

# If We Should Enter Mexico, How Big an Army?

Estimates at Washington Range from 50,000 to 200,000, Dependent on the Political Situation  
Across the Border—Prolonged Guerrilla Warfare Possible



"MEXICO'S PRESIDENTIAL PARADE," AS SEEN BY A POPULAR CARTOONIST OF THE COUNTRY.

Ten Presidents, including the late General Porfirio Diaz, ascended to power in a period of six years up to the time of Carranza's accession in 1915. General Diaz held office from 1878 to 1883 and again from 1888 to 1911. Francisco Leon de la Barra, second in the procession, was in power from May to November, 1911. Francisco I. Madero, president for more than two years, is third in the picture. Senor Pedro Lascurian, number four, was president from 7:01 P. M. to 7:46 P. M.—presidential chair for a month in the summer of 1914. Gutierrez, Garza, and Chazaro, the seventh, eighth, and ninth, all seem to have enjoyed their presidential

[The pictures with this article are furnished by George D. Wright, producer of the motion picture series "Mexico Today," released by the Educational Films Corporation of America.]

**M**UCH difference of opinion exists among military men as to the number of men likely to be required should relations between this country and Mexico come to the pass of intervention by the United States.

Foremost is the question whether Congress, in cutting off 175,000 men from the number asked for by the War Department, has reduced the force for the remainder of the fiscal year to a desirable point. This situation, however, as indicated by inquiry at Washington, is not bothering military men; they think that even with the army pared down, as it will be after Oct. 1, there will be an ample force to cope with whatever condition may arise in regard to Mexico.

Since the General Staff was reorganized and expanded by General Peyton C. March, the War Plans Division has become an important branch, and there is no doubt that, in accordance with its function to be ready where possible clash with any other country looms, several plans have been worked out for the invasion of Mexico, should that be found necessary. These plans, in which is to be counted co-operation with the navy, undertake to meet every set of conditions that may arise.

These sets of conditions divide themselves into two classes, from the standpoint of the number of men required. Should invasion be in support of a movement in Mexico that gave acceptable assurances of protection to the lives and property of Americans in Mexico and of a fair Government for all, a smaller force would be required than if the invasion was one which, confronting the united forces of Mexico, had first to overcome these before order and a Government guaranteeing protection and justice to all could be established.

In the first case the number of troops required would depend on the strength of the movement in Mexico itself; were this of considerable scope it is estimated by some military men who have been studying the situation that not more than 50,000 men would be needed. At the other end of the proposition, facing a united Mexico, the estimates run from 100,000 to 200,000, and one officer who had experience in the Philippines and

who believed fighting in Mexico would be similar in important lines to that in the Philippines, said that he thought that 500,000 men would be required in the end, counting the detachments needed to guard railroad stations and to keep other lines of communications open.

There is no doubt that our plan of campaign would profit by the experience we had in the Philippines; that is, the problem would not be that of meeting forces equal in fighting power, for it is not expected that the Mexicans could stand up against our soldiers, but it would become mainly a question of routing them out of retreats selected for their natural defense against attack. The fighting in the Philippines developed along these lines, and, while there was never any question of the superiority of our forces or doubt as to the outcome, it was eight years before the islands were completely pacified and order established.

The extent of the country and the mountain fastnesses were problems that had to be dealt with; Mexico is a country of much greater extent and immeasurably better supplied with mountains for guerrilla tactics than the Philippines. For this reason it would not be surprising, intervention taking place, if the desultory mountain fighting were prolonged for several years, long after the chief forces had been driven from the field. But it ought to take only a little while to re-establish traffic and industry in the main parts of the country.

In the Philippines a constabulary force was organized out of natives, and after the Filipinos saw that the Americans were fighting to establish order and justice in the islands, larger and larger numbers of them joined. Something like this, it is asserted by those who favor intervention, would follow in Mexico, as it was made apparent that the United States forces had no intention of taking possession of the country, but were there to put an end to the disorder and insecurity which weighed upon all.

Even if, as Carranza has predicted, an invasion of Mexico by the United States would result in the union of the half dozen independent armed forces in the country, it is asserted by those who be-

lieve intervention is the only solution that this would not last long, and that the better element would soon begin to recognize the real purpose of action by the United States.

From this is seen that the factors are both military and political and that plans of campaign, in the event intervention is decided to be necessary, must take many considerations into account. The population of Mexico is about 15,000,000. The largest element is of mixed blood, about 45 per cent., with the Indian element next, placed at close to 40 per cent. There is no way to get more than a small proportion of the population into an army. Equipment for the forces now in the field is hard to obtain.

The largest force is Carranza's. Late estimates put his army, on paper, at 120,000, with 250 Generals, 1,800 field officers, and 8,850 officers of the line. Carranza has been endeavoring to organize aviation and tank services. Reports are that he has about fifty airplanes and one tank. The number of men Carranza actually has in the field is thought to be about 60,000.

Villa's force is placed at from 5,000 to 10,000 men, distributed in small groups in Chihuahua and some of the adjoining States. Felix Diaz is reported to have 5,000 in the field. Palaez claims 10,000 in the Vera Cruz territory. Mieuxeiro has about 6,000 Indians under him in Oaxaca, only a part of whom are armed. Reports are that Palaez and Mieuxeiro are co-operating with Diaz, and that the three forces may be united in their common opposition to Carranza. Colonel Esteban Cantu, in Lower California, has about 1,700 men. Zapata's forces are estimated at 1,200 men.

There are numerous other guerrilla chieftains, but these include the organized forces of any considerable size, and their total gives an idea of the Mexican Army, if, as Carranza boasts, intervention drove them all together. That prophecy, it is asserted, seems less and less likely, as it is made apparent that the larger number of the lesser leaders are waiting for the "strong man" to appear, to rally to him against Carranza.

Carranza's standing has been weakened by the fact that it is now plain that

he sided in the war with the Germans, and that, in further proof of lack of leadership, he has been unable to compose his differences with the United States. He is nearing the end of his term as President. Two men stand out most prominently as his successor, General Obregon and General Gonzales, Commander in Chief of the Army. In recent elections in different districts of Mexico they have been brought into opposition, and the question of intervention may turn on which finally wins the ascendancy in Mexico.

Gonzales is said to be particularly well disposed to the United States; he is pro-ally and is for the protection of foreigners. Obregon was reported during the war to be on the side of the Germans. The approach of a Presidential change in Mexico increases the mixture of political and military factors in the situation. Representative Julius Kahn, Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the House, was asked a few days ago, in Washington, about the criticism that the army had been cut to a figure smaller than it should be.

"After Oct. 1 we shall have approximately 230,000 men for the remainder of the fiscal year," he answered. "That is approximately 130,000 more enlisted men than we ever had in any peace army in the United States, except during the period of two months just before we entered the war. In fact, we had about 120,000 when we entered the war."

"It seems to me that with 230,000 enlisted men we can cope with anything that may immediately arise. I have always felt that we would not need a greater force than that in the event of trouble on our southern border. If war should break out, Congress, being in session, could easily pass a law to expand our forces, and there is no doubt that the required number of men in excess of 230,000 could be early brought to the colors. Most of this force of 230,000 would be available in this country, as I understand the policy of the War Department to be to reduce our forces in the occupied territory to approximately 5,000 men by Sept. 30."

After the cut by Congress of the army

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appropriation, reducing the force from the 509,000 asked by the War Department to 325,000 as the average for the year, the War Department announced that in September the number of officers would be reduced to those in the regular army, 12,000. This means the discharge of some 20,000 officers in the emergency class.

"The appropriation made in the Army Appropriation bill," Mr. Kahn said in regard to this, "will provide for a great many more officers and men in 1920 than the regular establishment ever had before during peace time. The average army, 325,000, shows that more officers will be needed, on the basis of the 28,000 asked for for an army of 509,000, than the 12,000 in the regular establishment. I should say they will probably need 15,000 officers for the number of enlisted



General Obregon and President Carranza in Conference.

sume the money will be expended in a manner that will give us a well-proportioned army.

"I hope the War Department will lay before us a permanent policy for the army by Aug. 1, so that it may be known what the War Department contemplates for the future. I don't say the bill will go through as written, but it will probably be the basis for a plan that Congress can adopt and the country will approve. If we adopt a policy of universal training it will not be necessary to have a standing army of 509,000 enlisted men and 28,000 officers, as the War Department asked for. Not only do I believe such an army is unnecessary in peace time, but it would probably defeat any attempt to secure a law of universal training in this country.

"I recognize the fact that the question of expense is serious. In the past when some of us were trying to pass legislation by way of preparedness we were met by the pacifists with the argument that 70 cents of every dollar paid into the Treasury of the United States from

all sources was being expended for military preparation, past and present. It was a very potent argument, and undoubtedly made pacifists of a great many who had not taken the time to investigate the whole subject. Therefore I feel that we must always bear in mind the question of the cost of our military establishment.

"The people forget that war adds enormously to the burden of taxation. I have always contended that if we had expended about \$2,000,000,000 during the five years preceding entrance into the world war we could probably have prevented that war and saved ourselves the \$30,000,000,000 of indebtedness we are now called upon to meet. What is more important, the killing, wounding, and maiming of large numbers of our young men might have been averted."

Mr. Kahn said the adoption of the League of Nations would not lessen his advocacy of universal training.

"Every well-informed proponent of the League of Nations," said Mr. Kahn, "has stated that the adoption of the

covenant of such a league is not a preventative of war. We have the word of our President to that effect. We have the word of Lloyd George and of Clemenceau. Field Marshal Haig, speaking on June 12 at the Guildhall in London, said this to the people of England: 'As a man who has seen enough of war to make him determined to spend his intensest effort to prevent its recurrence I urge you to set up forthwith the organization of a citizen army on territorial lines—an organization which will insure that every able-bodied citizen shall come forward when the next crisis comes, not as a willing, patriotic but military ignorant man, but as a trained man.'

"General Pershing has expressed himself on somewhat similar lines. These men have witnessed the horrors of war. They want to avoid war for the future. They feel that the best way to avoid it is to have a well-trained citizen army that could come to the aid of their country at the first call of danger. It is for these reasons that I think universal training is more important than ever."



Henry P. Fletcher, American Ambassador to Mexico.

men provided for. Of course, the War Department is charged with the duty of administration; Congress has not attempted to write into the law just what proportion of money shall be expended for this or that branch of service. I pre-