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PRESIDENT
VENUSTIANO
CARRANZA

Corrects Statements
made by
Senator Knox, of Pennsylvania
in the Senate



By Transfer
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MEXICAN EMBASSY
Washington, D. C.

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I HAVE read an article which the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, of Pittsburgh, Penna., published on the 2d of May last, in which it is stated that Senator Knox, of Pennsylvania, ex-Secretary of State, delivered a speech making reference to the message that I read to the Congress of the United States of Mexico, on the 15th of April, and in which he undertakes to correct my statements, and submits as pretended proof of his allegations the copy of a telegram which, he said, was sent from Saltillo on the 21st of February, 1913, by the American Consul, Holland, to the Department of State of the Washington Government. For the information of the public, I transcribe herein what Senator Knox said, according to the dispatch published by the paper referred to:

Mr. President, I rise to a matter of personal privilege, which will take only a few moments. On the 27th day of April, 1916, in a public address I made in the city of Pittsburgh before the Americus Club, in speaking of the recognition by large numbers of the Mexican people and large areas of the Mexican Republic of the accession of Gen. Huerta, I used this language:

"It was the judgment of the diplomats representing foreign countries in Mexico that the provisional government in Mexico had been installed in compliance with the Mexican constitution and Mexican precedent, and that its speedy recognition would be helpful in restoring normal conditions throughout the country. The American ambassador shared this view and asked for instructions. Gen. Carranza, who at that time was governor of one of the Mexican States, had officially informed this Government of his adherence to the new government; the Mexican Congress and courts had recognized its authority, and advices from our diplomatic and consular officers indicated a very general adherence to its authority throughout the Republic."

A few days after the publication of that address, on the 7th day of May, there was published an article in the *New York World* by Gen. Carranza in which he referred to the statement I have just read. Gen. Carranza said:

"It was impossible for me to have adhered to Huerta or to have notified anyone that I had, for upon the very day I received a message from Huerta inviting me to adhere to him, I officially proclaimed that I disclaimed him and his government. Knox can not prove his statement."

I was requested to give an interview in reply to that statement by Gen. Carranza. I declined to do it, stating that there would be time enough for me to take cognizance of such a statement when what I had said had been denied upon the authority of the State Department where the archives rested proving my statement.

I would have let the matter go at that, but a few days ago, in an address to the Mexican Congress, Gen. Carranza revived this denial and stated that I had, in an interview recently in regard to the situation in Mexico, practically reiterated that statement, and he denounced it as false.

I wish to say, Mr. President, that from the time I ceased to be Secretary of State until this very moment I never gave out an interview upon any matter pertaining to the foreign affairs of the United States at any time or in any place, and so far as I know no interview purporting to have come from me has ever been published in an American newspaper.

I send to the desk and ask that there may be read in the order in which they are arranged a letter I addressed to the Secretary of State, his reply, and the inclosure of his reply, as follows:

April 18, 1917.

"Hon. Robert Lansing,

Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

"Dear Mr. Lansing: In a report made by Gen. Carranza to the Mexican Congress on the 15th instant, the General took occasion to denounce as entirely false an interview which he alleged I gave out, naming me as Senator Knox, in which he puts into my mouth words I never said, and refers to an interview I never gave, never having given any upon the subject. This all arises out of a statement that I made in a public speech to the effect that within a few days after the accession of Gen. Huerta, Gen. Carranza had notified the American consul in the State of Coahuila that he was prepared to acknowledge the Huerta regime in Mexico. These are not the exact words I used, but they were words to that effect. Within a few days after making this statement there appeared in the *New York World* an interview with Gen. Carranza, in which he denounced that statement as false.

"I will be obliged to you if you will transmit to me, for the purpose of having the same introduced into the Record, a copy of a telegram received by the Department of State, in which the department is informed as to the intentions of Gen. Carranza in relation to the recognition of Huerta, and which likewise states that this information had been transmitted as well to our embassy in Mexico City. I can not recall the date of this telegram, but it appeared in the information series on the troubles of Mexico, and will be found, I think, under some date in February of 1913.

"Your compliance with this request will enable me to justify my statement and settle an annoying incident. My purpose is to rise to a question of personal privilege and deny that I ever gave an interview such as Gen. Carranza quotes, or any interview at all on the subject, and to produce the telegram as an authority for the only statement that I have ever made in reference to the matter.

Very sincerely yours,

P. C. KNOX."

Secretary Lansing readily complied with the request of Senator Knox, and sent him a copy of the following official telegram regarding the question, and which shows that Carranza did exactly what Mr. Knox says he had done:

[Telegram received from Saltillo, dated February 21, 1913, received February 22, 1.22 a. m.]

Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.
February 21, 1 p. m.:

Gov. Carranza has just announced to me officially that he will conform with the new administration at Mexico City. All opposition here abandoned. Railroads will be opened at once. Perfect quiet prevails. Embassay advised. HOLLAND.

This closes the incident so far as it concerns Senator Knox, and this correspondence is now incorporated into the archives (or records) of Congress, and made part of history.

I now find myself under the necessity of again rectifying (or correcting) the statements made by Mr. Knox, who affirms that I recognized the usurper, Victoriano Huerta, after the *coup d'etat* which he engineered in Mexico City, on the 18th of February, 1913, because not only is this confirmation false, as I have already stated in the message which I read to the Congress of the Union, on the 15th of April of this year, but also because the personal feeling of the Senator who has dealt in this question gives more or less veracity to a declaration by the Consul, Holland, which, he said, he had obtained from me, but who has no proof that I did so, as this was only one of the ruses employed during the course of events immediately following those of the 18th of February, 1913, with the object of giving the Government of the United States the impression that all the governors of the various Federal Entities of the Republic had accepted the new order of things, and, therefore, it was due that the American Government should also recognize the usurping government.

In no other way is explained the hardly honorable behavior of the then Ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, for while on one hand he communicated with Consul Holland by telegraph, directing him to exert pressure on me so that I would recognize

Huerta as President of the Republic, with assurances that he had already been recognized as such by the governors of all the States and by the representatives of all the foreign governments, including those of the United States, accredited to Mexico, and acknowledging the fact that I was the only one who had refused to grant said recognition; on the other hand, Consul Holland, with the object of helping Ambassador Wilson in his designs, was addressing the Department of State, assuring it that I had made the official statement to the effect that I would give my approval to the new administration in Mexico City, and this was done, as it will be clearly seen, with the object of making it appear to the Government of the United States that the regime created by the *coup d'etat* of February 18th had been accepted by all the political entities of the country, with which 'allegations General Huerta and Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson hoped to also obtain the recognition of the new administration by the American Government.

The untruthfulness of these statements is shown by my unchanging attitude from the time that I knew of what took place in the Capital of the Republic, on the 18th of February, because when General Huerta communicated to me that, in accord with the Senate, he had assumed the Executive Power of the Nation, and held as prisoners the President and Vice-President, who had been duly elected, I brought these facts to the knowledge of the Legislature of Coahuila, which body issued, on the 19th of February, decree No. 1421, by means of which, and in representation of the State, whose government was under my charge, the character of Victoriano Huerta, as Chief Executive of the Nation, was repudiated; his acts were also repudiated, and extraordinary powers were granted to me in all the branches of public administration for the purpose of assisting in the maintenance of constitutional order in the Republic, and by which it was ordered to arouse the governments of all the States, the chiefs of the Federal forces, Rurales and auxiliary forces of the Federation, so that they might follow the course taken by the government of Coahuila.

Immediately I addressed by telegraph the governors of the neighboring States, informing them that the government of Coahuila had repudiated the unspeakable assault against the

fundamental pact; had repudiated the government of Victoriano Huerta, and invited all the governors and military chiefs to place themselves on the side of law and order.

When my attitude was known in Mexico City, Ambassador Wilson instructed Consul Holland to exert pressure on me with the object of changing that attitude, and, in fact, the said Consul, accompanied by Vice-Consul Silliman, who acted as his interpreter, came to me and expressed what I have already stated in the foregoing paragraphs.

My answer was an absolute refusal to recognize Victoriano Huerta, and so final was this that, notwithstanding the confirmation that the Consul had expressed to me of the allegation that the Government of the United States had recognized that of the usurper, I addressed, on the 26th, from Ramos Arizpe, via the International Railway, a telegram to President Taft, as follows:

“The haste with which your government has recognized the fraudulent government that Huerta is trying to build upon treason and crime, has brought civil war to the State of Coahuila, which I represent, and very soon it will spread all over the country. The Mexican Nation condemns the villainous *coup d'etat* that has deprived her of her constitutional rulers, but she knows that her institutions are sound and she is ready to uphold and defend them. I hope that your successor will proceed with more caution regarding the social and political interests of my country. Signed—V. Carranza, Constitutional Governor of Coahuila.”

This message was altered to a certain extent by Sr. Teodulo R. Beltran, who was at Eagle Pass, and to whom I sent the message to be forwarded by him to Washington, and at whose conduct I was greatly puzzled, for he had no authority to make the said change in the text of my message. The message, as altered by Sr. Beltran and forwarded by him to Washington, read as follows:

“The Mexican Nation condemns the *coup d'etat* that has deprived her of her constitutional rulers, who were cowardly assassinated; but she knows that her institutions are sound and she is ready to uphold and defend them. I hope that your Excellency's government, as well as that of your successor, will not recognize the fraudulent government

that Huerta is trying to build upon treason and crime, but that you will proceed with caution regarding the political and social interests of my country. Signed—V. Carranza, Constitutional Governor of Coahuila.”

I referred to these facts in my report to the Congress of the Union, and also to the second interview which I had with Vice-Consul Silliman at Villa de Arteaga, where I had established my headquarters, a few days after the first interview which I had with Consul Holland, all of which prove that I continued to follow the same course that I had taken since the 19th of February concerning Huerta.

In the meantime I continued making preparations for the struggle, and already I had fought the federal forces, on the 7th day of May, at the Hacienda de Anheló, and I attacked, during the 22d and 23d, the city of Saltillo, which had been occupied by the forces of Huerta.

In order that the Revolution might be provided with a banner, and that it might spread all over the national territory, as the decree of the Legislature of Coahuila only referred to the repudiation by the government of the State of the administration that resulted from the *coup d'état* of February, there was signed, on the 26th of March, at the Hacienda de Guadalupe, by all the chiefs of the forces that were under my command, the plan that served as the guidon for the continuance of the campaign.

Such acts show that not only did I refuse to recognize the fraudulent government of Huerta, but also that I assumed the command of the Revolution down to its successful termination, and this is vouched by the inhabitants of Saltillo, who witnessed the preparations I undertook, dating from the 19th of February, to fight the usurpation.

With this I shall consider as closed the discussion which Senator Knox has endeavored to maintain regarding this matter, pretending to justify himself and the government which he served, for the undignified procedure of Ambassador Lane Wilson, and I consider as opportune in frankly acknowledging that the intrigue with which said Ambassador tried to obtain the recognition of the administration of Victoriano Huerta from the government of President Wilson failed before the

uprightness and good judgment of the government of President Woodrow Wilson, who took charge of his high post on the 4th of March, 1913; also, it should be acknowledged that President Taft, with utmost serenity, in the last days of his constitutional term, refrained from granting the same recognition, leaving to his successor the responsibility of passing upon the events that took place at the Capital of the Republic in the month of February of that year.

V Carranza

Mexico, 15th June, 1917.





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