

EVERYBODY IS WILLING, IT SEEMS, TO HAVE A WAR But Everybody Is Puzzled How to Start and With Whom to Fight

A PRICKLY JOB



GENERAL WOOD.

Thrilling Scenes Stir the Capital as Plans Unfold

Washington, April 20.—In an atmosphere of suppressed excitement, reflecting grave tension and patriotic fervor, President Wilson asked congress in person today for approval of his purpose to use the army and navy to force General Huerta to apologize for indignities offered to the American government.

It was the first time since the war with Spain that the president had placed so grave an international crisis before the national legislature. Mr. Wilson spoke in solemn tones. When he entered the house chamber the cheers and applause that greeted him were wildly enthusiastic—an outburst of the tension that has prevailed in the national capital for the last 24 hours.

As he read his message the applause came largely from the democratic side; many republicans remaining conspicuously silent. It presaged an opposition to the president's request which was not long in making its appearance.

Speeches in the house and opposition in the senate committee on foreign relations showed that the prospect of immediately passing the joint resolution approving the president's course was by no means as bright as it had seemed.

President Wilson had pointed out that, under precedents, he did not need the authority of congress to act, but merely sought its counsel, advice and approval "in a matter possibly of so grave consequence."

While congress deliberated and Majority Leader Underwood urged prompt action so that if American forces were fired on they would be free to act, the executive branch of the government issued orders to the army and navy with systematic regularity. The army was cautioned to be on the alert and active preparations to use the militia as volunteer forces in case of further emergency were begun. The warships of the navy were ordered to concentrate on Tampico and Vera Cruz as their first objective point.

Plans were made to seize those ports. American merchant vessels were ordered out of the harbors and a long session of the board of the army and navy, participated in by Admiral Dewey, Major General Wood and Major General Wotherspoon, after which it was announced that the army and navy were prepared for instant action.

Tonight the president conferred with secretaries of state, war and navy regarding successive steps to be taken to force reparation from Huerta. Major General Wood, chief of staff of the army; Rear Admiral Victor Blue, chief of the navy bureau of navigation; Rear Admiral John Fiske, chief of the bureau of operations, and John Lind, the president's personal representative in Mexico, were called into conference.

Americans are being urged to withdraw from Mexico, merchant ships are being chartered to take them away and while the president himself deprecates the "war spirit" with which the national capital is saturated, high government officials do not deny that most elaborate precautions are being taken for any eventuality.

Clerks and secretaries in the state, war and navy departments are being kept on duty 24 hours, and everything

is on a "war basis." Social engagements are being cancelled by government officials; members of congress are hesitant to leave Washington, while the crisis is on.

Excitement. Newspaper extras and crowds watching the bulletins in front of newspaper offices and scenes of animation at the White House and state, war and navy departments indicated that excitement that has spread through Washington.

The president in a statement to newspaper correspondents said he had no enthusiasm for war; that he hoped to avert it, but that he was taking forceful steps to stop indignities which might lead to armed conflict. He drew a distinction between the Huerta faction and the great body of Mexican people who had refused to recognize Huerta as their president.

We Will Not Fight. The president, in deprecating the war spirit that had arisen, said: "In no conceivable circumstance will we fight the people of Mexico."

Measures "short of war" are planned by the president, such as the seizure of customs houses, the occupation of coast towns, the taking of Mexican warships and a blockade of Mexico's commerce with the United States.

Precedent Found. When the president laid the situation before the cabinet in a two-hour session, Counselor Lansing of the state department sat at the table, telling in detail of the president upon which the administration's action, if now has been decided, will be based. It happened in 1854 when the captain of an American vessel was ordered by President Pierce to Bluefields, Nicaragua, to obtain reparation for insults to the American minister. The town was held by rebels who had not been recognized by the United States. It was three months before the American ship and finally the American officer went ashore with his men and burned the town. No lives were lost, the population taking refuge some distance away.

Not Against the Weak. Mr. Wilson realizes that any action which the United States might take might be construed by Huerta as a military operation sufficient to provoke war, but in all utterances today he emphasized that it was not the part of a powerful nation such as the United States to declare war on a weak neighbor, especially on a small portion of the country already torn by civil strife.

The president's message clearly indicated that should war result the United States would not seek to add to its territorial confines and that its only purpose would be the restoration in Mexico of law and order.

Secretary Garrison insisted in his talks with callers today that no orders had been issued to the army for aggressive action, but that his department merely had taken steps deemed prudent in the emergency. Brigadier General Mills, in charge of militia affairs, had telegraphed to the various states for information about militia to be used as volunteer forces in cases of necessity and arrangements were being made with merchant steamship lines to charter ships for transports.

Secretary Garrison announced that if the army were used in forcing the demands on Huerta, Major General Wood, whose term as chief of staff

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WILSON ASKS CO-OPERATION THOUGH HE DOESN'T HAVE TO AND WOULD PUNISH HUERTA

Washington, April 20.—President Wilson laid the Mexican situation before congress today in these words: "Gentlemen of the Congress: "It is my duty to call your attention to a situation which has arisen in our dealings with General Victoriano Huerta at Mexico City, which calls for action, and to ask your advice and co-operation in acting on it."

On the night of April 1 a paymaster of the U. S. Dolphin landed at the Turbide bridge landing at Tampico with a whaleboat and boat's crew to take off certain supplies needed by his ship, and, while engaged in loading the boat, was arrested by an officer and squad of men of the army of General Huerta. Neither the paymaster nor any one of the boat's crew was armed. Two of the men were in the boat when the arrest took place and were obliged to leave it and submit to be taken into custody, notwithstanding the fact that the boat carried, both at her bow and at her stern, the flag of the United States. The officer who made the arrest was proceeding up one of the streets of the town with his prisoners when met by an officer of higher authority, who ordered him to return to the landing and await orders, and, within an hour and a half from the time of the arrest, orders were received from the commander of the Huertista forces at Tampico for the release of the paymaster and his men. The release was followed by apologies from the commander and later by an expression of regret by General Huerta himself. General Huerta urged that martial law be observed at the time of Tampico, that orders had been issued that no one should be allowed to land at the Turbide bridge and that our sailors had no right to land there. Our naval commanders at the port had not been notified of any such prohibition, and, even if they had been, the only justifiable course open to the local authorities would have been to request the paymaster and his crew to withdraw and to lodge a protest with the

HIS LATEST



Here is the latest picture of President Wilson. It was taken at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., the other day.

commanding officer of the fleet. Admiral Mayo regarded the arrest as no serious affront that he was not satisfied with the apologies offered but demanded that the flag of the United States be saluted with special ceremony by the military commander of the port.

Not Trivial. "The incident cannot be regarded as a trivial one, especially as two of the men arrested were taken from the boat itself—that is to say from the territory of the United States; but had it stood by itself it might have been attributed to the ignorance or arrogance of a single officer. Unfortunately it was not an isolated case. A series of incidents have recently occurred which cannot but create the impression that the representatives of General Huerta were willing to go out of their way to show disregard for the dignity and rights of this government and felt perfectly safe in doing what they pleased, making free to show in many ways their

irritation and contempt. A few days after the incident at Tampico, an orderly from the U. S. S. Minnesota was arrested at Vera Cruz while ashore in uniform to obtain the ship's mail and was for a time thrown into jail. An official dispatch from this government to its embassy at Mexico City was withheld by the authorities of the telegraph service until peremptorily demanded by our charge d'affaires in person. So far as I can learn, such wrongs and annoyances have been suffered only to occur against representatives of the United States. I have heard of no complaints from other governments of similar treatment. Subsequent explanations and formal apologies did not and could not alter the popular impression, which it is possible it had been the object of the Huertista authorities to create, that the government of the United States was being singled out and might be singled out with impunity for slights and affronts in retaliation for its refusal to recognize the pretenses of General Huerta to be regarded as the constitutional provisional president of Mexico. The manifest danger of such a situation was that such offenses might grow from bad to worse until something happened of so gross and intolerable a sort as to lead directly and inevitably to armed conflict. It was necessary that the apologies of General Huerta and his representatives should go much further, that they should be such as to attract the attention of the whole population to their significance and such as to impress on General Huerta himself the necessity of seeing to it that no further occasion for explanations and professed regrets should arise. I, therefore, felt it my duty to sustain Admiral Mayo in the whole of his demand and to insist that the flag of the United States should be saluted in such a way as to indicate a new

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WISE OR OTHERWISE SUPPORT HIM

New York, April 20.—"Whether President Wilson's decision with regard to Mexico is wise or not, the country should support him," says Joseph G. Cannon, former speaker of the house. Cannon arrived today from Bermuda. "The president is entirely competent to act. Congress is entirely competent to act. Whether his course has been a failure or not, whether his present action is wise or not, I believe that congress should support him. And whether his decision is wise or not, I hold that the country should support him and will support him. For the country is not a divided one, but united."



ADMIRAL BLUE.

Senate Hesitates on the Resolution Specifying Huerta

Washington, April 21 (Tuesday).—Action by the army and navy of the United States to force Huerta to salute the flag was held up early today through opposition in the senate to the form of the joint resolution approving President Wilson's purposes, as it passed the house last night. A recess of the senate was taken at 12:28 a. m. until noon today.

The president, while stating in his message to congress that he had full constitutional authority to act, is waiting for congress to express its approval before ordering Tampico and Vera Cruz to be seized and other steps taken looking to reparation for the arrest of American bluejackets at Tampico.

In a spectacular midnight session the senate discussed the house resolution briefly. Senators objected to individualizing Huerta and a substitute resolution was agreed upon by the foreign relations committee giving the president broad authority to deal with indignities offered the United States in Mexico "in view of the situation as presented by the president in his message."

President Wilson had retired early, but Secretary Taft, Secretary Garrison, Postmaster General Burleson and Vice President Marshall, acting Chairman Shively and other administration leaders conferred on the substitute resolution.

Detailed plans for landing of marines at Tampico and Vera Cruz were completed at a conference at the White House between President Wilson, Secretaries Bryan, Garrison and Daniels, Major General Wood and Rear Admiral Fiske and John Lind.

"No orders to the army and navy will be issued tonight," was the announcement made after the conference, action temporarily being deferred until congress acts on the joint resolution approving the president's purpose of using the armed forces of the United States to enforce its demands against General Huerta growing out of the arrest at Tampico of the American bluejackets.

House Vote. The resolution passed the house tonight by a vote of 377 to 27 after a spirited debate. The house adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow and President Wilson, worn out by the day's work, retired after hearing that the house had adopted the resolution.

Persons in touch with the president said the steps which would be taken by the United States "short of war" were of a nature which would not require formal notification to the powers in the same sense that a declaration of blockade or other preliminaries to war. Foreign governments, however, will be kept informed of developments.

The debate in the house brought out the fact that while the American navy probably would block Mexico off from commerce with the United States it would not interfere with the passage of foreign vessels, although cargoes discharged on the shore might be held at the customhouses if they were occupied by American forces.

The Resolution. The joint resolution passed by the house and which was before the senate at a late hour tonight read as follows: "A joint resolution justifying the employment of the armed forces of the United States in enforcing certain demands against Victoriano Huerta. Resolved by the senate and house of represen-

tatives in congress assembled that the president of the United States is justified in the employment of the armed forces of the United States to enforce the demands upon Victoriano Huerta for unequivocal amends to the government of the United States for affronts and indignities committed against this government by General Huerta and his representatives.

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