

VILLA AND REYES HASTEN JUNCTION FOR BLOW AT U. S.

Mexican Outlaws Reported Ready to Join for the Attack

WARSHIPS HELD READY

WASHINGTON, March 20.—Unless the American punitive expedition corners Francisco Villa within the next 48 hours the task of capturing the bandit chief will be greatly complicated.

Confidential advisers reaching here today say that General Canuto Reyes, the Villista commander in the Torreón district, is moving northward with between 3000 and 5000 men planning to effect a junction with the Villista forces. Should he be successful, Villa will be in position to give battle to the American forces, as the Reyes troops are veterans and are well armed and equipped.

It is assumed here that General Pershing knows of the Reyes movement and that he will take every necessary precaution to checkmate it. But to do so will necessitate active co-operation by the Carranzista soldiers who are operating from Chihuahua and who up to the present have failed to show any desire to assist the Americans in any way.

Although on the surface the general situation in Mexico seemed unchanged today, officials plainly were more apprehensive. Every day that the American forces remain in Mexico adds to the uncertainty. From many points along the border appeals are being received by the War Department to strengthen the troops on guard because of the reported planned raids by Villista sympathizers. Representatives of the State and War Departments are being sent to the border to see that Villistas have completed plans to raid Presidio, Tex., and that assistance was urgently needed. General Pershing was immediately ordered to take every precaution to prevent any raids.

Reports of discontent among the Carranzista forces continue to reach this city. Many of the men are declared to be threatening to desert if the American expedition is not opposed and the pressure on the "First Chief" constantly is increasing. However, the State and War Departments continue hopeful that there will be no open outbreak and that Carranza and Obregon can retain control of their forces.

Plans have been completed for increasing the American naval forces on the Mexican east coast. This will not be done unless an emergency arises, but the 500 marines sent to Pensacola will be held in readiness for immediate transfer there, while the old battleship Kearsarge will be held ready for orders to join the Kentucky at Vera Cruz. It is not the present intention of the Navy Department today to send any of the Atlantic fleet vessels to Mexico from Guantanamo if that can be avoided.

The Kearsarge and Kentucky, however, have been in Mexican waters for months, and the Kentucky already is on her way back to Vera Cruz from New Orleans. Sending the Kearsarge to join her would not cause any irritation among the Mexicans, and it will be possible in that event to send with the battleship an augmented marine guard that would be available for any emergency that might arise.

It is expected that at tomorrow's Cabinet meeting the President will take up with his advisers the question of what action shall be taken should it develop that Villa has managed to escape into his mountain refuge. So far, officials say, no such contingency has been discussed. The question of whether Carranza will be permitted to continue to import unlimited quantities of ammunition from the United States and how the supplies are to be sent forward to Pershing must also be decided within the next few days.

U. S. TROOPS IN CLASH WITH VILLA, IS REPORT

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yet elude his pursuers and gain the mountains. Official announcement was made by General Funston, at San Antonio, that, in a wireless from General Pershing, at Casas Grandes, it was learned the American troops had been divided into small bands and were proceeding south and southeast from Casas Grandes. It was assumed that Villa also had split his bands.

Nearest calculations place the American forces in the region of Galeana, the most advanced column, 135 miles south of the border, with others still at the supply base, Casas Grandes. The vanguard is believed 50 miles from the Villistas.

Reports indicate that Villa has divided his band, leaving a rearguard, in order to facilitate his escape into the Sierra Madre. Officials believe that if any fighting occurs soon it will be, not with the main body, but with the rearguard of the outlaws.

Aeroplane with the American troops are circling about today in an effort to disclose the whereabouts of the bandits.

No reply has yet been received to the request of the American Government that Carranza grant the use of Mexican railways to transport supplies to the expedition. It is said the President, after a conference with Acting Secretary Polk today, intimated he would do nothing to embarrass the Carranza Government.

Troop movement continues along the border, strengthening the patrols and preparing for additional forces to march into Mexico.

It was said that Villa and General Reyes, his lieutenant, were hastening to join forces to oppose the American advance. No confirmation was had on this report.

VILLA BELIEVED SURROUNDED AMONG THE GUERRERO HILLS

LAREDO, Tex., March 20.—Reports of a fight between American troops and General Villa's patrols were received by Carranza officers at Nuevo Laredo, just across the border, early today. No details were given.

EL PASO, Tex., March 20.—Francisco Villa, reported hemmed in among the canyons of the Guerrero Mountains, today was believed to be surrounded by several columns of Carranza troops and the American expedition closing down on him from the north. However, there were miles of mountainous desert in the net the pursuers were drawing around the outlaw and escape was considered likely.

Aeroplane are being used today in spying out Villa's hiding place. Soaring among peaks several thousand feet high they could pick out Villa's men on the mountain trails and signal their whereabouts to General Pershing's scouts.

Villa was reported to have left a small detachment at the Hernandez ranch to hold off the American cavalry until he was safely hidden in the fastnesses of the Sierra Madre.

The American column, matching its corn-fed cavalry horses against Villa's

Pershing March World's Record, Says Funston

SAN ANTONIO, Tex., March 20.—"Black Jack" Pershing and his American cavalry forces set a world's record on their march into Mexico in pursuit of Francisco Villa. Major General Frederick Funston made this statement today when asked to comment on Washington dispatches stating that the Government had demanded more haste in chasing Villa. "I don't see," said General Funston, "how I can speed up any more. The main column made a world's record march. I do not see how it could have hurried more."

General Funston believes that an engagement will soon take place between the American troops and Villa's bandits or sympathizers. The United States column is now in the heart of the district where Villa has long been the chief arbiter.

It is understood that General Pershing's troops are getting supplies at Casas Grandes.

tireless ponies, was making forced marches to get at grips with the Villistas.

VILLA DIVIDES FORCES. Villa, harassed by the rapid progress of General Pershing's American cavalry, has split his retreating force into two bands that are fleeing along the mountain trails, according to information that reached Carranza headquarters in Juarez early today.

General Gavira, the Carranza commander at Juarez, believes that the dividing of Villa's forces indicates that the bandit leader will not offer any resistance.

Scouts with the American forces have nevertheless warned General Pershing to be on the lookout for one of Villa's surprise attacks. Every precaution is being taken by the American soldiers as they press forward. Villa is in a country he knows thoroughly. In the mountains he was able to defy the soldiers of the Mexican Government for 15 years.

As Villa scurries southward like a hunted rat, the time for the real test of Carranza's troops is nearing. It is believed that Villa will attempt to get through the mountain passes and join Emiliano Zapata or Reyes in the district where those bandit leaders have long held sway. If this is his intention only the Carranzistas can stop him.

TEST FOR CARRANZA.

General Carranza has ordered his army to cooperate with the Americans, but it is feared on the border that the troops of the First Chief, will desert in large numbers as the Americans march further south and permit Villa to pass through their lines, even joining his retreating columns.

Villa's bandits, though traveling swiftly, still take time for murder and looting. Reports come over the border that the American troopers have come upon burned ranch houses and mutilated bodies. These are the usual marks of a Villa trail.

This trail is being followed with all the endurance of the American troopers. They left the border vowing not to return without the bandit chieftain dead or alive, and they are eager to close in on him before he reaches a territory where he can prolong the campaign indefinitely. Reports have reached the border that in case the pursuit now in progress fails to trap the bandit leader orders from Washington may recall the troops.

NEED OF SUPPLIES.

The rapid advance of the troops has added to the difficulty of keeping open a line of communication and supply. To assure effective operation it is deemed necessary here that the United States will have to get permission to use the Mexican railways for the transportation of provisions and ammunition. This may be granted and it may not.

A large part of the Mexican people would not take kindly to the American troops using the Mexican lines to take ammunition into Mexico to kill Mexicans.

Popular feeling would undoubtedly sway the Carranza Government.

The American troops are said in the message to General Gavira to have located Villa himself and to be 50 miles behind the fleeing bandit leader. Villa is said to have had a narrow escape from capture in the Casas Grandes district. He delayed his flight, thinking the Americans would be unable to make rapid progress.

TIGHTENING THE NET.

Villa has been driven into a trap by the rapid advance of the American troops, according to the information received in wireless dispatches from the front. Everything seems now to depend on the ability of the Carranza garrisons to hold their end of the net. On three sides of the bandit chief he is hemmed in by strong Carranza columns, while on the fourth the Americans are driving forward with amazing speed.

A report to General Gavira said that Villa was in the Babicora Lake region. Babicora is about 55 miles south of Galeana, where one section of the American expeditionary force has arrived and is pushing forward.

A few miles to the west of the bandit's position is Namiquipa, which is held by a powerful Carranza garrison. On the east are the frowning barriers of the Sierra Madre Mountains, barring the way to Sonora. General Luis Gutierrez, a Carranza field chief, declares he holds all the passes to Sonora. To the south Villa's way is blocked by the Carranza garrison at Madera.

If the Carranza forces remain loyal to the First Chief, Villa appears trapped. It is, of course, realized that he is on ground of his own choosing and in a country admirably suited for guerrilla warfare.

Where Colonel Dodd is with his advance squadron of mounted troops was not known north of the line. In fact, his exact location has not been known since Friday night, when he reached Casas Grandes, going southeast over the Galeana trail toward Galeana City and Namiquipa.

U. S. WON'T SEIZE RAILWAYS; AWAIT CARRANZA REPLY

WASHINGTON, March 20.—President Wilson will do nothing in Mexico to embarrass General Carranza. The wishes of the de facto Government Chief will be adhered to in every possible way, while the American expedition is pursuing Villa. This was made clear after a conference early today between the President and Solicitor Polk, of the State Department.

In this connection it became known that if Carranza deemed it advisable not to permit the use of Mexican railroads by the American Government in transporting troops or supplies, the United States would not demand that the roads be turned over or take them by force.

The United States army will simply devise other means of transportation. That Carranza is in a troublesome position was admitted in official circles. The President appreciates this, it was said, and will do everything in his power to assist the First Chief.

Advices to the White House, from Consul Rogers at Queretaro, say the de facto Government is entirely satisfied with the manner in which the United States is carrying on its expedition in Mexico.

The State Department, in asking the use of Mexican railroads, is merely making a reciprocal request in a way, it is pointed out, because American railroads during recent months have been used by Carranza in transporting troops, supplies and prisoners along the border. While no reply has been received from Carranza, no concern is felt over the delay and a favorable answer is expected within 24 hours.

The President was informed today that Carranza had formally requested that no troops be allowed to occupy Casas Grandes or any other Mexican town during Villa's pursuit. Orders, however, already had been sent to army headquarters, making it clear that the troops are not to occupy those cities.

The President, it was said, is convinced

that with his assistance and co-operation the de facto Government will be able to control the situation and the American expedition permitted to pursue its course without embarrassment from Carranzistas.

Dispatches to the War Department reported all quiet along the border. There was nothing according to General Scott, to tell how far General Pershing has gone into Mexican territory. There was no mention of any anti-American feeling in towns across the border.

General Scott today forwarded to General Funston the request of Representative Smith, of Texas, for additional troops at Presidio, Tex.

VILLA CUT OFF FROM WEST BY GUARDS FROM SONORA

DOUGLASS, Ariz., March 20.—General P. Elias Calles, Carranza Governor of Sonora and commander of the Mexican troops south of the Arizona border, today increased his guards at the four passes leading from Chihuahua into Sonora. He has Yaqui Indian scouts operating in the mountains about these passes to give notice if any attempt is made by Francisco Villa to move westward.

General Calles declared there was no possibility of Villa's escapement into Sonora.

"The west side of the trap set for Villa is complete," he asserted. "He must go south or east. His only alternative is to face the American troops and fight them."

U. S. FORCES SPLIT TO COMB HILLS FOR VILLA'S OUTLAWS

SAN ANTONIO, Tex., March 20.—Like an army headquarters it was announced today that the principal column of the American expeditionary forces, under Pershing's personal command, was well to the south and east of the Casas Grandes, broken up into small bodies, but all operating from the new Mexican base.

In dispatches from General Pershing, at Casas Grandes, General Funston stated, no mention is made of new Villa outrages committed on American colonists in the Casas Grandes district, nor has any fighting been reported. Coded parts of Pershing's message, however, were so badly garbled in transmission that the meaning of whole messages was lost.

The report stated that all was "well" with the expedition; that the Carranza garrison at Casas Grandes was friendly, but passive, and the United States cavalry forces were being broken up into small groups.

This was taken to indicate that Francisco Villa had divided his bandit followers into small bands.

The Mormon colony at Casas Grandes, received the American soldiers enthusiastically. They regarded the expedition as one sent for their benefit alone.

200 CROSS LINE TO JOIN VILLA

Sympathizers From U. S. Leave to Aid Bandits

EL PASO, Tex., March 20.—A rancher from the border west of here rode in today with reports that more than 200 Villa sympathizers had crossed from the United States between El Paso and Columbus into Mexico to join Villa.

Brass Beds Relacquered

Without Removal T. E. MILLERSHIP, 6735 N. 8th

BOYS IN KHAKI 'CUSS' A BIT, HUM THE 'TROTTS' AND CHAFE AT DELAYS

Columbus, N. M., All A-Bustle With Soldiers Who Look for Long Hunt to Capture Francisco Villa

HOSPITAL CORPS READY

COLUMBUS, N. M., March 20.—Nearly two dozen American ambulances are concentrated here and a military field hospital is being rushed to completion in preparation for expected bloody fighting between American and Villista forces in the mountainous wastes to the southward. Army men expect a long campaign and are making comprehensive preparations.

"We expect to be chasing Villa around these mountain peaks next Christmas," said a colonel, pointing to the rocky spires looming through the purple mist south of the border.

"Regardless of the views of statesmen, most of the officers believe we're in for a long trip, and won't stop much this side of Panama. And all say they're glad, too."

The dress-parade aspect of war is absent from Columbus, until the raid only a lazy border cattle town, but now the center of an army. Gold laces and flashing swords were missing among the khaki-clad officers. Throughout the town soldiers rushed preparations for fighting Villa.

The little telegraph office has been yanked out of its corner in the railroad station. Expert keymen now crowd the limited space, transmitting army messages and sending such newspaper copy as the censor and wire limitations will permit. The censor, a young lieutenant, sits in a corner, his blue pencil poised menacingly over the work of a hurried correspondent. A bulky cavalryman steps up and hands him a message addressed to his mother in Rochester, N. Y. "We cross the border tonight. Love to all. Don't worry."

"Can't send that," says the censor, running his pencil through the word "to-night." "Substitute 'noon,' and will go."

Across the street at the postoffice, the overworked postmaster is swamped in the accumulation of mail. Washington may send him an assistant after Congress has had time to mull the matter over, he said, but for the present he's going it alone and slowly.

The old army in blue would have been

A sorry sight in Columbus but the khaki uniforms match the dust and are almost invisible at a distance. Under the brooding still humming the strains of the latest army post-fox trots, sweat copiously, swear a little, dig dust from their eyes and long for the fight.

All are eager for the front and regard the preparations here as an expensive but necessary duty. An army aeroplane rises southward and wings after the disappearing line in the desert. The railroad station, where the arrival of a traveling salesman once was a town event, has been abandoned by the troops, and the army stores, arriving on every train and in every army wagon, are stored in huge piles on the village outskirts.

Since Villa shot up the town the former Columbian guarantee a hot time to any Mexican visitor. While Columbus has not forgotten its dead and the village is not as its sands, the grape juice and soda make keta cannot supply the demand of dust-caked throats. Frame huts, with boards over the windows, shot out by the raiders, have blossomed forth as restaurants.

HOTEL ASTOR 3626 residents of Philadelphia registered at Hotel Astor during the past year. Single Room, without bath, \$2.00 to \$3.00. Double - \$3.00 to \$4.00. Single Rooms, with bath, \$3.00 to \$5.00. Double - \$4.00 to \$7.00. Parlor, Bedroom and bath, \$10.00 to \$14.00. TIMES SQUARE At Broadway, 44th to 45th Streets—the center of New York's social and business activities. In close proximity to all railway terminals.

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