

## Lend Lease Episode 13 Notes and Links - US Operations in Mexico under Wilson during the Mexican Revolution Civil Wars

- Background: 1910-1920 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican\\_Revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican_Revolution)
  - Madero's 1910 coup ends Diaz's 30 year reign
  - Madero is elected in free elections in 1911, assassinated in 1913
  - General Huerta kills Madero and seizes power (counter-revolution)
  - 1914: Revolutionary forces form a coalition to defeat & remove Huerta
  - 1914-15: Revolutionary coalition breaks up and triggers a civil war
  - 1915: Carranza's and Obregón's forces (with US support) prevail over Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata and Carranza becomes president. Villa and Zapata go underground for continuing guerilla operations. [Might want an interesting side tangent on Hermila Galindo, Carranza's powerful female adviser: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermila\\_Galindo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermila_Galindo) ]
  - 1917: radical Constitution adopted
  - 1919: Zapata assassinated
  - 1920: Carranza deposed and assassinated by the Sonoran Triumvirate after attempting to hand off power (due to the one-term rule) to Mexico's Ambassador to the US, a puppet who lacked the profile or support of the revolutionary generals needed to win or take the presidency. The Triumvirate eventually sees General Obregón (one of them) elected with the support of his allies in the Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (CROM) trade-union, which he quickly co-opts against its revolutionary potential and more radical members.
  - 1920-24 (post-Wilson): All three Triumvirate members served as president if you include the brief transition in 1920 in addition to the "elected" regimes of Obregón and then Calles, who later founded the Institutional Revolutionary Party to continue championing his radical left-populism. However, the third leg of the stool collapsed in 1923 when it became clear he wasn't going to get a full term himself and the US Navy supported Obregón and Calles in exchange for oil concessions.
  - Calles traveled to interwar Germany and France to study both social democracy and radical oratory for mass mobilization before he took office. Calles also tore up the US oil agreements and enforced state ownership of oil. Calles also triggered a smoldering low-level civil war with the Church that left 100k dead. Obregón returned to power in 1928.
- 1914 US Occupation of Veracruz following the Tampico Affair [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_occupation\\_of\\_Veracruz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_occupation_of_Veracruz)
  - <https://www.historynet.com/learned-battle-veracruz.htm>
  - <https://www.usni.org/magazines/naval-history-magazine/2014/march/take-veracruz-once>
  - <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/56141/world-war-i-centennial-tampico-incident-brings-us-mexico-brink-war>

- <https://www.revolutionspodcast.com/2018/12/917-the-occupation-of-veracruz.html>
- The occupation's inciting incident itself had followed the US mistaking an illegal arms shipment to Huerta's counterrevolutionary forces from American business allies as being a German arms shipment to Mexico (several months before World War One started in Europe)
- Smedley Butler, maybe the US's most prominent anti-war military officer ever, was part of the operation, which he later criticized
- Don't forget how the US issued a hilarious number of medals to participants in the operation to seize Veracruz
  - *"After the fighting ended, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels ordered that fifty-six Medals of Honor be awarded to participants in this action, the most for any single action before or since. This amount was half as many as had been awarded for the Spanish–American War, and close to half the number that would be awarded during World War I and the Korean War."* (wiki)
- The US eventually decided after Huerta was deposed that Carranza was the most moderate option, although he wasn't a fan of the US, and they timed their withdrawal to maximize the benefit to him in the Civil War against the leftists. The US recognized Carranza's government as legitimate so that arms sales would be legal instead of what had happened before Veracruz. Carranza kept Mexico out of World War One, despite German efforts like the Zimmerman Telegram, and gave standing military orders to deter the US from re-invading (which was contemplated in 1917) by planning the destruction of Mexican oilfields if US troops landed again.
- [Oil and Revolution in Mexico \(Jonatahn Brown, 1993\)](#)
  - The navy's plans to protect the oil fields remained on the shelf. Instead, Daniels cabled his admirals: "Seize custom house [at Veracruz]. Do not permit war supplies to be delivered to Huerta government or to any other party."<sup>[61]</sup> By the second day of the invasion, by which time the Congress had approved Wilson's action, more than 3,300 American troops were ashore at Veracruz. The German merchant vessel *Ipiranga* was indeed detained by the American occupation of Veracruz. But the invasion forces, not being at war with Germany, could not confiscate the cargo. Once allowed to depart, the *Ipiranga* headed for the federally held port of Puerto México, where the arms were off-loaded for Huerta's troops.<sup>[62]</sup> The Americans could not even prevent the shipment of arms to Huerta, which had been the ostensible excuse for seizing Veracruz.

- 1916 US Punitive Pancho Villa Expedition (following Battle of Columbus)
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pancho\\_Villa\\_Expedition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pancho_Villa_Expedition)
  - The yakkety sax of counterinsurgency efforts
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Carrizal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Carrizal)
  - Parral
  - <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/02/the-last-time-the-us-invaded-mexico-214738>
    - *Displaying his deep piety and moral conviction, Wilson declared that he would never “recognize a government of butchers” and declared his intent to “teach” Mexico “a lesson by insisting on the removal of Huerta.” To that end, he sent two personal envoys to Mexico City to instruct the country’s political leaders—“for her own good”—to insist on Huerta’s resignation. The mission fared poorly. For one, the envoys—William Bayard Hale, a journalist, and John Lind, a local politician from Minnesota—spoke not a word of Spanish. Lind privately regarded Mexicans as “more like children than men” and conducted himself accordingly, to the detriment of the mission*
    - Politico historian: Incensed, Wilson raised a “punitive expedition” of 10,000 soldiers under the direction of General John J. Pershing. Equipped with all the modern trappings of war—reconnaissance aircraft, Harley Davidson motorcycles—the invading army searched high and low for Villa. It was like finding “a needle in a haystack,” Pershing would soon complain. Though Villa’s forces continued to plunder and maraud, the Americans proved incapable of finding and capturing the rebel leader. When Villa surfaced briefly in Glenn Springs, Texas, with his troops, only to disappear soon thereafter, the Wilson administration was left mortified and bereft of an explanation
    - Soldaderas in villa’s army - he didnt want them but they were there anyway
- <https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article237463004.html>