

## PRESIDENT WARNED IN VAIN

### Ambassador Wilson Foresaw the Ruin of Mexico if Huerta Was Not Recognized and Urged Many Reasons for Such Recognition

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By SAMUEL CROWTHER.

#### PART II.—MURDER OF MADERO AND THE PRESIDENCY OF HUERTA.

The despatches and telegrams quoted in the following article are paraphrased from the secret code of the State Department and for reasons of space are abbreviated in parts unessential to the narrative.

THE second part of the true story of Mexico's ruin as revealed by official documents in the archives of the State Department in Washington is given here. Like the first part printed in *The Sun* last Sunday, it is based on unpublished despatches, correspondence and memorandums sent to Washington by Henry Lane Wilson, formerly American Ambassador to Mexico, and the statements made in these documents are amplified and explained by Mr. Lane's personal comments.

The first instalment described the condition of Mexico in the closing days of the administration of President Porfirio Diaz, the successful revolution led by Madero and the difficulties encountered by Madero at the outset of his administration. It gave information essential to a complete understanding of the events of the last four years in Mexico.

A turning point in American diplomacy is reached in the second instalment, printed to-day, which covers the "Decena Tragica" (Tragic Ten Days)—the fall of Madero and Huerta's seizure of power. It is of the utmost importance, presenting as it does all the known facts concerning the murder of Madero and the reasons urged by Ambassador Wilson why the United States should recognize the Government of Huerta.

Who killed Madero? As affairs of nations go, it is not of much importance. The question is important to Americans because President Wilson made it so.

He received information from his Mexican advisers that Gen. Huerta killed Madero, and he held that the United States should therefore have designs on Huerta. The murder of American citizens, the lives and money squandered in the expedition to Vera Cruz, the lives of the soldiers and civilians that have been lost on the border—all of these are directly consequential to President Wilson's impression of the Huerta government. More than 200,000 lives, Mexican and American, have been sacrificed to this suspicion.

Therefore the event is of importance to Americans. Who killed Madero? Why did not President Wilson recognize Huerta? What were the causes of the Carranza-Villa insurrection? What was the situation when President Wilson took office on March 4, 1913?

All of these questions are answered in the following official documents. All of these documents are on file in the archives of the State Department. Such of them as concern the overthrow of the Madero Government and the setting up of the Huerta Government were addressed to Secretary Knox, but all of these were collated by Ambassador Wilson and contained in a formal, confidential despatch to Secretary Bryan dated March 12, 1913.

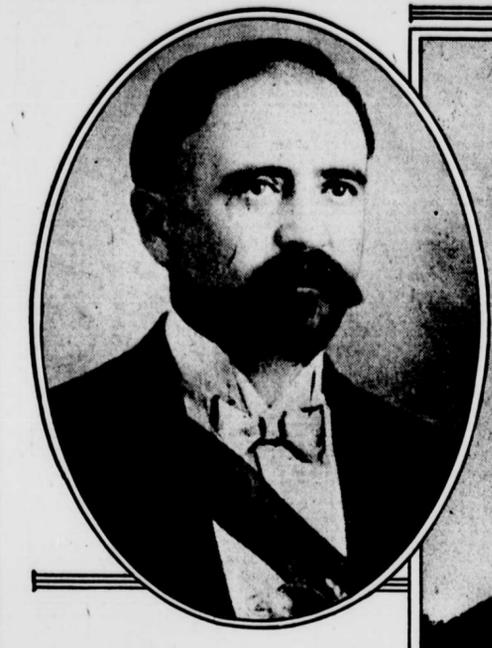
"I believed," says Ambassador Wilson in commenting on this confidential despatch, "that the rule of Madero must be short lived. I accurately stated the conditions in my telegrams and despatches to the State Department, which were founded on my personal observation and the reports from the consular officers and others throughout Mexico. The Madero Government was completely disorganized and was bound to fall at the hands of one or more of the numerous factions actually in arms or about to take arms against it.

"I think it would have been extraordinary for any person of even average intelligence to have remained in Mexico in the city without being cognizant of the instability of the Madero rule. This is borne out by a statement of facts issued by a committee made up of the leading citizens of the American colony. They said:

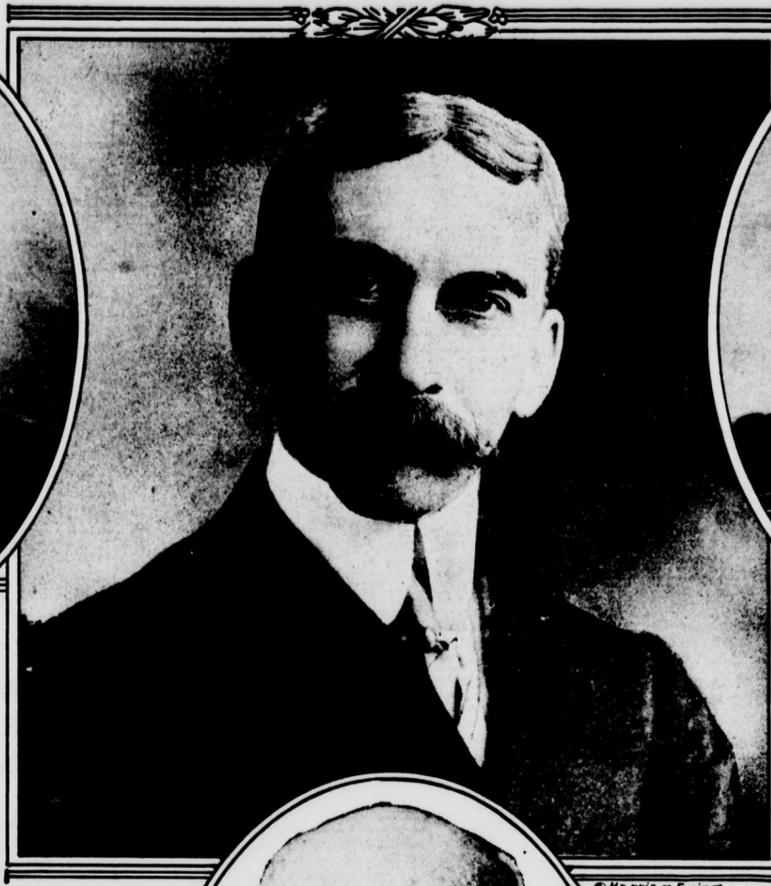
"It was a matter of common rumor throughout the city that serious defections were about to occur among the Generals who were supporting President Madero, and a color of truth was given to those rumors by the attitude of Gen. Blanquet, the number of days he consumed in bringing his troops from Toluca to the city of Mexico and his inactivity after arriving in the capital.

"It was further rumored that members of the Senate were actively engaged in trying to bring about the resignation of President Madero. It was impossible for the Ambassador to be blind and deaf to all that any Spaniard speaking foreigner saw or heard and had he failed to notify the State Department of what all intelligent men believed to be impending we submit that he would have been delinquent in his duty."

The relevant telegrams and messages passing between Ambassador Wilson and the State Department and



Francisco Madero, former President of Mexico.



Gen. Felix Diaz.



Provisional President Victoriano Huerta. Above—Former Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson.

between the Ambassador and the Mexican authorities follow. Mr. Wilson was the dean of the Diplomatic Corps in the city of Mexico and therefore messages from the foreign representatives as a body to the Mexican authorities went through his hands, and likewise the Mexican authorities communicated with him when they desired to inform all the diplomats concerning any subject. This accounts for the fact that all meetings of foreign diplomats were presided over by the American Ambassador and that all joint proceedings were taken in his name.

The record begins with a despatch dated February 9, 1913, 2 P. M., in which Ambassador Wilson informs the State Department of the outbreak of the revolt against Madero, led by Felix Diaz. He immediately took steps for the protection of the lives and property of American citizens and other foreigners. At the request of practically all of the chiefs of the diplomatic missions, he especially asked Pedro Lascurain, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, that all saloons and pulque establishments should be closed. The general situation was described in a despatch sent by Mr. Wilson to Washington on the following day:

"At the present moment there are some 5,000 Americans and perhaps 25,000 foreigners of all kinds in this city absolutely without any protection whatsoever against invading Zapatistas, who are undoubtedly already moving in this direction, or against the rising of a mob, of which there are no present indications but which nevertheless may precipitate trouble at any time.

"Our Government has primary duties relating to the protection of its own nationals and secondary duties growing out of its proximity and our announced policy in relation to these countries to afford protection to foreigners. I cannot indicate how the Government of the United States could extend protection to Americans and foreigners in Mexico city because of its interior position and other difficulties and because, too, of the uncertainty of a situation which may radically change at any moment for the worse or for the better. To me this would appear to be a problem which the President and his advisers are more competent to solve than the embassy.

"There is, however, no doubt in my mind as to the imperative necessity, in anticipation of sympathetic outbreaks in Mexican ports, that formidable warships supplied with marines should be despatched to points on the Atlantic and the Pacific and that visible activity and alertness should be displayed on the boundary. We are forming foreign guards here and I hope to be able to report an effective organization later. At present Americans only are patrolling a part of the foreign district. No police or soldiers are on duty."

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

Secretary Knox in reply to this request for drastic instructions expressed the view that the present situation did not seem to warrant such action, taking the ground that it might possibly precipitate what we were trying to avoid, namely, intervention; also that it might produce results that would more greatly endanger the lives of Americans in Mexico and the provinces. He concluded with the statement that he believed that nothing was called for at present beyond the precautions which had already been so promptly taken by the embassy.

The situation got so bad, the danger to the lives and property of foreigners became so great that the chiefs of the principal foreign missions held a conference at the American Embassy and decided to make a protest to President Madero and another to Gen. Diaz. The interview with President Madero is described in the following memorandum:

February 12, 1913.  
"In company with the German and Spanish Ministers and with the written authority of the British Minister I went to the National Palace this morning, and after some difficulty obtained access to the President. I immediately stated to him on behalf of my Government and the Governments of my colleagues that we had come to protest against the further continuation of the barbarous and inhuman warfare which was being carried on between the Federal and revolutionary forces in the midst of this modern capital city.

"I recited to him the enormous damages which had been done, the fact that the American Consulate-General had been demolished by his troops, that numerous American residences had been fired upon by his troops and that the embassy was filled at this moment by Americans who had been driven from their homes either directly by his troops or by his guns, which frequently were directed at non-combatant houses and fired upon with-

out any notice whatever. I said to him on my own part that the President and the Government at Washington were profoundly impressed by and apprehensive of the existing situation and deeply concerned for the safety not only of American nationals but for the nations of other Govern-

ments, to which we owed secondary obligations.

"The President was visibly embarrassed and confused in his reply, but attempted to place the responsibility for the character of the urban warfare on Gen. Diaz. As usual, he added some glowing accounts of the meas-

ures which were being taken by the Government and which he believed would subvert the rebellion by tomorrow night.

"His statements made no impression on me or on my colleagues, and we insisted that there should be some cessation of hostilities until we might have an opportunity to make some vigorous representations to Gen. Diaz. He agreed to this, asking that he be notified by telephone of the time when we would visit Gen. Diaz and afterward to be advised of the results of our interview.

"The German Minister called the attention of the President to the fact that much of the firing of his soldiers was indiscriminate and wild, and that efforts ought to be made to place the firing line in such manner as to do as little harm as possible to the residential districts.

"The President replied that the artillery was now under the direction of Gen. Navarrete, who was supposed to be the most competent officer in the Mexican army.

"Advising the President that we intended to visit Gen. Diaz as soon as possible, we left his presence.

"The Spanish Minister observed to the President that he had joined with much pleasure the Ambassador and the German Minister with humanitarian purposes in view, as they as well as he considered that the continuation of the hostilities could have very serious consequences. So far the people had behaved in an exemplary manner, but work is stopped and hunger is a bad adviser, being able to provoke new conflicts, besides loss of life and property. He considered therefore that it was urgent for the Government to put an end to the actual state of affairs."

A second memorandum describes the interview with Gen. Diaz:  
"Upon being received by Gen. Diaz at Ciudadela the Ambassador informed the General of the purpose of the con-

ference. He began by stating that in view of the great amount of destruction of property and loss of life among non-combatants he felt that some effort should be made by both combatants to confine their firing within a designated and particular zone. That much damage had been caused by a reckless and indiscriminate bombardment of the city, seemingly directed over that part mainly occupied by residences of foreign representatives; that he could not tell whether this was done by the Federal or the rebel cannon; that he did not know what attitude would be taken by other nations, but that as the representative of the United States Government he could say that the President was very much concerned and deeply apprehensive as to the results of this state of affairs in Mexico; that vessels had been ordered to both the Gulf and the Pacific ports and transports with marines, which if necessary would be landed and brought to the city for the purpose only of maintaining order and affording protection to the property and lives of foreigners. The Ambassador stated that these very same representations had been made to the President of Mexico before going to him and that he had informed the President that he would immediately after a conference with him go to Gen. Diaz."

[Note by Ambassador Wilson—This statement was without any authority and solely for the purpose of making an impression that would lead to better conditions. No statement of this kind was made to President Madero, which would of course have been an error.

"Gen. Diaz replied that he regretted very much what was happening to the city and its inhabitants, but that he was able to prove that his attitude had been from the beginning one of defence; that instead of attacking the Ciudadela from afar, as the Government troops were doing it, he had proceeded directly to the place and taken it in twenty-six minutes; that in doing this he had had at heart the desire to cause the city no harm, and that this was shown by the fact that being able to do it he had abstained from proceeding to the National Palace, which he feels certain he can take if he is convinced that the Government will not yield without his resorting to that expedient; he said that it was not a matter of personal ambition for him to overthrow this Government, for himself, but that it was with the desire of voicing the sentiments of the whole nation; that if he succeeded he would allow the people to choose their own representatives and that he would withdraw to his home as a private citizen.

"Referring to the firing of cannon, Gen. Diaz said that by consulting a map of the city it could be ascertained where the Government had placed its batteries, disregarding the fact that many were located in the thickly populated sections of the city; that he considered this in utter violation of the rules of civilized warfare; that if his cannon had done some harm he felt deeply concerned, but that all he had done was to respond to the firing of the enemy; that it was evident that much more harm must have been done by the reckless firing of the Government, as only a very few shots had touched the Ciudadela.

"The General repeated the fact that his attitude after taking the Ciudadela with hardly any loss of life had been one of expectancy; that he thought the Government, being fully cognizant of its unpopularity, would yield to the sentiments of the nation and not force a bloody struggle in the heart of the city; he said that as proof of this he had not taken any steps whatever after taking the Ciudadela, but had remained absolutely quiet with the hope that bloodshed would be avoided. He said that the morale of his troops was excellent and that he had about fifteen hundred troops were disembarking at the San Lazaro station."

A curious sidelight on the difficulties with which Ambassador Wilson had to contend is thrown by the following despatch to the State Department. The

### Who Killed Madero? The Answer Is Important Because the One the President Accepted Has Cost Thousands of Lives

name of the gentleman referred to is omitted, but it appears frequently in the newspapers in connection with Latin American affairs.

"Mexico, February 14, 1913, 1 P. M.  
"Can the Department do anything to restrain the mischievous activities of \_\_\_\_\_, whose utterances are being published here and are producing a bad effect on the situation, which needs at this time firmness, activity, but no sentimentality or amateur politics? The colony are just preparing to protest to the American people against these utterances."

Attempts were made to secure President Madero's resignation. One of them is described in the following memorandum drawn up by Ambassador Wilson and dated February 13:

"Moved by the increasing horrors of the situation and for the purpose of supplementing the work done with Mr. Lascurain, in our interview Friday morning, I requested the British, German and Spanish Ministers to come to the embassy last night to consider the situation and resolve upon some action. There was great difficulty in bringing the Ministers to the embassy. The automobile which went for Mr. Strozze, the British Minister, was fired upon by Federal soldiers riddled with bullets, although he carried a Federal Colonel and six soldiers. We did not succeed in getting together before 1 o'clock in the morning and the conference lasted until nearly 3.

"The Spanish Minister recited the efforts he had made with Mr. de la Barra and Mr. Lascurain. We then considered the question of making direct representations to President Madero relating to his resignation in order to save further bloodshed and possibly international complications. The opinion of the assembled colleagues was unanimous and clear that we should at once, even though without instructions, take this action, which we thought might be of use in terminating an intolerable situation, the idea being that upon his resignation of the President his recapture should be turned over to the Congress.

"Mr. Cologan, the Spanish Minister, was designated to bear to the President our joint views. He and the German Minister then returned to their homes. Mr. Cologan, the British Minister, found it too dangerous to cross the line of fire and spent the night at the embassy.

"This morning Mr. Cologan went to the palace and entered slightly in advance of thirty Senators who had come on for his session. As soon as he was received by the President Mr. Cologan went over the points which had been discussed the night before and stated the conclusion which had been reached, saying that it was our unanimous opinion that he should resign.

"The President replied that he did not recognize the right of diplomats to interfere in a domestic question and further that he was the Constitutional President of Mexico and that his resignation would involve the country in chaos. He said he would never resign, but if necessary would die in defence of his rights as the legally elected President.

"At this moment the arrival of the thirty Senators was announced with the statement that they were coming to ask for his resignation. He replied 'Contentia!' [noisy] and after a hurried conversation vanished through one of the doors. When the Senators entered, they were told that the President had gone out with Gen. Huerta to examine firing points and were obliged to return without seeing him.

"It appears that the Senate had voted that President Madero be asked for his resignation by twenty-seven to three of those present, which is a majority, but not a quorum."

At this time President Madero sent a despatch to Washington protesting against military intervention by the United States, and simultaneously the Mexican Embassy presented to the State Department a note in relation to the suggested resignation of President Madero, which Ambassador Wilson regarded as highly improper and as reflecting unjustly upon him. In a series of notes Ambassador Wilson secured from President Madero and Mr. Lascurain, the Mexican Foreign Minister, admissions that his course had been proper. The instructions sent by President Madero to the Washington Embassy were withdrawn, and President Madero wrote a note to Ambassador Wilson expressing regret for the occurrence.

Early in the course of the Diaz uprising there had been indications that Gen. Huerta was planning a coup of some kind adverse to President Madero. In speaking of Huerta's action Ambassador Wilson says:

"At this point it might be well to relate a circumstance to which undue importance has been attached in certain quarters:  
"On February 15 I desired to communicate directly and urgently with Gen. Huerta for the purpose of having a battery removed, which was being established in the immediate vicinity of the embassy and which was a menace to the entire foreign resident part of the city. Our Consul-General, Mr. Shanklin, introduced to me a Mexican by the name of Zepeda, who said that he knew Gen. Huerta well and that he would carry the message.

(Continued on Second Page.)



Madero from centre balcony of the palace attempting to address crowd as revolution began.