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VERA CRUZ TAKEN BY U. S. MARINES KILLED 4; MEXICANS 200

United States Sailors Take Possession of Custom House with no Resistance, When Firing Begins

Mexican General is Warned to Stop Firing at U. S. Soldiers or Else Big Guns From Ships Would be Used.

Vera Cruz, April 21st.—Vera Cruz tonight is in the hands of forces from the United States warships but the occupation of the port was not accomplished without loss of American lives.

Four Americans, bluejackets and marines, were killed by the fire of the Mexican soldiers and 20 fell wounded. The Mexican loss is not known, but it is believed to have been heavy.

The water front, the customs house and all important piers, including those under the terminal works from which extend the railroads to the Capital, have been occupied. All the territory around the American Consulate is strongly patrolled and detachments hold other sections of the city.

The Mexican commander, Gen. Gustavo Maas, offered a stubborn resistance to the American advance, and for many hours there was fighting in the streets. Toward nightfall it was reported that the main body of the Federal garrison was in retreat to the westward.

Landing of Marines

Rear Admiral Fletcher, commanding the United States warship, prefaced his occupation of the port by a demand, through the American Consul, W. W. Canada, for its surrender. General Maas promptly declined to accede to this demand and shortly afterwards 10 whale-boats were sent off from the side of the transport Prairie loaded with marines.

These boats effected a landing in the neighborhood of the customs house before noon, and a few minutes later Capt. William R. Rush of the battleship Florida, who was in command of the operations ashore, brought his flag in.

The coming of the American forces was not heralded by any great excitement, but small crowds gathered to watch the landing. Soon the bluejackets and marines marched through the streets leading from the water front and along the railroad yard. Others proceeded to the American Consulate, while still others were deployed along the approaches to central plaza, in which General Maas had concentrated his men.

Mexicans Fire Volley

These maneuvers were effected without opposition, but suddenly General Maas challenged the advance with the first shots—a volley fired from a point three blocks from the marines and two blocks south of the main plaza.

The marines replied immediately but the action ceased in a moment. There was a lull for 10 minutes and then another brief exchange from the west end of Montesinos street, where a Federal outpost was stationed.

At 12:30 the firing became general and at 1 o'clock the guns of the transport Prairie went into action.

Marines Destroy Mexican Tower

Prior to this, a detachment of bluejackets from the Utah, holding the ground between the Consulate and the water front, opened with two of their three-inch guns. The first shots from these pieces were directed against the ancient Bonito tower, occupied by Mexican sharpshooters. Lieutenant Commander Buchanan of the Florida ordered that it be destroyed. Five shots brought the old tower down.

Flag Flies Over Vera Cruz

Washington April 21st.—The American flag tonight flies over Vera Cruz. Four Americans were killed and 20 were injured when a detachment of bluejackets and marines from the American fleet seized the customs house raised the American flag, and skirmished with the Mexican garrison.

Desultory firing was in progress late today, according to a dispatch from Rear Admiral Fletcher, received at 6 p. m. At first the garrison had appeared to be withdrawing. American Consul Canada reported this to the State Department at 5 o'clock, but when the American forces reached the customs house, the Mexicans opened with rifle and artillery fire.

The transport Prairie immediately began shelling the Mexican positions, slowly driving them out. The Mexicans fought from housetops and along the streets.

The American forces have taken possession of the cable office and a part of the city in the vicinity of the wharves.

Rear Admiral Fletcher's dispatch came by cable, and reached here at 6 p. m.

Secretary Bryan left the White House for the German Embassy where he discussed with the German Ambassador the consignment of arms for Huerta aboard a German merchant vessel due to be landed in Vera Cruz tonight. The capture of the Vera Cruz customs house was ordered by the American Government to prevent the big shipment of ammunition and machine guns from getting into Huerta's hands.

Congress has discussed all day the resolution which would give approval to the President's purposes to use the Army and Navy in the Mexican situation. The Senate had recessed until 8 p. m., while the House adjourned until tomorrow at 10 o'clock. Senate leaders had agreed to take final action tonight.

The concentration of forces, totalling about 7,000 sailors, and nearly 2,000 marines, is made up of Rear Admiral Mayo's ships which have been ordered from Tampico late yesterday and the ships which Rear Admiral Fletcher has had at Vera Cruz for many weeks.

Rear Admiral Badger, with the first ships of the Atlantic fleet, reached Vera Cruz tonight having been diverted from Tampico, where only the cruiser Des Moines remains.

Information which came from sources close to the Cabinet council indicated that the President exercised self-restraint and calmly determined that with the seizure of Vera Cruz and the prevention of shipments of arms from reaching Huerta, further steps would not be taken by the American Government for the present. The future depends upon action by the Huerta authorities. Secretary Garrison announced emphatically that no troop movements had been ordered.

Officials did not believe Huerta would take offensive steps, but if he does the American marines and bluejackets which will be assembled in Vera Cruz within 48 hours will number about 15,000. Estimates here place the Huerta forces at Mexico City at about three or four thousand men and Army and Navy officers believe the American forces could take the Mexican Capital with-

out serious difficulty. The bulk of General Huerta's Army is in the North fighting the Constitutionalists.

Rear Admiral Badger on being ordered to proceed direct to Vera Cruz, ordered also diverted the 14 torpedo destroyers to Vera Cruz.

These will be of much use in approaching close to the town, and in blockade duty.

While the Army has received no orders to move, should it become apparent that there will be resistance to the holding of Vera Cruz, the four Army transports at Galveston, carrying four or five thousand troops, will be ordered under way.

The Americans have captured Vera Cruz, but at the cost of the lives of several men and a much larger number wounded.

The Mexicans, under Gen. Gustavo Maas, the commander of Vera Cruz, put up a stubborn resistance. General Maas challenged the advance of the Americans almost from the first, and made it clear that the Mexicans do not propose to permit a peaceful occupation.

Less than half an hour after leaving the side of the United States transport Prairie, the marines had landed and the absence of resistance at the water front and failure of the Mexicans to contest the taking of a position somewhat in from the water front caused the curious spectators in the street to laugh and when one Mexican peon ran for cover, having had the temerity to shout at the top of his voice "viva Mexico" loud guffaws came from the onlookers.

But the lull was not indicative of compliance. A few shots came within a few minutes and later a brief exchange. After another brief interval, fighting in earnest began and hour after hour the Mexicans continued to oppose the Americans fiercely in some quarters, although the main body apparently seemed ready to quit.

Most of the firing was done by outpost parties from roofs at various points of vantage.

The guns of the Prairie assisted the landing party. Towards evening the fighting continued, but it was more of a house-top character than a determined, organized resistance.

Finally, the Mexican soldiers who had not been captured, killed or wounded, retreated westward.

Washington, April 21.—Marine and bluejackets of the American Navy today took the customs house and a large section of Vera Cruz with a loss of four killed and 20 wounded. The loss of the Mexican garrison was not officially known here tonight, but was estimated at 200 killed. This was the first step in the program of reprisal by the United States against the Huerta Government for the arrest of American bluejackets at Tampico and other offenses "against the rights and dignity of the United States."

It was the first clash between forces of the United States and Mexico since revolution broke out in the Southern Republic in 1910 and gave the Washington Government a Mexican problem.

Though fighting had not ceased at a late hour tonight, Rear Admiral Fletcher had warned the Federal commander that he would use the big guns of the American fleet if his men did not stop firing. The American forces had orders to fire only to defend themselves. The United States intends to take no offensive steps for the present. The salute to the flag which Huerta refused will not be satisfactory reparation. It is understood a declaration of apology as well as a salute and a guarantee that the rights and dignity of the United States would be respected can alone cause a withdrawal of the American forces.

The President gave Rear Admiral Fletcher authority to seize the Vera Cruz customs house to prevent the landing there today by a German merchant vessel of a big consignment of arms and ammunition for the Huerta Government.

Secretary Bryan conferred with the German Ambassador, Count Von Bernstorff, and it is believed the influence of the German

Government will be interposed to prevent the consignment from landing elsewhere in Mexico and complicating the situation. The ship carries 15,000,000 rounds of ammunition and 200 rapid-fire guns and thousands of rifles.

The President conferred with the Secretaries of War, State and Navy early tonight. Rear Admiral Badger was ordered to Tampico, where another customs house may be seized. The President intends to act slowly to force Huerta to yield and hopes to avert war. With the taking of the railroad for a few miles inland from Vera Cruz and the custom houses it is believed no other aggressive steps will be taken. Many officials admit that offensive action by Huerta may draw the American forces into a conflict tantamount to war. All preparation possible has been made by the Army and Navy, but no orders have gone out to State Militia, nor has the naval militia been called upon.

Consul Canada's Report

Washington, April 21.—Consul Canada at Vera Cruz reported to the State Department tonight that several Americans including some women who had refused to go aboard refugee ships, are now in hotels within the firing line.

Consul Canada's report follows: "Marines and bluejackets landed at 11:30 this morning, immediately taking possession of cable office, post-office, telegraph office and customs house, also railroad terminals and yards with rolling stock. Notwithstanding firing from house tops, we are masters of the situation so far without use of heavy guns. Our men are simply defending themselves. Some resistance from naval vessels soon silenced by guns on Prairie.

At this time reported four of our men killed and 20 wounded. American newspaper men and several other Americans in Consulate. Several Americans including some women who refused to go aboard refugee ship are now marooned in hotels within firing line. Trains from Mexico City did not arrive."

American Officer Orders All Ships Out of Vera Cruz

Vera Cruz, April 20.—Commander Charles F. Hughes, chief of the United States Atlantic fleet, today called on General Gustavo Maas, commander of the Federal troops at Vera Cruz, and on the commander of the port, and instructed them to order all merchant vessels out of the harbor. Commander Hughes then went on board the Spanish and the British warships anchored off this port and informed their commanders of his action.

W. C. Canada, the American consul here, is making arrangements to have the foreigners in the city taken on board the merchant vessels, should necessity arise.

American and other foreign women have been asked by Consul Canada to take refuge on vessels now in the harbor, preferable on board the Mexico of the Ward line and the Esperanza which has been chartered by the United States navy.

"Ham And" \$2.50 Per in Tampico

Tampa, Fla., April 16th.—With three American refugees aboard the German steamer Osage from Tampico, docked here today. The steamer arrived at quarantine yesterday. The refugees were A. C. Serrell, T. M. Morward and E. Hammond, formerly of New York. They were taken away from Tampico on April 10 while the constitutionalists were making their attack on the Mexican city.

Captain De Reese of the Osage reported there was considerable small pox in Tampico and that the price of food was very high. Ham and eggs for a meal cost \$2.50 in American money, the captain said. He reported that food supplies in the city were scarce.

WILSON TALKS OF MEXICAN TROUBLE

Repeated Insults to American Flag Must Be Corrected—There Are Many Incidents that Have Not Been Made Public.

Washington, D. C., April 17.—Today's conference at the White House and other departments revealed more information of Mexican insults. It was learned that two of the blue jackets arrested at Tampico when the party landed to get gasoline, were arrested in a whaleboat under the American flag, and also following that, the American orderly carrying the mail at Vera Cruz was arrested and jailed, but released. Also the federal attempt to delay and censor official American dispatches from Vera Cruz. O'Shaughnessy had to make a formal demand for some of the official dispatches before he was allowed to get them.

High administration officials pointed out that the above offenses were not duplicated towards other nations, and it appeared that Huerta intended to affront the United States.

The Official Statement

The following official statement was issued today as representing the views of President Wilson and the administration:

"In discussion in official circles of Washington of the present Mexican situation the following points have been very much dwelt upon:

"It was pointed out that in considering the present somewhat delicate situation in Mexico, the unpleasant incident at Tampico must not be thought of alone. For some time past the de facto Government of Mexico has seemed to think mere apologies sufficient when the rights of American citizens or the dignity of the Government of the United States were involved and has apparently made no attempt at either reparation or the effective correction of the serious delinquencies of its civil and military officials.

"Immediately after the incident at Tampico, an orderly from one of the ships of the United States in the harbor of Vera Cruz, who had been sent ashore to the postoffice for the ship's mail and who was in uniform and who had the official mail bag on his back, was arrested and put into jail by the local authorities. He was subsequently released and a nominal punishment inflicted upon the officer who had arrested him but it was significant that an orderly from the fleet of the United States was picked out from the many persons constantly going ashore on various errands from the various ships in the harbor, representing several nations.

"Most serious of all, the officials in charge of the telegraph office at Mexico City presumed to withhold an official dispatch of the Government of the United States to its Embassy at Mexico City until it should have been sent to censor and his permission received to deliver it and gave the dispatch in to the hands of the Charge d'Affaires of the United States only upon his personal and emphatic demand, he having, in the meantime, learned through other channels that a dispatch had been sent him which he had not received.

"It cannot but strike anyone who has watched the course of events in Mexico as significant that untoward incidents such as these have not occurred in any case where representatives of other Governments were concerned, but only in dealings with representatives of the United States and that there has been no occasion for other Governments to call attention to such matters or to ask for apologies.

"These repeated offenses against the rights and dignity of the United States, offenses not duplicated with regard to the representatives of other Governments, have necessarily made the impression that the Government of the United States was singled out for manifestations of ill will and contempt.

"The authorities of the State Department feel confident that when the seriousness and cul-

minative effect of these incidents is made evident to the Government of Mexico, that Government will see the propriety and the necessity of giving such evidence of its desire to repudiate and correct these things as will be not only satisfactory to the Government of the United States but also an evidence to the rest of the world as an entire change of attitude.

"There can be no loss to the dignity of the de facto Government in Mexico in recognizing in the fullest degree the claims of a great sovereign Government to its respect."

Details of Arrests

More information describing the arrest of the American bluejackets at Tampico was revealed in the day's conferences at the White House and other Government Departments. It was learned authoritatively that some of the bluejackets from the Dolphin went ashore with Assistant Paymaster Copp to get gasoline supplies. All but two landed to get the supplies. While they were gone a Mexican officer approached and claimed the party should not have landed where it did, and ordered the bluejackets from the whaleboat which flew the American flag. They were unarmed and accompanied him voluntarily.

The other members of the party were arrested while on shore. They all were intercepted by another Mexican officer who marched them back to the dock, communicated with his superior and released them. The ordering of the bluejackets from the boat which was flying the Stars and Stripes considered technically American soil was regarded by Rear Admiral Mayo as requiring an apology, the punishment of the Mexican officer, and a salute of 21 guns to the colors.

The first two demands were complied with but the local Federal authorities asked for an extension of time during which they consulted the Huerta Government at Mexico City. Meanwhile Rear Admiral Mayo notified Washington of his course and received the Government's approval. General Huerta himself never agreed to any salute but one of his under-secretaries did make inquiry of the American Embassy whether a small salute to the Dolphin would be acceptable. This was rejected as insufficient under Naval practice. The time limit for the firing of the salute was extended indefinitely by Rear Admiral Mayo after communication with Washington and after representatives were made to the Huerta Government and the Atlantic and Pacific fleets dispatched to Mexican waters.

The President told those who conferred with him that there had been no notification to the fleet of any prohibition against landing where the bluejackets docked, and while placing most emphasis on the Tampico incident, he reviewed other offenses such as the arrest of an American orderly carrying mail at Vera Cruz, the attempt to exercise censorship and delay of official messages and other episodes designed to show a studied attempt on the part of the Huerta Government to offend the United States. But for the fact that no Government had been recognized in Mexico and that a state of anarchy existed the President is said to have declared to members of Congress he would have Charge O'Shaughnessy promptly. No mention was made by the President of the movement of the Army and this was interpreted generally as the result of a desire to maintain a status quo on the Texas border.

We the undersigned List Takers for Wards Nos. 1 and 2, of Mt. Airy township, will sit at Banner's Warehouse on the 6-7-8 and 9th, of May for the purpose of listing the property of the Tax payers inside the city.

It is important that you come and list your property on the days set, as a failure to list will subject you to double tax.

J. R. Patterson.
List taker Ward No. 1.
Fletcher Saunders.
List taker Ward No. 2.