise to observers of the political scene that the main Republican thrust in the preconvention period came in the area of foreign policy with emphasis on Mexico, the issue on which President Wilson appeared most vulnerable. In major political addresses, two nationally prominent Republicans sought to exploit three years of active disagreement with the President's policies toward Mexico by focusing on those policies and the Democratic administration which had initiated them.

On February 15, 1916, the distinguished former senator from New York, Elihu Root, acting as temporary chairman of an unofficial convention of the Republican Party of New York, delivered an address which the New York Times characterized as the "keynote of the national campaign" before a capacity audience at Carnegie Hall. In a speech reminiscent of his note-worthy address during the Vera Cruz crisis, Root delivered a blistering attack on Wilson's

\[\text{1New York Times, February 16, 1916.}\]
indecisive and inconclusive course in Mexico. In Root's estimation Wilson had two duties toward Mexico: first, to use his powers as president to secure protection for the lives and property of Americans in Mexico and to require that the rules of law and stipulations of treaties should be observed by Mexico towards the United States and its citizens; and second, to respect the independence of Mexico by not interfering in Mexican internal affairs, except as he was justified for the protection of American rights. Root accused Wilson of having failed to uphold either principle. In recalling the April, 1914, events at Vera Cruz, Root demonstrated that the President interfered in the internal affairs of Mexico when he brought about President Huerta's removal. Wilson's destruction of the established Mexican government led to a state of anarchy which left citizens of the United States living in Mexico at the mercy of roving bands of bandits. He stated that the "Administration at Washington shares responsibility with the inhuman brutes with whom it made common cause" for the sufferings of Americans in Mexico, because:

It is not by force of circumstances over which we had no control, but largely because the American administration intervened by force to control the internal affairs of that country instead of asserting and maintaining American rights that we have been brought to our present
Root concluded that had the United States intervened to protect her citizens, rather than to overthrow Huerta, she would have been opposed but she would have been understood and respected.

Following the lead of Elihu Root's well received speech, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge spoke before the Republican Club of Lynn, Massachusetts, on March 16. In a speech announcing his candidacy for reelection, Lodge took the occasion to recall the recent Mexican raid on Columbus, New Mexico, and he assailed Wilson as Root had a month earlier. Lodge maintained that the tragedy at Columbus "commands our attention above all." He laid the blame for American deaths in Mexico and more recently at Columbus on the administration's "failure to protect Americans in their rights." He summarized the effectiveness of Wilson's policies toward Mexico in stating, "The present administration found Mexico and Mexican relations in bad condition. They have made these conditions infinitely worse."3

Senator Albert Fall of New Mexico continued to use the Senate floor as a rostrum for attacks on Wilson's

---

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., March 17, 1916.
Mexican policies. In oratory which became increasingly more partisan, he charged on May 17 that the Democratic administration had suspended the border patrol at Columbus, New Mexico, at the request of Carranza government prior to the Villa raid. The accusation met with no response.4 On June 2 he delivered one of his periodic addresses on the failure of Wilson's policies toward Mexico and renewed the charge that the administration was derelict in protecting the rights of citizens.5

As the time for the national convention approached, the Republican Party appeared to have done much to heal the wounds which had resulted from the party division in 1912. All factions of the party stood unified in their dissatisfaction with the Mexican policy of Woodrow Wilson and anticipated the exploitation of this issue in the coming campaign. The preelection period saw a multitude of potential presidential candidates narrow down to three as Republicans made ready to assemble in Chicago. The outstanding candidates for the nomination were Theodore Roosevelt, Elihu Root, and Charles Evans Hughes.

By the late spring of 1916 it became evident that Roosevelt had little chance of gaining the Republican

---

4 Congressional Record, 64th Congress, 1st Session, 8134.
5 Ibid., 9167.
nomination. The conservative elements of the party were not quick to forget the damage which Roosevelt's Progressive movement had done in 1912. In 1916 the Republicans, Roosevelt included, wanted to avoid another self destructive party division. There was some thought that though unable to gain the nomination for himself, Roosevelt might be able to control the party's choice. As a bargaining point he could offer the support of the remnants of his Progressive Party which was meeting in convention in Chicago at the same time as the Republicans. The Colonel, however, was not inclined toward either Root or Hughes, and his suggestion of Henry Cabot Lodge to the Republican mediators drew little support from either side.6

Elihu Root, whose age of 71 years hindered his candidacy, had also been marked by the party split of 1912. Because he had supported Taft and the party regulars, Root lacked Progressive support, and like Roosevelt, he would be a divisive rather than a unifying candidate. There was also fear that Root would not be a very strong national candidate. As a New York lawyer retained as counsel by several corpor-

ations, he was identified with the country's large business interests. This factor limited his appeal to reform and rural groups.  

Of the three men only Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes was a unifying candidate. As a member of the Supreme Court he had avoided the intra-party fight of 1912. The Progressive saw him as one of their own on the basis of Hughes' actions as governor of New York from 1906 to 1910. He was equally acceptable to the conservatives. Remembered as a strong campaigner and willing to accept the candidacy, he was favored to win the nomination.  

On June 7, 1916, Senator Warren Gamaliel Harding of Ohio, officiating as temporary chairman, opened the Republican National Convention with the keynote address. In a speech which covered both domestic and foreign policy, Harding spoke briefly but critically of Wilson's policy toward Mexico. He said, "...history will write Mexico as the title to the humiliating recital of the greatest fiasco


in our foreign relations."^9

On the third day of the convention the Platform Committee, headed by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, presented the assembly with the product of its work. After some small debate the convention accepted the committee's platform without revision. Mexico was given high priority. The first plank was a statement on the protection of the rights of American citizens at home, abroad and on the seas. This was a direct response to the Democrats' failure to protect American rights in Mexico. After offering sympathy to the Mexican people for the hardships they were suffering because of their revolution, Lodge's committee assailed the administration on the same two points Root had made in February. Specifically, these were the administration's interference in the domestic affairs of Mexico and its failure to act in behalf of citizens of the United States in Mexico after promoting the conditions which caused their plight. The final statement of the plank was a pledge to protect the lives and property of the United States citizens residing there.10

---


On June 10 on the third ballot the convention nominated Charles Evans Hughes as the Republican Party's candidate for President of the United States. Hughes immediately telegraphed his acceptance of the nomination and sent Wilson his resignation from the Supreme Court. The convention chose Charles W. Fairbanks of Indiana, former Vice President under Roosevelt, as its candidate for vice president.  

The Democrats assembled in convention in St. Louis on June 14, 1916. Both the temporary chairman, former Governor Martin H. Glynn of New York, and the permanent chairman, Senator Ollie M. James of Kentucky, in their respective keynote addresses attempted to defend the Wilson administration's Mexican policy. In Glynn's speech, an extremely stirring address, the audience interrupted numerous times with outbursts of emotional applause. Only when he spoke of Mexico did the former governor fail to captivate the crowd. They listened silently as he placed responsibility for the Mexican situation with the administration of William Howard Taft. In speaking of Vera Cruz he insisted that the United States occupied the port "to punish an insult to the flag." The following day both

Senator James and William Jennings Bryan agreed with Glynn's assessment of Taft's responsibility for the Mexican situation. On June 16 the chairman of the Committee on Platform and Resolutions, Senator Willism J. Stone, reported the platform to the convention. The platform, actually the work of Woodrow Wilson, dealt briefly with Mexico in its eighth plank and praised the President for resisting pressure to intervene in Mexico. The convention renominated Woodrow Wilson by acclamation and renominated Thomas R. Marshall for the vice presidency, and both accepted.

During the period between the end of the convention and the beginning of the presidential campaign, Charles Evans Hughes prepared for the ordeal which lay before him. Aware of the necessity of cementing relations with dissident Progressives, Hughes met with Roosevelt, who gave the candidate his unqualified endorsement. Hughes also faced the task of making his first important decision, the selection of a campaign manager. Hoping to avoid offending

---


any faction, he chose a political unknown, William R. Willcox, a man with no experience in managing a national campaign. The Willcox appointment proved to be Candidate Hughes' first major mistake. On the subject of Mexico he sought and received qualified advice. Henry Cabot Lodge urged Hughes to gear his campaign to take the offensive against Wilson's foreign policy. In late July, former ambassador to Mexico Henry Lane Wilson met with Willcox. In reporting this meeting the press speculated that Mexico would be "one of the paramount issues of the Presidential campaign." Willcox assured the press that "Mexico was certainly to become a most important issue." 

Speculation on the role Mexico would play in the Republican campaign ended on the night of July 31, 1916 as the Republican campaign for the presidency officially began. On the night, Charles Evans Hughes delivered his official speech of acceptance in New York City before a capacity audience at Carnegie Hall. After an introduction by Senator Harding, Hughes began his campaign with an address that embraced the Mexican issue, which the Republicans had been

15 Pusey, Hughes, p. 335.
developing since April, 1914, and presented it as a major campaign issue. In a speech designed to cover both the domestic and foreign issues of the campaign fully one quarter dealt specifically with Mexico.

Hughes attacked the Mexican policy of the Wilson administration on three levels: its policy aimed at overthrowing the Huerta government, its failure to protect the lives and property of United States citizens in Mexico, and its vacillating character on arms embargoes and intervention. To strengthen his argument, Hughes cleverly used statements by Democrats to substantiate his accusations. On the question of Huerta, Hughes quoted Secretary of War Newton D. Baker as saying, "We did not go to Vera Cruz to force Huerta to salute the flag. We went there to show Mexico that we were in earnest in our demand that Huerta must go." To show the failure of the administration in protecting American lives and property, Hughes quoted the Democratic platform of 1912 which pledged that:

The constitutional rights of American citizens should protect them on our borders, and go with them throughout the world, and every American citizens residing or having property in any foreign country is entitled to and must be given the full protection of the United States Government, both for himself and his property.

In recalling the damage done to American lives and property in Mexico, Hughes cited a letter written by Secretary of
State Robert Lansing on June 20, 1916, which characterized the treatment of United States citizens there as being one of "atrocity after atrocity." To emphasize his charge of vacillation, Hughes referred his audience to Wilson's many changes in policy on arms embargoes, his vacillating policy toward Villa, and his interference in Mexican affairs while decrying interference. Hughes concluded his remarks on Mexico by calling for "a new policy, a policy of firmness and consistency through which alone we can promote an enduring friendship." 17

This first speech of the Republican campaign set the tone for a series of speeches which followed. By design it was highly critical of Wilson's policies while it offered little in the way of concrete alternative. Senator Lodge encouraged Hughes to continue in this approach. He wrote, "It is not our business, as the opposition party out of power, to construct bills and frame policies...Our business is to drive from power the present Administration, and that must be done by attack." 18

The Republican campaign's emphasis upon Mexico did not go unnoticed by the Democrats. Presidential advisor

17 Republican Campaign Textbook, pp. 4-8.
18 Garraty, Lodge, p. 326.
Colonel Edward M. House viewed the election year with some apprehension. In the East he saw strong sympathy for Hughes over the Mexican issue, but he also thought that although Americans could be excited by foreign affairs they voted in accordance with domestic interests. House believed Wilson's record to be strongest on matters relating to domestic policy and the many reforms sponsored by the President. Following Hughes' acceptance speech, House advised Wilson to answer Hughes' charges on Mexico, and specifically to question what the Republican candidate proposed to do to get a stable government in Mexico. 19

President Wilson decided against responding directly to Hughes. For one thing, he did not intend to begin his campaign until September. The position of Democratic spokesman fell to Senator James Hamilton Lewis, who in the Senate on August 5 delivered the Democratic response to Hughes' acceptance speech. Seeking to defend the President's policy of non-recognition of Huerta, Lewis stated that it was not as simple a matter as the Republicans now claimed, or surely Taft would have recognized Huerta himself rather than passing the responsibility to Wilson. He attempted to put the Republicans on the defensive by charging them

with responsibility for the Columbus raid. He reasoned that only after "...Republican generals shot at the President of the United States did the murderers in Mexico shoot at the soldiers of the President and kill Americans in America." Finally, he followed Colonel House's suggestion and demanded to know, "What would Justice Hughes do? What would he have done in the matter of Mexico?" 20

Senator Fall responded to Lewis by calling his speech a "political harangue" and pointing out that Lewis failed to consider the Democrats' failure to protect United States citizens, in violation of their 1912 platform. 21

A week after his acceptance speech, Hughes embarked on his first tour of the campaign, and an ambitious if not exhaustive itinerary lay before him. It called for the candidate to whistle stop his way from New York to Seattle, then down the Pacific Coast to San Diego, and finally to return to New York by way of Denver.

In Detroit on August 7, Candidate Hughes, now officially on the Republican stump, delivered his first speech of the campaign tour to a capacity audience in Arcadia Hall. As he had in his acceptance statement, the candidate laid heavy emphasis on the administration's

---

20 Congressional Record, 12139-12145.
21 Ibid., 12146-12148.
mishandling of the Mexican situation. In what was to become a standard procedure on the tour, Hughes criticized Wilson's policy toward Huerta. He asserted that the Republican position would have been that the United States had the right to withhold recognition but not the right to interfere in what could only be termed the internal affairs of Mexico. Concerning the citizens of the United States living in Mexico, he stated that our policy should be characterized as determined rather than meddlesome or militaristic. He challenged Wilson's measures as being half-hearted and ineffective. To prove his accusation Hughes cited Pershing's expedition into Mexico in search of Villa and charged that the limitations which Wilson placed on the force had doomed it to failure. In his strongest statement to that date, Hughes insisted that the citizens of the United States living in Mexico and their property "must be protected and it will be done."\textsuperscript{22}

Hughes made subsequent statements on Mexico in speeches delivered at Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and Coeur d'Alene. In Chicago on August 8, Hughes indicted the wrongheaded policies of an administration which brought anarchy to Mexico and made American citizens the prey of the ravages of revolution. He repeated the promise that a

\textsuperscript{22}New York Times, August 8, 1916.
Republican administration would protect American rights. In St. Paul the following night, Hughes reiterated his charges, laying particular emphasis on the role that the administration's vacillation over arms embargoes had in bringing about anarchy in Mexico. He charged that this failure to implement a consistent policy had caused citizens at home and in Mexico to suffer loss of life and property. On August 14 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Hughes attacked two of Wilson's favorite slogans: "Too proud to fight" and "He kept us out of war." Hughes stated that he was not too proud to fight, but fighting over a salute or a technical arrest for which an apology had been received was unreasonable. Yet the United States under the leadership of Woodrow Wilson fought a war with Mexico for these very reasons.

In San Francisco on August 18, candidate Hughes insisted that with regard to Mexico the primary obligation of the United States lay in the protection of the lives and property of her citizens residing in the southern republic. He applied this doctrine to the totality of United States foreign relations by stating that a citizen

23Ibid., August 9, 1916.
24Ibid., August 10, 1916.
should have the power of the United States government behind him to protect him anywhere in the world. On August 21 in San Diego, a city particularly concerned about United States policy toward Mexico because of its proximity to the border, Hughes repeated this demand for the protection of the rights of citizens. He coupled this with a statement on the need to rebuild Mexican-American friendship. He said that the United States must be willing to aid Mexico in her plight, but she should understand that American lives and property "are going to be safeguarded." Hughes entered California at an inopportune time. With the state's primary campaign in its final days, factional strife between California's Progressives and Conservatives was at a fever pitch. The national candidate did nothing to heal the rift, and if anything, because of the ineptitude of his staff, jeopardized his own position by his very presence.

26San Francisco Chronicle, August 19, 1916.
28In The California Progressives (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951), George Mowry argues against the charge of the Los Angeles Times that Hughes lost California in 1916 because Hiram Johnson sold out the Republican Party. See pages 269-277 for a discussion of other causes for Hughes' loss of California, not the least of which was the Republican candidate himself.
After leaving California, Hughes completed his first campaign tour with speeches in the same vein. Mexico continued to be the most consistent Republican issue until Hughes returned to New York.

On August 31, another Republican voice spoke out on Mexico. Charles W. Fairbanks, the party's candidate for the vice presidency, delivered his acceptance speech at his home in Indianapolis, Indiana. Fairbanks stated that although it was an American tradition to accept and support the President's foreign policy, Wilson's policy toward Mexico necessitated that this tradition be suspended. He had put the country's patience to the test, Fairbanks contended, and the free hand he had been granted to conduct foreign affairs had resulted in failure. Fairbanks sought to discredit the Democratic campaign slogan "He kept us out of war" by stating that it was easy to avoid a war when no one wanted to fight you. In spite of this lack of opponents, Wilson managed to involve the country in war with Mexico, the result of United States aggression.29

In a major political address, Theodore Roosevelt entered the campaign on Hughes behalf and attacked the administration's Mexican policy with an exuberance unparalleled by other Republican spokesmen. On August 31

Colonel Roosevelt addressed a standing-room-only crowd in the city auditorium in Lewiston, Maine. While the speech also dealt with other subjects, fully one half of it was concerned with Mexico. In oratory that was at once more colorful and vehement than Hughes', the Colonel lashed the administration in stating that by recognizing Carranza, Wilson "...had not merely kissed the hand that slapped him in the face. He kissed that hand when it was red with the blood of American men, women, and children." In reply to the administration's claim of avoiding war, Roosevelt stated that fewer lives had been lost in the Spanish-American War than in Wilson's peace with Mexico, and that "peace rages as furiously as ever."30

Roosevelt accused Wilson of taking refuge in "platitudes about peace, non-intervention, and humanity" while disinterestedly watching over the fortunes of Americans in Mexico. Roosevelt saw Pershing's expedition as a typical example of the implementation of Wilson's policy. The President sent an army into Mexico to get Villa dead or alive, and the army returned having accomplished neither.31

After Roosevelt's speech, observers questioned how Hughes, whose campaign had been so cautious, would react to

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
the inflammatory address the Colonel had delivered in his behalf. The answer came in the form of a wire of thanks from the candidate to Roosevelt and a statement that he was in "complete accord" with Roosevelt's position. On September 8 it was announced that the Colonel would have a larger voice in the conduct of the Republican campaign, and on the merit of his Lewiston address, Roosevelt was to make a speaking tour in behalf of Hughes.

It was this relentless Republican attack on the administration's policies toward Mexico that caused the Literary Digest to term Mexico "The Republican Issue in the Campaign" and caused Current Opinion to call Mexico "The Dominant Issue in the Campaign."

In reviewing the first month of the Republican stump, Current Opinion observed that the Republicans had given Mexico priority in the campaign as evidenced by the strength of the Mexico plank in the party platform, by the fact that Hughes devoted a quarter of his acceptance speech

---

32Ibid., September 2, 1916.

33Ibid., September 8, 1916.

to Mexico, and by Hughes relentless attacks on the administration's Mexican policy throughout the campaign. Current Opinion declared that the facts surrounding Mexico justified the emphasis the Republicans placed upon it. The Wilson administration had spent large sums of money on its Mexican programs. The National Guard had been activated, mobilized and stationed along the border, affecting the lives of 125,000 men. All mobile forces of the Regular Army had also been involved. Mexico had been invaded by the United States two times in three years with the seizure of Vera Cruz and with Pershing's "punitive expedition." Mexican "bandits" had invaded and raided the United States three times, the most notorious incident being the raid by Villa on Columbus, New Mexico. Finally, the billion dollars of United States capital invested in Mexico had been rendered useless, and an estimated five hundred United States citizens had been killed.35

On September 2 at Shadow Lawn, his new summer home at Long Branch, New Jersey, Woodrow Wilson delivered his acceptance speech to a crowd of 15,000 and officially began his campaign for reelection. In a comprehensive address covering both domestic and foreign affairs, the Democratic

35Current Opinion, September, 1916, pp. 146-150.
candidate devoted the bulk of his attention on foreign affairs to defending his policies toward Mexico. Wilson tactfully avoided mentioning Vera Cruz but did justify the pursuit of "bandits" into Mexican territory. Wilson repeated his pledge to the Mexican people that he would use his power to assure them the opportunity to determine their own destiny. In answer to the Republican charges that he had failed to protect the lives and property of United States citizens in Mexico, the President responded, "I am more interested in the fortunes of oppressed men and pitiful women and children than in any property rights whatever."  

The New York Times, in commenting on the President's acceptance speech, stated that, "...although he Wilson defended his Mexican policies at length, this part of the President's speech received the smallest response from the crowd." In the future Wilson would not deal with Mexico as directly, nor would he strive to reply to Republican charges.

With Hughes' return to New York in September, the candidate met with the Republican National Committee to

---


evaluate the course of his campaign. As a result of this discussion, the Republican National Committee announced that on the merit of his Lewiston speech Theodore Roosevelt would have a larger voice in the conduct of the campaign. The announcement indicated that plans for a future campaign tour by Roosevelt in behalf of Hughes were being formulated.\(^8\)

In the Senate, meanwhile, Senator Fall on September 7 continued his attack on the Democrats over matters of Mexican policy. He disagreed with the administration's spokesman, Senator Lewis, who contended that American investors in Mexico held unfair concessions from the Mexican government. Fall argued that investors in Mexico assumed tremendous risks and as citizens deserved United States support. He took the occasion to chide Wilson for neglecting, in his acceptance address, to acknowledge his failures in Mexican relations.\(^39\)

In September, Hughes embarked on his second campaign tour, a trip into the Middle West. The Republican candidate reopened the Mexican question, determined to prove that Wilson had warred on Mexico when he invaded Vera Cruz in 1914. At Richmond, Indiana, on September 21 Hughes

\(^8\)Ibid., September 8, 1916.
\(^39\)Congressional Record, 14034-14039.
produced documentation from the Lind mission proving that the Wilson administration was willing to force Huerta out of office if it became necessary. The President, Hughes charged, preferred Huerta's removal by peaceful domestic means but was willing to use other means if the peaceful overtures did not work. This disposition to the use of force, Hughes stated, soon became fact and resulted in anarchy which cost many American lives. 40

At Indianapolis, before a huge crowd of 75,000, Hughes termed Wilson's presidency as "an administration of broken promises" and repeated his charges that Wilson advocated intervention and force in his dealings with Huerta in 1914. At Cleveland three days later he challenged the Wilson administration to deny his charges on Wilson's instructions to Lind. He questioned how Wilson could justify the Lind episode in light of his numerous pronouncements in favor of Mexico determining her own institutions. 41

After his acceptance speech, Wilson was aware that it would be best for him to avoid attempting to defend his Mexican policies. The Democrats decided that henceforth they would either avoid discussing Mexico or deal with it in a manner which placed the burden back on the Republicans by demanding of Hughes a viable alternative to Wilson's

41 Ibid., September 24 and 27, 1916.
policies. The Democrats judged that the nation, which was daily being made aware of the horrors of the war in Europe, was most concerned with keeping the peace. Hoping to capitalize on this fear, they argued that armed intervention was the only alternative to the administration's policy in Mexico, thereby branding the Republicans as war mongers.

On September 14, Democratic vice-presidential candidate Thomas Marshall delivered his acceptance speech at his home in Indianapolis, Indiana. In considering the subject of Mexico he challenged the Republicans to admit that they favored intervention, and to those who would vote Republican he cautioned that they should be willing to enlist in the army of intervention. Marshall felt that unless Hughes had a better plan for Mexico than the one that Wilson had implemented, he should remain silent.43

On September 21, Democratic Senator James A. Reed, who had been a vocal defender of the administration's

42 In 1916, the land battles of Verdun and the Somme with their horrendous casualty lists (the battle of the Somme lasting from July to October cost the Germans about 500,000 men, the British 400,000 and the French 200,000) caused Americans to appreciate peace and be hesitant about invading their southern neighbor.

Mexican policies in the Senate, spoke in behalf of Wilson in Springfield, Illinois. Reed confined his speech to praise of Wilson's domestic policies and tactfully avoided mentioning Mexico. Likewise, Wilson, in a campaign address at Shadow Lawn two days later, made no mention of his Mexican policies, being content to speak on the eight-hour day.

In a speech at Shadow Lawn before the Young Men's Democratic Clubs on September 30, the President for the first time since his acceptance address spoke of Mexico. His purpose was to show that the Republicans favored armed intervention in Mexico. Should there be a Republican victory in November he said, "...to the south of us the force of the United States will be used to produce in Mexico the kind of law and order which some American investors in Mexico consider most to their advantage." Thus he marked the opposition as bellicose and equated Republican calls for the protection of United States citizens with the protection of exploitive investors.

With Hughes' return to New York City from the Middle West, the Republican campaign entered its final month. In

---

44 Ibid., September 22, 1916.
45 Wilson, New Democracy, pp. 301-310.
46 Ibid., 330.
October prominent Republicans came to the candidate's aid by delivering speeches and contributing magazine pieces which vitalized a waning force. Colonel George Harvey, former President Taft, and William Willcox, Hughes' campaign manager, wrote in Hughes' support and criticized Wilson over his Mexican policies.

Colonel Harvey, editor of the *North American Review*, had been an early supporter of Wilson but broke with the President over Mexico. Harvey felt that the administration's policy in the southern republic had been one of criminal blundering. In his journal Harvey wrote that Wilson failed because he had neither the moral nor the legal right to say who should or should not be the President of Mexico. Harvey termed the "punitive expedition" headed by General Pershing as a "foolhardy" adventure. He favored the withdrawal of the United States troops which remained and blamed Wilson for the tragedy at Carrizal where some of Pershing's men were killed and others captured.47

Former President Taft, writing in the *Yale Review*, also indulged in a critical review of Wilson's administration.

It was his special concern to refute Democratic allegations that Wilson simply followed the policy which Taft had established. Taft stated that had he remained in office, he would have recognized Huerta. Taft considered Wilson's policies the product of amateur diplomacy. He cited the President's Indianapolis speech of January, 1915, in which Wilson stated that the internal affairs of Mexico were "none of our business" as ridiculous in the light of Huerta and Vera Cruz. Taft agreed with Harvey's assessment of the Carrizal incident and stated that it could have been avoided if the troops had been promptly removed.48

For the first time since the convention in June, a major Republican figure publicly considered the merits of intervention. Taft expressed the opinion that if Carranza was unable to tranquilize the situation in Mexico, the United States would have to act to end the anarchy. Taft estimated that such a venture would require 250,000 men and would take two years.49

In an article in Forum, William Willcox stated that the conditions in Mexico were a result of "the abandonment of the national duty to protect American lives and property

49 Ibid.
throughout all the world." He responded to Democratic demands to know what Hughes would have done by stating that he could not think of Hughes "getting himself into such diplomatic brambles." 50

Hughes began the month of October with a speech in New York City. In it he refuted Democratic allegations which equated a Hughes' victory in November with war with Mexico. He contended that the alternative to the present administration was peace with honor. He maintained that Wilson's weakness had resulted in the chaotic condition of Mexico. The Republican alternative would be a firm insistence upon known rights. 51

The following day Hughes, Roosevelt, and Taft met at the Union League Club in New York City. This meeting, arranged with the help of Elihu Root, marked the first time Taft and Roosevelt spoke to each other since 1912. Roosevelt addressed the assembly on the Mexican policy of Woodrow Wilson. In this speech he repeated the charges he made against Wilson at Lewiston. Roosevelt promised that if Hughes were elected the protection of American citizens at home, abroad, and on the seas would be assured. 52

52 Ibid., October 4, 1916.
Taft spoke in behalf of Hughes' candidacy on October 4 at Trenton, New Jersey. His speech repeated the charges he had made against the administration's Mexican policy in his article in the Yale Review.53

At Carnegie Hall on October 5, Elihu Root addressed the Republican Club and delivered the only major speech he would give in behalf of Hughes during the campaign. It included a hard-hitting attack on Wilson's Mexican policies in which he challenged the hypocrisy of Wilson's 1915 Indianapolis speech in light of the events at Vera Cruz. Using the words of Secretary of Agriculture Franklin K. Lane, Root proved that the United States seized Vera Cruz, not for a salute which was but a pretext, but to force Huerta out. Root charged that Wilson's policies left the United States without a friend in Mexico.54

In Boston on October 7 in a speech before the Massachusetts Republican Convention, Henry Cabot Lodge spoke in behalf of Hughes and directed some of his heaviest blasts at the "bloodstained thing that is called peace in Mexico." Concerning Woodrow Wilson's foreign policy he stated:

... it had followed no principle, had been true to no tradition, has cast aside all the lessons of the past and has been determined from day to day

53Ibid., October 5, 1916.
54Ibid., October 6, 1916.
by the effort to conciliate one group of voters or to secure the approbation of some other group. 55

He denied Wilson's charge that the Republicans meant to engage the country in war, and explained the Republican position:

...the Republican Party would be strong and determined and would uphold a policy which would insure national defense and command the respect of other nations... The Republican Party means to keep the peace if it can be honorably and rightly kept, but it does not mean to keep it by humiliation and by the cowardly abandonment of American rights. 56

Charles Evans Hughes, on his third and final tour of the campaign, addressed an audience at Baltimore on October 10 and pledged that if elected, he would be guided by three considerations in his dealings with Mexico. They were: first, not to meddle in the affairs of Mexico which are not our concern; second, not only to talk about but to observe the rights of small states; and third, to protect the lives and property of American citizens. He stated that the use of force was not necessary to protect American lives but the "sanction of force lies back of the laws and the pursuits of peace." 57

---

56 Ibid., p. 164.
The Republican candidate again raised the issue of Mexico at Omaha, Nebraska, on October 16. Hughes compared the situation in Mexico with what the country could expect in Europe if it allowed Wilson to continue to refrain from standing firm. He stated that the only thing that Wilson's Mexican policy had brought the United States were insults and contempt.\(^58\)

In the final weeks of the campaign, Theodore Roosevelt made the campaign tour in behalf of Hughes that he had promised in September. The Colonel travelled to the Southwest and made bitter attacks on the administration's Mexican policies in Phoenix, Arizona, on October 21 and at Albuquerque, New Mexico, two days later. Roosevelt ended his tour in New York City on October 28 before a standing-room-only crowd at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Before this highly receptive audience, Roosevelt abandoned the guarded statement and made an outright appeal for intervention. He stated that Mexico should be handled as McKinley had handled Cuba; the United States should go in and do the job. Doing anything less, he contended, would make the administration a failure to both the people of the United States and those of Mexico. He argued that Mexico had to be secure to

\(^58\)Ibid., October 17, 1916.
In October Wilson continued to use the campaign strategy on the Mexican issue which the Democrats had adopted in September. Colonel Edward House's appraisal that the nation was not interested in past mistakes but in future programs\(^{60}\) encouraged the President to cease offering apologies and instead to propose measures which promised peace. In an article on Mexico in the *Ladies Home Journal*, Wilson made no mention of his past policies. He spoke, instead, against intervention in Mexico, arguing that the United States "...must respect the liberties and self-government of Mexicans as she would respect her own." In speaking of those who propose alternative plans for Mexico, a thinly-veiled reference to his Republican opponent, he said:

> It is painful to observe how few of the suggestions as to what the United States ought to do with regard to Mexico are based upon sympathy with the Mexican people or any effort even to understand what they need and desire. I can say with knowledge that most of the suggestions of action come from those who wish to possess her, who wish to use her, who regard her people with condescension and a touch of contempt, who believe that they are fit only to serve and not fit

\(^{59}\)Ibid., October 29, 1916.  
\(^{60}\)The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, p. 369.
for liberty of any sort. Such men cannot and will not determine the policy of the United States.\textsuperscript{61}

At Cincinnati on October 26, Wilson again referred to his opponent without directly naming him when he labeled Republican demands for the protection of United States citizens in Mexico as a call to fight "...to get something, not something spiritual, not a right, not something we could be proud of, but something we could possess, and take advantage of and trade on and profit by."\textsuperscript{62}

On November 5, at a mass meeting in New York, labor leader Samuel Gompers spoke in behalf of Woodrow Wilson's candidacy. Gompers defended Wilson's Mexican policies by stating that there had been more progressive legislation in Mexico during the last two years than ever before. The \textit{New York Times} observed that the audience enthusiastically received Gompers's comments on the President's foreign policy.\textsuperscript{63}

The presidential campaign of 1916 ended with the national election on November 7. Excitement ran high as the public anticipated a close contest. The electorate


\textsuperscript{62}Wilson, \textit{New Democracy}, p. 380.

came to the polls in record-breaking numbers; the total voting exceeded 1912 by more than 3.5 million. On the basis of favorable early returns from the East and in anticipation of traditional Republican strength in the West, it appeared as though Hughes would be victorious. Wilson went to bed election night under the impression that he had been defeated. As reports came in from the Western states a Democratic trend took shape. The results of the election remained in doubt until Friday, November 10, when it became evident that Wilson had carried the West and had been reelected. 65

Wilson polled 9,129,606 votes or 49% of the popular vote, an increase of almost three million over his winning total of 1912. Hughes polled 8,538,221 or 46% of the popular vote. The electoral vote was even closer. Wilson won with 277 electoral votes while Hughes trailed closely with 254. A switch of just twelve electoral votes from the Democratic total to the Republican total would have


meant victory for Hughes.66

In analyzing the Wilson victory it becomes apparent that the issue of Mexico brought victory, not to the Republicans who had so diligently campaigned on the futility of Wilson's policy toward Mexico, but to the Democrats who had argued that Hughes was in favor of armed intervention in the southern republic. The democrats turned Mexico from an issue of incompetence in foreign relations to an issue of peace. The New York Times declared that peace was the paramount issue in deciding the election, and in commenting on the results the Times said, "Two classes of voters, and only two, accomplished the result. They were not the German-Americans, the labor vote, or any of the groups standing for special interests. They were the Progressives and the women." Women voters67 found the Democratic campaign slogan, "He kept us out of war," especially persuasive. To illustrate the importance of the peace issue the Times stated, "Where the women turned the


67In 1916, women voted in eleven states west of the Mississippi River.
vote of a state, it was nearly always for that reason." 68

Throughout the West the failure of the Republican Party's Mexican issue was apparent. A political observer in Kansas estimated, "fully 70,000 Republican women in Kansas voted for Wilson in fear of war in the event of Hughes' election." He indicated that they said that "...Hughes, with Roosevelt urging him, would engulf the country in war with Mexico, and possibly with Germany." 69

In California, where the Democrats achieved an important although narrow victory for Wilson, it was observed that normally Republican districts went Democratic. It was "the opinion of expert calculators that the women voters caused this change by their heavy support of the President. It is also very clear that the slogan, 'He kept us out of war' was a dominant note with the women." 70

In Utah a political observer explained that normally Republican state's support of Wilson by stating, "Utah...had soldiers on the border, and, as with other states where there

68 New York Times, November 12, 1916. The Times analysis of 1916 election is very well done and has been praised by Arthur Link for its thorough treatment. (See note in Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Movement on page 249.)

69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
are mothers of soldiers, there was rejoicing here when actual fighting was averted and Wilson got credit for it."\textsuperscript{71} Likewise, an observer explained Idaho's vote for Wilson by stating, "The women voted for Wilson on the peace issue."\textsuperscript{72}

In New Mexico and Arizona the Republican campaign had been intense. Theodore Roosevelt spoke in Hughes' behalf in both states two weeks before the election, yet Wilson won in both states. An observer in Albuquerque credited the Democratic victory to the "policy of non-interference in Mexican affairs" advocated by the President.

In Arizona a political observer explained Wilson's victory there by stating, "The President's Mexican policy which the Republicans made the foremost issue in the State was indorsed by the people as the Democrats accepted the issue."\textsuperscript{73}

The foregoing statements spell out the reasons why Mexico failed to be an effective issue for the Republicans in the presidential campaign of 1916. Hughes' steadfast adherence to the negative campaign technique on Mexico, as advocated by Henry Cabot Lodge, left the electorate unsure of exactly what course Hughes would follow in Mexico if

\textsuperscript{71}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{72}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73}Ibid.
elected. The public identified Hughes with Theodore Roosevelt whose bellicose statements on Mexico made late in the campaign in Hughes' behalf caused the public to view Mexico as a war-peace issue rather than an issue of mistaken foreign policy. Meanwhile, Wilson's campaign accusations, contending that a Hughes victory would result in a war with Mexico, exploited this weakness in the Republican campaign and proved a powerful antidote to Republican revelations of past Democratic mistakes in foreign diplomacy. The Democrats' ability to portray themselves as the instrument to continued peace, especially with regard to the first world war raging in Europe, greatly neutralized the issue of Mexico. Mexico as a Republican issue failed most seriously among what was an important voting block in 1916, the women voters. Relatively unconcerned with the mistakes of the past, women voters failed to respond to Republican accounts of Democratic blunders in foreign policy. They voted, instead, for peace and Woodrow Wilson. Because the Mexican issue, as developed by Hughes, failed to persuade women voters, Hughes lost the West. With the loss of the West, the Republicans lost the election. An issue which had been developed for over three years ultimately failed because it looked to the past, and in 1916 women were concerned with the future.
WORKS CITED

I. Printed Sources

A. Documents of State (printed)


———. *Congressional Record*. 63rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1914.


U.S. Department of State. Records of the Department of State. Record Group 59, Decimal file 812.000/6325A.

B. Private Documents


C. Secondary Literature


D. Articles


"Mexico as the Dominant Issue in the Campaign." Current Opinion, September, 1916, pp. 146-150.

"Mexico as the Republican Issue in the Campaign." Literary Digest, August 19, 1916, pp. 395-397.


Outlook, July 25, 1914, p. 690.

"Republican Revival." Literary Digest, November 14, 1914, pp. 937-938.


______. Metropolitan, March, 1915.

______. Outlook, July 11, 1914, p. 236.


E. Newspapers
