

## **KANSAS PRESS COVERAGE TO THE PANCHO VILLA RAID ON COLUMBUS, NEW MEXICO MARCH 9, 1916**

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During the early morning hours on March 9, 1916, Pancho Villa and his followers raided Columbus, New Mexico. This raid by Villa was one of the few times that the United States was invaded. The purpose of this paper is to examine the Villa raid on Columbus and Kansas' reaction to it throughout the month of March. In order to understand the actions of Villa, it is necessary to look at the internal problems in Mexico beginning in 1911. After looking at these events, the coverage of the raid by the Kansas newspapers will be studied.

To determine Kansas' reaction, four Kansas newspapers will be examined. Of those newspapers, the Topoka Daily Capital and the Hutchinson News were published daily, the Salina Semi-Weekly Journal was published twice a week, and the Hays Free Press was a weekly publication. By examining these papers, it will be shown that Kansas supported President Woodrow Wilson's decision to send troops into Mexico after Villa and his band of followers.

From 1911 to 1916, Mexico was in a state of turmoil. The old regime under Porfirio Diaz was overthrown in 1911 by reformer Francisco Madero. Madero was a mystic, idealist, and dreamer who tried to destroy the backbone of the old system.<sup>1</sup> Madero attempted to reconstruct the base of Mexican society and as a result counter-revolutions occurred.<sup>2</sup> Madero, in February 1913, was betrayed, deposed and murdered by his chief general Victoriano Huerta.

In March 1913, Woodrow Wilson became President of the United States. President Wilson refused Huerta recognition as President of Mexico because of the method he used for gaining control. Wilson felt that a constitutional government had been overthrown by a military usurper, and the rightful ruler of Mexico had been murdered.<sup>3</sup> The President felt that to recognize such a coup d'etat in a country as important as Mexico would be to sanction and encourage government by assassination throughout the Western Hemisphere. Because of that belief by Wilson, he would not recognize Huerta's government. To do so would mean the United States was recognizing a government of butchers.<sup>4</sup>

Wilson's attitude toward Mexico represented a sharp clash between idealism and legalism.<sup>5</sup> From the days of Thomas Jefferson it had generally been the policy of the United States to recognize established governments, no matter what the circumstances or how often those governments came into power. Wilson, however, changed this policy and further clarified his Mexican policy in an address at Mobil, Alabama October 27, 1913. He asserted:

We dare not turn from the principle that morality and not expediency is the thing that must guide us and that we will never condone iniquity because it is most convenient to do so... It is a very perilous thing to determine the foreign policy of a nation in the terms of material interest. It not only is unfair to those with whom you are dealing, but it is degrading as regards your own actions.<sup>6</sup>

On August 27, 1913, President Wilson announced he would pursue a policy of "watchful waiting".<sup>7</sup> This would mean that Wilson would wait and see if Huerta could extend control over all of Mexico and to see if he would hold constitutional elections as he promised. The policy of "watchful waiting" ended in October 1913, when Huerta inaugurated a full-fledged military dictatorship. President Wilson accused Huerta of personal bad faith and said the United States would not approve any election he might hold. Wilson also addressed a circular note to the governments with representatives in Mexico asking them to withhold recognition from Huerta's regime. The President warned those governments that his immediate duty was to require Huerta's retirement from the Mexican government, and that the United States would employ any means necessary to secure this result.<sup>8</sup>

It appeared that Wilson made this statement to ensure the governments with representatives in Mexico, that the United States was serious and would not back down from asking Huerta to resign as president of Mexico. In April 1914, an opportunity to intervene presented itself. On April 10, the paymaster and crew members of the U.S.S. Dolphin were arrested by a Mexican Colonel when they landed without permission at Tampico, Mexico.<sup>9</sup> When General Morelos Zaragoza learned of the incident he released the men and sent a personal apology to Admiral Henry T. Mayo, commander of the American squadron off Vera Cruz. Admiral Mayo demanded a twenty-one gun salute to the American flag as an apology. Huerta refused to give the salute to the flag.<sup>10</sup> When Huerta refused to give the salute to the flag tensions between the two countries became tense. On April 21, marines landed and took possession of Vera Cruz. In taking Vera Cruz, nineteen Americans were killed and scores were wounded in four days of street battle. The Americans continued to occupy Vera Cruz until late November 1914.<sup>11</sup>

In October 1915, Venustiano Carranza was recognized by the United States as the de facto ruler of Mexico. He had become president when Huerta was overthrown in late 1914. When Carranza became president of Mexico, Pancho Villa, who was one of Carranza's generals, left the Carranza camp and began to raise the standard of revolt against Carranza's government.<sup>12</sup> Villa led the revolt against Carranza because he wanted Carranza to begin the land reforms which he had previously promised. It was at this time that Villa made threats against the United States and in early January 1916, Villa carried out his threats.<sup>13</sup> At Santa Ysabel Villistas killed sixteen Americans. With the attack at Santa Ysabel, Villa was deliberately attempting to provoke American intervention as a means to discredit Carranza.<sup>14</sup> The United States demanded that Carranza punish Villa for the raid, however, Carranza was not able to catch Villa and in March 1916, Pancho Villa led the raid on Columbus, New Mexico.

On March 9, 1916 at 4:00 a. m., Francisco Villa and his bandits raided United States territory.<sup>15</sup> This was only the beginning of the trouble for people on the United States-Mexican border. Before the raid on Columbus by Pancho Villa, the newspapers in Kansas were covering the events in Europe. The major story at this time was the German bombardment at Verdun.<sup>16</sup> With the raid by Villa on United States territory; the press began to shift coverage from European events and devoted much of its attention to events here at home. The amount of coverage varied with the different newspapers in Kansas. The Topeka Daily Capital devoted much of its front page coverage to nothing but news on the raid for about three weeks.<sup>17</sup> The Hutchinson News devoted much of its front page news to the coverage of the Villa raid for almost two weeks.<sup>18</sup>

The first accounts of the raid on Columbus began to appear in the Kansas papers on the Morning of March 10, 1916.<sup>19</sup> The headlines clearly indicated the shock the editors felt about the vicious attack. For example, the Topeka Daily Capital reported that "United States troops invade Mexico and clash with outlaws after Villa murders sixteen Americans in night raid."<sup>20</sup> Another example was, yelling "Death to Americans" Villa's outlaws swept into a New Mexico town shooting down civilians aroused from sleep.<sup>21</sup> With the first volley of shots fired by the Mexicans, the civilians of Columbus barricaded themselves in their homes and fired at the Mexicans as they darted through the streets. The Mexicans in turn began to set fire to the houses. After the initial encounter with the Mexicans, the American troops of the Thirteenth Cavalry drove the Mexicans across the border. Villa made a stand five miles south of the border where spirited fighting ensued.<sup>22</sup> The Americans had 250 troops which went against the Mexican forces numbering between 3000 and 5000 men. What was interesting was that the Americans reported only two casualties and the Mexican losses were estimated at one hundred killed and twice as many wounded.<sup>23</sup> At the time of publication, the number of casualties by the Americans and the Mexicans could not be verified.

The major account for the raid on Columbus was supplied by Mrs. Maud Hawk Wright. According to the newspapers accounts, Mrs. Wright was held captive by Villa for nine days prior to the raid on Columbus. According to the accounts she was taken captive by Villa when his men were looking for supplies on her farm. According to Mrs. Wright, Villa announced March 1 his intention to attack Columbus.<sup>24</sup> Villa was able to get his men to support him by telling them that killing of Americans was justifiable because the United States was responsible for the wretched conditions of the Mexican people.<sup>25</sup> Villa made this statement because he felt that the American businessmen were exploiting the Mexican people. Villa believed that the American businesses were trying to get rich from Mexican oil with no regard for the Mexican people.<sup>26</sup> When Washington received the news of American troops crossing the border the governmental officials were pleased. The Congressional circles wanted United States troops to punish the Mexican bandits for terrorizing American citizens on both sides of the border.<sup>27</sup> According to the papers; this was also the mood of the people throughout the nation.

The nation, as well as Washington, wanted the army to have free rein to catch the bandits if possible. This was the ideal the press stressed throughout the month of March 1916, in its coverage of the raid on Columbus.<sup>28</sup> The main story on March 11 was President Wilson's order to send American troops across the Mexican border to capture Pancho Villa dead or alive. Wilson declared that this move was entirely in aid of the Carranza government and without thought of aggression.<sup>29</sup> Wilson, in a statement given at the White House, commented:

An adequate force will be sent at once in pursuit of Villa with the single objective of capturing him and putting a stop to his forays. This can be done and will be done in entirely friendly aid of the constitutional authorities in Mexico, and with scrupulous respect for the sovereignty of that Republic.<sup>30</sup>

According to the newspapers, it seemed that both Houses approved President Wilson's action on sending troops into Mexico after Villa and his bandits. Representative William R. Smith, a Democrat, from Texas commented on Wilson's order:

Send troops after the assassins and pursue them until they are captured. They should be brought back alive or dead. If they are captured alive, they should be brought to Columbus and hanged. I would put no limit on the number of miles our troops might have to go into Mexico to do this. To Carranza I would say that we are only doing our duty.<sup>31</sup>

Henry F. Ashurst, a Democratic Senator from Arizona, also commented on President Wilson's order:

It is the duty of the Senate to vote authority to send troops after those red- Handed cutthroats, bring them back to Columbus where they made a funeral Pyre out of American citizens and shoot them on the spot. That is, I would give them grapeshot instead of grape juice.<sup>32</sup>

These statements appeared to show that Wilson was backed by the Representatives and Senators from the Southwestern part of the United States. Besides having the backing of the people, President Wilson also had international law on his side. By a provision in a treaty signed between Mexico and the United States in 1890, "The military forces of either country could pursue marauders across the international line where a 'hot trail' existed."<sup>33</sup>

President Wilson put Major General Frederick Funston, who was from Kansas, in charge of carrying out his orders.<sup>34</sup> General Funston's main objective was to re-enter Mexico to capture or kill Pancho Villa. General Funston suggested that details of the troop movement should be kept secret, to provide the element of surprise. On March 11, the Committee on War plan reached the conclusion that General Funston must be left unhampered to work out the problem of pursuing the bandits with any number of forces he thought necessary. General Funston was to secure American border towns and ranches against repetitions of the Columbus raid. General Funston was to have 12,000 troops to employ on the border. The general plan was to distribute the Infantry to guard the border towns, while the cavalry would scan the countryside to flush out Villa. The General had no intentions of using the Navy.<sup>35</sup> Besides General Funston having 12,000 American troops, the Mexican Army had 85,000 troops to help in pursuing Villa and his followers.<sup>36</sup> The Mexican Army also had approximately 200 cannons to help in the pursuit. With 97,000 men and 200 cannons after Villa, who had a force of 3000 to 5000 men, depending on the estimates, it would seem that his days were numbered. It was really amazing that Villa, facing these odds, was able to avoid capture. It was true that Villa had an advantage of knowing every trail and water hole in the mountains, but with his lack of men and supplies it seems remarkable that he still avoided capture.

The following day Major General Funston, who was in charge of troop movements, applied a strict censorship on military proceedings.<sup>37</sup> The major reason for this censorship was to keep the American troop movement in Mexico a secret from Villa. By doing this, Funston believed there was a chance for a surprise attack. Since most of the peasants in the hills and border towns were for Villa, the secrecy on troop movement would be hard to accomplish.<sup>38</sup> Some of the Mexican officials were also disturbed with the idea of American troops on Mexican soil. One Mexican official in Juarez commented:

We are now placing large forces in the field against Villa and I hope we can dispose of him before the American troops cross the border. It would be much better from the Mexican viewpoint to let us finish him ourselves. There then would be no possibility of any clashes or misunderstanding.<sup>39</sup>

On March 12, the Topeka Daily Capital reported that General Carranza sent a message to the State Department requesting permission to send his troops, should the occasion arise, across the border into the United States in pursuit of the bandits. At the time of printing, President Wilson said he would consider Carranza's request. On March 13, Carranza issued a declaration which stated, "Under no circumstances would Mexico grant the right to the United States to send in Armed forces to capture Villa without consent and reciprocal privilege being first obtained."<sup>40</sup> President Wilson had not replied as yet, but it was thought that he would reply in favor of Carranza. Twenty-four hours later the officials in Washington replied to the Mexicans. They accepted Carranza's proposal.

On March 14, the United States entered into a formal agreement with the de facto government of Mexico.<sup>41</sup> This agreement gave the Americans the right to send troops across the border to hunt down Villa and his bandits, and it also guaranteed cooperation from the Carranza forces to help with the chase. This agreement just seemed to formalize the Treaty of 1890 between the two countries. That Treaty had said that either country could cross the border in pursuit of bandits if a "hot trail" existed. The Mexican officials and the American officials were jubilant over the acceptance of this proposal. Both forces could not turn their attention toward Villa and his bandits.

On the evening of March 14, Major General Funston announced that Brigadier General John J. Pershing would be in charge of the expeditionary forces. General Pershing had approximately 12,000 troops with forty-eight mountain and field gun batteries under his command.<sup>42</sup> The Topeka Daily Capital also reported that the troops would be spread along a line about 200 miles long between Douglas, Arizona and El Paso, Texas, and that the expeditionary force would also have the use of a complete motor supply train and the use of a full air squadron of the United States Army.<sup>43</sup> That same article also reported that "one third" of the force was made up of cavalry units and that there was a likelihood the expedition could continue for an extended period of time before Villa would be captured.<sup>44</sup>

The motor supply train would take the place of the railroads. The trucks would carry munitions, food, clothing and other items necessary for the expedition. The airplanes would serve principally as scouts, seeking out the hiding places of the bandits, reporting back to the armed detachment of soldiers and directing their progress.<sup>45</sup> This would be the first time in the history of the United States warfare that the army would engage airplanes. March 15 did not bring much change in the situation. The force under Pershing had not crossed the border yet, and they were beginning to fear a guerilla warfare attack from Villa.<sup>46</sup> The guerilla tactics were feared because of the kind of terrain the expeditionary force would encounter. It was reported that Villa was taking refuge in the Sierra Madra proper.<sup>47</sup> If this were true it would lead the American and Mexican forces into a barren desert without roads and not much water. Under these conditions Villa would be able to use guerilla warfare quite effectively.

With Villa's forces numbering between 3000 and 5000 men this kind of warfare would fit his force perfectly. The bandits would be able to hide in the mountains without being found. Since Villa's forces were so small, compared to the combined forces of Pershing's and Carranza's of 97,000, Villa could split his forces and send them off in different directions. Because the territory was so large, it would be very difficult for the forces of Pershing and Carranza to locate Villa. It must be remembered that the villagers of Northern Mexico were on Villa's side, and this could be a thorn in the side to the forces chasing him. If Villa needed anything, he would take it by force. The press reported on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March that Mexican farmers were telling stories of Villa's bandits seizing all their guns, ammunition, saddles and extra horses.<sup>48</sup> This prompted General Gabriel Gavin, commanding the Carranza forces at Juarez, to state, "I hope that we shall take Villa soon with the help of the United States."<sup>49</sup> The longer Villa eluded his captors, the better his chances of never being captured became. The following day the order the American troops were waiting for was issued.

On March 16, General John Pershing with more than 4000 troops crossed into Mexico in pursuit of Pancho Villa. General Pershing's orders were to overtake and wipe out Villa and his organization.<sup>50</sup> The campaign would continue until Villa was captured or killed. Pershing had no restrictions and the troops were prepared to go anywhere to carry out the president's order. The Mexican citizens in the northern part of the Republic were bitterly hostile to the action of the United States.<sup>51</sup> They were upset and unfriendly toward the Americans because they felt the American businesses were exploiting their culture. There were reported incidents of the American citizens being harassed, so many of the Americans began to migrate across the border into United States territory. When the orders to go into Mexico were issued, orders were sent out to sea ports along the United States and Mexican borders simultaneously.

All shipments of arms, ammunition or explosives consigned to Mexico were to be held up unless they were clearly designated for the de-facto government.<sup>52</sup> This order was issued because of rumors that shipments of arms, ammunition and explosives were being sent to Villa and his bandits. Governor Arthur Capper in a editorial on March 16 said the best thing that could happen to the United States was to have Villa captured by the Mexicans before the Americans actively entered upon the enterprise.<sup>53</sup> If Villa was not captured before the Americans entered Mexico, the possibilities of war, and a very long war at that, existed. Capper felt that the luck and attitude of the Mexican soldiers would determine the outcome.

On March 16, the Topeka Daily Capital also had an interview with Augustine Alba. Alba was a member of the Topeka Police department who by birth was a Mexican and by adoption an American. Alba expressed the opinion that Carranza's soldiers would join Villa and whip the American soldiers.<sup>54</sup> He felt the Americans would only win because they had ammunition and food supplies. Alba felt all Mexicans would join together to fight the American troops because they were a proud people. The Mexicans did not like to have their country invaded by a foreign nation. Alba said that the United States citizens would pull together if they were invaded by a foreign country the same as the Mexican citizens would; was this not the question at stake when President Wilson ordered American troops across the border to catch Pancho Villa for raiding Columbus, New Mexico?

The major development for the press on March 17 was the rumors that began to float around. The major rumor was that Carranza had been assassinated.<sup>55</sup> There were also rumors that Diaz (son of former President Diaz) would help Villa. Diaz felt the same as Alba, that all Mexican citizens would unite behind Villa to defeat the Americans. Diaz was essentially saying that Villa would become a national hero.<sup>56</sup> These were just rumors though, and they could not be confirmed. On March 18, the tensions along the border began to sharpen. The Mexicans at Juarez were becoming increasingly hostile toward Americans. The Americans were beginning to migrate over to the United States territory to end hostility against them. One high army official said Mexico was a powder keg ready to explode, if the troops of Carranza and the people joined Villa.<sup>57</sup> If this happened, Pershing would need every troop available to him to defeat Villa. This feeling of Mexico being a powder keg went hand in hand with the rumors circulating on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March. The press was conveying the feeling that the people wanted this expedition over and would do anything to accomplish this goal.

There were two stories indicating the willingness of the people to end this chase for Pancho Villa. In Chicago there were 1000 men who reported to recruiting officers with the objective to go to Mexico and fight against Villa. There were also 46,000 Spanish American war veterans ready to volunteer for service in Mexico. President Wilson had to be careful in this situation because he did not want to go to war with Mexico and if Wilson sent more troops across the border the Mexicans could take this as a sign of aggression. In this respect Mexico was really a powder keg just waiting to explode. Pershing was facing a problem in Mexico due to the lengthening of his communication and supply lines. The further he advanced into Mexico the easier it would become for guerillas to raid. Pershing stopped sending reports to Funston regularly due to the lengthening of his lines.<sup>58</sup>

On March 19, there were reports that Villa had taken refuge in the vastness of the mighty Sierra mountains. The people of this region were followers of Villa and were expected to give him food, help with recruits and give him information as to the movements of Pershing's forces.<sup>59</sup> Pershing, on the other hand, was trying to keep his forces together until he was sure of the spot where Villa was going to make his stand. General Pershing hoped to force Villa into a battle and trap his forces in the next day or two. Two days later on March 21, Major General Funston was in correspondence with Washington asking for more soldiers.<sup>60</sup> Funston wanted the soldiers to help protect the communication line which was already over 100 miles long.

At this time, the aviators of the United States army were searching trails in the passes of the Sierra Madre Mountains for Villa. The army felt that it would be easier for the planes to locate Villa and his men. Once Villa was located, the planes could give his location to the ground forces. However, the airplanes were having trouble searching for Villa. One airplane crashed while trying to take off due to swirling winds and two were lost in flight heading toward the Mexican border.<sup>61</sup> The planes were not as successful as the army first thought they might be. The dust was one of the major problems for the planes. The dust would cause the motors of the planes to stall out. Since the planes could not be used for scouting, the army was talking about using them to carry mail to Pershing and then taking his reports back to Funston. In the Hutchinson News on March 21, an editorial appeared expressing the same attitudes expressed by Capper and Alba in the Topeka Daily Capital on March 16.<sup>62</sup>

The editor felt the United States would act the same way as the Mexicans did if they were invaded by an enemy force. The press did not have much coverage on Villa on March 22. The Topeka Daily Capital reported the names of the two aviators who were lost twenty-four hours earlier. They were Lieutenant Carrell and Lieutenant Willis. Lieutenant Carrell was one of the cleverest and most conservative fliers in the army while Lieutenant Willis was one of the youngest aviators in the service.<sup>63</sup> It was not known if they were captured by Villa's troops but it was thought that Carrell and Willis were still out in the desert somewhere.

There was a report from a Topeka man, who refused to give his name because he was not sure of the spirit in which the government might take his comments, which dealt with the initial raid on Columbus, New Mexico. The man reported that the machine guns at Columbus failed to work because there was no ammunition for them.<sup>64</sup> The ammunition for the guns was locked up and the guard could not be found. This man reported also that there was only one sentry on duty on the side of town where the raid came from. If this story was true, it makes one wonder if the army or the Thirteenth Cavalry was really prepared for trouble. Trouble had been brewing on the border for a couple weeks prior to the Columbus raid, so the army should have been ready for trouble or at the very least expecting something like the raid to happen. The papers on March 22 covered the incidents in Europe along with the Mexican trouble. The main story dealt with the French checking the German onslaught at Verdun.<sup>65</sup> Both the Topeka Daily Capital and the Hutchinson News covered the Verdun story. The Verdun attack was a bloody battle and it had been mentioned in the papers for the past few days.

On March 23, rumors were beginning to surface again about the Mexican troops deserting Carranza. There were reports that General Louis Herrera, Carranza's military governor to Chihuahua, had renounced Carranza and joined Villa's forces.<sup>66</sup> This was important to the Americans because if this report was true it could lead other Mexican leaders in the middle to support Villa. If this happened the United States could be facing war with Mexico. However, on March 24, General Herrera announced that he had not denounced Carranza. Herrera commented that he was ready to fight Villa as energetically as possible.<sup>67</sup> This was pleasing to hear for the Americans but it also mystified General Funston because he had heard so many rumors that he did not know what to believe anymore.

There were also reports in the Topeka Daily Capital of speeches made by Villa to his followers. Villa said he intended to kill every American he came across, and he was not going to take any prisoners. Villa also said the American invaders would never capture him except after his death.<sup>68</sup> Villa was upset because the Mexican people were becoming poor while the Americans in Mexico were becoming rich. The most disturbing news to the United States was reports of German officers arriving in Vera Cruz. Villa had announced in early March that Germany and Japan would support him if he attacked Columbus. With reports of Germany officers arriving in Vera Cruz, the Americans were beginning to fear that Germany might support Villa. This report was never confirmed, so fear was a little premature. The headlines on March 24, said that battle between Villa's forces and the forces of Pershing and Carranza was eminent. The American troops had been in Mexico for three weeks and they had not engaged Villa yet. The troops as well as General Pershing were looking forward to trapping Villa soon.<sup>69</sup> The quicker Villa could be captured, the sooner the trouble on the border could be stopped. The Thirteenth Cavalry wanted revenge against Villa and this could be the chance they were waiting for.

On Saturday March 25, Pancho Villa was reported trapped in a small plateau between Rio de Santa Carla and the Rio del Carmen.<sup>70</sup> If Villa could avoid this trap, he could cause trouble for General Pershing and the forces of Carranza. By escaping this trap, Villa could split his forces and this would cause Pershing and Carranza to split their forces. If this happened, Villa and his bandits could attack the split forces in guerilla fashion. The weather was also against the expeditionary force. The snow and sleet were bringing suffering to lightly clad United States troops.<sup>71</sup> Casas Grande was 7000 feet high and was at the beginning of the foothills of the Sierra Madres. This was the area to where Villa was retreating and the deeper American troops followed the more they could expect severe weather. This cold weather could also bring suffering to the Villa forces because they were short of supplies and they had no way of getting supplies unless Mexicans living in the hills could supply them. This was unlikely because there were not that many Mexican farmers living in the area. On March 27, Villa and his bandits were able to avoid the forces of Pershing and Carranza. As a result, three columns of American Cavalry began to pursue Villa. The American troops were already 250 miles south of the border and unless the three columns of American Cavalry and the Mexican forces could stop Villa, the distance would greatly increase by the close of the week.<sup>72</sup> As mentioned before, the longer the communication lines of Pershing became the greater the chance it had for being attacked by the bandits. If the bandits could harass the American supply and communication lines, it would hamper the effort against the bandits.

Also on March 27, there were reports of a battle between Government troops and Villistas. General Guzman and twenty-two men, all members of Villa's band, were killed and ten prisoners were taken.<sup>73</sup> This had to be a boost to the morale of the soldiers. After chasing the bandits for close to a month without an engagement, the troops were wondering if they would ever capture Villa. Pershing, at this time, admitted to General Funston that the invasion could last for several months. Pershing reported that the nature of the country Villa was hiding in precluded any possibility of an early capture.<sup>74</sup> This statement by Pershing turned out to be very true since he spent eleven months chasing Villa and never captured him.

The Americans agreeing with the idea General Pershing voiced on the possibility of a long chase wanted permission to use the Mexican railroads to move supplies to the soldiers.<sup>75</sup> However, General Carranza had not yet given his permission to the Americans to use the railroads. With the communication lines growing longer every day the use of Mexican railroads would take some pressure off of the American over stretched lines. The Topeka Daily Capital on March 28 reported an interesting story involving the state of Arizona. The people of Arizona had been worried since the Villa raid on Columbus that the same thing would happen to them. For this reason, the Governor of Arizona asked the Federal Government for permission to issue 3000 rifles to the citizens of his state.<sup>76</sup> The rifles were for the purpose of self protection against raids from Mexico. The Federal Government, however, told the Governor of Arizona that law prevented the Government from furnishing the rifles requested. As it turned out, the people of Arizona had nothing to fear because Villa never had a chance to get that far. Pancho Villa was spending so much time running and hiding that he had no time to raid anywhere even if he wanted to.

The situation on March 29 was not much different than it was on the previous day. Villa was still managing to stay in front of his pursuers and the problems of supplying the army with food became more acute each day. Because the problem of supplying the army was becoming difficult, General Funston asked for two more motor truck companies. With these two added to the ones already in service, General Pershing would have six companies of twenty-seven each.<sup>77</sup> The press reported also that the War Department was ordering an investigation of the circumstances of the raid on Columbus, New Mexico.<sup>78</sup> This investigation was to be conducted when the men of the Thirteenth Cavalry returned from Mexico. The Carranza government on March 30 in reply to the Americans asking permission to use Mexican railroads to ship supplies to its army gave permission for such use. There was one provision, though; the supplies must be consigned as ordinary freight to some individual not connected with the army.<sup>79</sup> Even with this provision attached to the usage of the Mexican railroads, it could help take some of the pressure off of the Americans over-stretched communication and supply lines.

The press on March 30 also covered news of a new crisis which had arisen in the European conflict. The German U-boats were waging a ruthless warfare against all ships on the high seas. The officials in Washington believed the submarines were operating under secret orders to torpedo every ship approaching England.<sup>80</sup> This unrestricted submarine warfare by the Germans would be one of the factors which would cause the United States to enter the War in Europe in the near future. The last day of March brought news that the American people wanted to hear. There were reports that said Villa had been shot in the leg. General Gavira, who received the message, said it came from a reliable source. As it turned out, the reliable source was wrong. As the spring of 1916 wore on, the Kansas newspapers began to lose interest in the Pancho Villa raid. The papers still covered news of the American army involvement in Mexico, but it began to appear in the middle section of the papers and the European Crisis was beginning to claim possession of the front page coverage. The expeditionary force sent down to capture Pancho Villa, 'dead or alive' remained in Mexico for eleven months. When the army was ordered out of Mexico in February 1917, it returned to the United States soil without reaching its objective, which was to capture Pancho Villa.

Up until the time American troops returned from Mexico, the Kansas press usually ran an article a day on news of Villa to keep the public informed. However, with the United States about to enter World War I, Pancho Villa was forgotten. With the American troops leaving Mexico, Villa had to be dejected. It must be remembered that Villa's ultimate goal was to have the Americans intervene in Mexican affairs so he could regain his lost control. Pancho Villa continued to roam the Mexican countryside until 1923. When Villa was assassinated in 1923, the horror of March 9, 1916 was terminated.

#### **Footnote**

1. Arthur S. Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917 (New York: Harper and Row, 1954), p. 107.
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3. Ibid., p. 109.
4. Ibid.
5. Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People (New York: F. S. Crofts and Co.,1940), p. 603.
6. Ibid., p. 604.
7. Link, p. 115.
8. Ibid., p. 117.
9. Ibid., p. 122.
10. Ibid.
11. Bailey, p. 606.
12. Ibid., p. 608.
13. Ibid.
14. Link, p. 136.
15. Dr. B. Ira Judd, "Pancho Villa's Raid" Grain Producers News, Vol. 30, 1979.
16. Hutchinson News, March 10, 1916, p. 1.
17. Topeka Daily Capital, March 10-31, 1916.
18. Hutchinson News, March 10-25, 1916.
19. Topeka Daily Capital, March 10, 1916, p. 1.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 2.
26. Link, p. 108.
27. Topeka Daily Capital, March 10, 1916, p. 1.
28. Ibid.
29. Topeka Daily Capital, March 11, 1916, p. 2.
30. Ibid., p. 1.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 2.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., p. 1.
35. Ibid., p. 1-2.
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37. Topeka Daily Capital, March 12, 1916, p.1.
38. Dr. B. Ira Judd, Grain Producers News, p. 6.
39. Topeka Daily Capital, March 12, 1916, p. 2.
40. Topeka Daily Capital, March 13, 1916, p. 1.; Similar story in Hutchinson News, March 13, 1916, p. 1
41. Topeka Daily Capital, March 14, 1916, p. 1.
42. Hays Free Press, March 18, 1916, p. 6.
43. Topeka Daily Capital, March 14, 1916, p. 13b.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Topeka Daily Capital, March 15, 1916, p.1. (They did cross on the 15<sup>th</sup>, but the newspapers are a day behind in their coverage)
47. Ibid.
48. Hutchinson News, March 15, 1916, p. 1.
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