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FELIPE ANGELES: MILITARY INTELLECTUAL
OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION
1913-1915

by

Ronald E. Craig

B.A., University of Montana, 1985

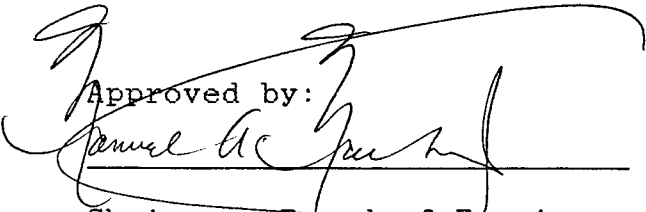
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History

Felipe Angeles: Military Intellectual of the Mexican Revolution (181 pp.)

Director: Manuel A. Machado, Jr.



This thesis examines the role of Felipe Angeles in the Mexican Revolution through his contradictory character traits and partnership with Francisco Villa. The basis of the inspection originates from and is guided by his two distinctive and occasionally contradictory characteristics: Angeles the soldier and Angeles the intellectual. Analysis of his relationship with the outlaw-general, Francisco Villa, exposes an unorthodox association of opposite yet complementary personalities and explains the intricate dilemma faced by Felipe Angeles.

The study incorporated information in English and Spanish, first searching Angeles' writings and diary excerpts for the personality inside the person. From that understanding it progressed to an inspection of his activities, viewpoints, and role in history. To discern his historical role, eye-witness comments, personal accounts, official reports, and historic accounts were examined and compared.

The results of the investigation and analysis exposed a multi-faceted man who adhered to a fundamental value system and moral code. An intelligent, unassuming man emerged who used the weapons of reason and logic in an emotionally charged atmosphere of revolution. His role in that chaotic historical event was subtle and difficult to disclose, yet profound and visionary. The results exposed Felipe Angeles as one of the few truly virtuous leaders of the Mexican Revolution.

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THESIS STATEMENT

Felipe Angeles was a military intellectual, which is a contradiction in principles and purpose. As a soldier he was expected to act according to the dictates of military psychology which was based on a national perspective and controlled by rules, regulations and a system of rewards. As a member of the military he was also expected to evaluate and consider things from a perspective of black and white or good and bad. Yet, as an intellectual he perceived a universal relationship and meaning. He utilized a creative mental process that was dictated by logic and reason, through which he questioned, examined, and refused to blindly accept assertions of facts. As an intellectual the appearance of black and white dissolved into gray with truth and reality becoming relative to the situation.

Angeles was a composite of the two contradictory concepts and had the unique ability to balance their principles and perspectives. He used the intellectual skills of an organized mind and his military knowledge to command soldiers in war, yet retained humane motives and a peaceful purpose. While other people fought because of hatreds and vengeance, Angeles approached events of the times, his actions, and the war with a philosophical

perspective.

The sources of information concerning the life of Felipe Angeles are rare and dispersed. Only two authors attempted to write biographies, and they were extremely biased. In his books, Felipe Angeles, Federal and Lugarteniente Gris de Pancho Villa (Felipe Angeles), Bernardino Mena Brito created a literary trial in which he accused Angeles of multiple conspiracies. Using actual historical events, Mena Brito made assumptions and twisted the facts to serve his purpose which was to defame and degrade Angeles. If a person considers the bias of the author in reading the books, parts of the truth shine through.

The other author who wrote a biography was Federico Cervantes, who served on General Angeles' staff during part of the Revolution. His book Felipe Angeles en la Revolución is apparently biased in favor of Angeles but not to the opposite extremes of those of Mena Brito. Although he portrays the general in a better light, faults are exposed. Glimpses into the personal side of Angeles are revealed in the numerous pages of the interrogation of Angeles during his trial in 1919 and Cervantes' visit to the general's cell.

The other major source which includes information on Angeles is Martin Luís Guzmán's Memoirs of Pancho Villa. Because it is a personal account of the Revolution, it is also inaccurate and tainted. Villa's greatness and humble

actions are exaggerated along with his knowledge of principles of military warfare. Yet, with all of its faults the book exposes the relationship that existed between Angeles and Villa, and many of Angeles' activities and attitudes.

The primary book used to trace the battles of 1914 was Miguel A. Sánchez Lamego's Historia Militar De La Revolución Constitucionalista: Tercera Parte, Las Operaciones Finales y El Triunfo De La Revolución, Tomo V. Sánchez Lamego utilized accounts and reports from both the revolutionary army and federal army in his narrative of the movements and combat cited in the book, and presented it in an objective manner.

The extensive Records of the Department of State relating to the Internal Affairs of Mexico 1910-1929 were extremely helpful, although many of the messages sent by agents were inaccurate or simply false. Often the reports made by field agents in Mexico during the Revolution were based on rumors or assumptions, and later corrected by them or other agents. Although it is an invaluable tool in researching the Mexican Revolution, discretion is necessary.

The most revealing and personal sources were the two accounts written by Felipe Angeles himself. In the Descripción de la Batalla de Zacatecas and Justificación de la desobediencia de los generales de la División del Norte

Angeles exposed not only some of his feelings toward the war but his thought processes and the complexity of his personality. Besides the sources already mentioned, numerous others were necessary to fill in the picture. In order to better understand the complexity of artillery, the author referred to a number of books including the Text Book of Ordnance and Gunnery, Barrage: The Guns in Action, and Heavy (Coast) Artillery Orientation. Napoleon and Modern War: His Military Maxims was utilized because Angeles attended numerous French military schools that taught Napoleon's principles of warfare; and many of Angeles' battle tactics corresponded to those maxims.

As with other historical papers, this thesis is a composite of information from various sources. The search for information and sifting of the facts has been a stimulating ordeal but one of pleasure. My thanks to Professor Manuel Machado for stimulating my interest in Mexican History and directing my efforts in this expedition.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 was not one continuous movement but a series of internal wars consisting of revolution, counter-revolution, rebellion, revolt, and civil war. The beginning of the Revolution was a movement against the regime of President Porfirio Díaz in November 1910. Díaz ruled Mexico from 1876 to 1911 with a policy of Pan Ø Palo (Bread or Club). Under that policy subordinates and local leaders either accepted financial benefits offered by the federal government or were eliminated from power through political exile or subjugation by the federal army. The policy promoted peace and stability to attract foreign investments and progress in the country but created discontent.

Along with that stability and progress came domination by the federal army and foreign businesses. Land usage was altered to accommodate commercial agriculture which required large ranches, farms and plantations. To achieve large-scale agriculture, native peoples and small landholders were deprived of their lands, creating a large number of landless peoples. A small elite element controlled society while the majority of people suffered in poverty.

The initial movement that sparked the Revolution of 1910 was based on the Constitution of 1857 and gained momentum to prevent the re-election of President Díaz; yet, the

actual fighting involved in the overthrow of Díaz was minimal compared to later campaigns and wars that raged across Mexico. The Revolution ended in a compromise in May of 1911 which created a coalition government of the followers of Francisco I. Madero, the figurehead of the revolt, and Porfirio Díaz. That compromise and the resulting coalition retarded changes declared necessary by the revolutionary forces. Elements that had participated in the movement wanted swifter changes and when that did not occur a number of revolts and rebellions erupted.

In February of 1913 a counter-revolution, referred to as the Barracks Revolt or Revolt of the Generals, succeeded in forcing the resignation of Madero. General Victoriano Huerta replaced Madero in the nation's highest office but the movement sparked another counter-revolution in the northern states. Various regional leaders joined in a common desire to defeat Huerta and his forces. The war that raged from March 1913 to July 1914, when Huerta fled the country, involved the development and usage of equipment and techniques of modern warfare. It also created the seeds of civil war through greed for power and jealousy between leaders.

Once General Huerta's forces were defeated in the summer of 1914, the revolutionary leaders convened to determine the country's course; but their efforts were hindered by the personal confrontations of two main elements of the

movement led by Francisco Villa and Venustiano Carranza. The situation evolved into chaos with two groups claiming to be the legal government of Mexico. Then, at one point in 1915, there were four persons claiming to be the President. The contending forces of the Conventionist and Constitutionalist governments fought a bitter and bloody civil war between November 1914 and June 1915. With his victory complete, President Carranza reoccupied Mexico City but peace did not come from the victory. He was plagued by continuing revolts in various parts of the country and the intimidating tactics of the United States, which persisted in attempting to dictate the course of Mexico's internal affairs.

The replacement of the Constitution of 1857 in 1917 did not quiet the atmosphere in Mexico but served to stimulate more rebellion. In 1918, Generals Felipe Angeles and Francisco Villa, who had led the Division of the North in 1914 and 1915, mounted a revolution against Carranza. The movement was squashed in 1919 by the interference of the United States army at Ciudad Juárez and the revolution dissolved into guerrilla warfare after the execution of General Angeles in November 1919. But, that movement was soon replaced by a more successful one from within Carranza's own forces. General Álvaro Obregón led the revolution which succeeded in removing Carranza from power in May 1920. The establishment of the Sonoran "Dynasty",

which included Obregón, Plutarco Elías Calles, Benjamín Hill, Manuel Dieguéz, and Adolfo de la Huerta, in national power did not stop revolts and rebellions. Various generals led armies in rebellion in unsuccessful attempts to overthrow Obregón. The most serious of those revolts was one led by Adolfo de la Huerta in 1923. After its defeat the period referred to as the Mexican Revolution of 1910 ended.

PREFACE

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 was the first large-scale, internal revolution of the 20th Century. It preceded the Russian Revolution and overlapped that revolution and World War I. Between the years of 1912 and 1915 drastic changes occurred in the methods used by the armies in Mexico. Before the Revolution, the federal army was commanded by elderly generals who resisted adoption of the emerging innovations in weaponry and developing techniques of combat. Those staff officers clung to a 19th Century belief in individual bravery and the use of valiant infantry and cavalry charges. During the Revolution younger officers, civilian-soldiers and federal officers who had been repressed, emerged to accept and utilize modern concepts of warfare and use developing technology.

The leaders of the armies during the Revolution were the first to use a combination of the technology and techniques of modern warfare. The extensive use of the railroad to transport troops and supplies to a battle area, which Germans first used on a large-scale in the 1870's, was refined and expanded. The use of artillery to reduce defensive fortifications and cover attacking troops, which proved effective during the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, became the primary ingredient of most battles. The machine gun, which

was to become the primary weapon in Europe during World War I, was swiftly adopted as a primary defense weapon. The first use of an airplane to bomb a fortification from the air occurred in northwestern Mexico, and airplanes were used for reconnaissance of enemy lines. A hospital train was first used by General Francisco Villa in northern Mexico in 1913 and that innovation was later modified for use by the armies in Europe. In addition to the above, it was shown in Mexico that cavalry was fast becoming an outdated arm of the military.

The railroad in Mexico became the primary factor in troop movements because of the distances involved and variety of terrain. The armies were often required to cross treacherous mountains, traverse deserts, penetrate jungles and fight a bloody and exhausting battle at the end of the trip. To assure that troops were fresh and ready for combat, trains moved large units from base camps to the area of engagement, and because trains were used to move troops, supplies and equipment, possession or destruction of railroad lines became an important part of battle strategy. Closely associated with movement was the repair of railroad tracks which became a routine task that allowed an army to reach its objective or facilitate the movement of large artillery pieces that were too heavy to be moved cross-country.

It was in Mexico that the effective use of artillery in

the destruction of enemy fortifications and covering the assault of troops was first used. The techniques of the concentrated barrage by heavy guns and close support of soldiers in the assault, which were used by the Division of the North in 1914, was later used in Europe. The armies in the European war did not use the concentrated artillery barrage until March 1915 and it was not until September of that year when they successfully used cannons to fire in front of the assaulting troops. With drastic changes occurring in warfare, the need for men with more technical knowledge became apparent. Bravery and daring alone could no longer win battles. Men were needed who could plan, organize, and use the tools available to create a strong defensive position or launch an offensive. Skills were needed in arranging for railroad transportation between points and the logistics necessary for mounting an extended campaign. Men were needed with military training and experience in the use of those modern weapons to win battles. One such man was General Angeles, who was an expert in the field of artillery and schooled in the art of warfare in some of the best French military schools.

Felipe Angeles was born on June 13, 1869 in the State of Hidalgo, the son of a district chief. Entering the Military College at Chapultepec in 1883 at the age of fourteen, he excelled in mathematics and graduated in three years. For ten years he served in Engineer companies at the College

until being transferred to the artillery. His mathematical talents attracted the attention of professor Eduardo Prado, Mexico's greatest mathematician. With Prado's recommendation, Felipe Angeles was made professor of mathematics and ballistics at the College, and during the 1890's he was also instructor of the Theory and Practice of Artillery Marksmanship.

During his years at the Military College, Felipe Angeles applied his intelligence and talents to reshaping war matériel, producing of smokeless powder, and designing shooting tables for artillery. In 1901 he began a series of foreign missions to inspect the manufacturing of artillery pieces for the War Department, examine war material for possible purchase and attend French military schools. Between 1904 and 1911 he attended and studied the methods of instruction at the schools at Detall, Fontainbeleau, Mailly, and St. Cyr. The entrance requirements of those schools included knowledge in subjects such as plane and spherical trigonometry, analytical geometry, mechanics, chemistry and natural philosophy. The courses taught at the French schools were specialized and technical, examples of which are listed and described in Military Schools and Courses of Instruction in the Science and Art of War, published in 1872. (See Table 1)

Two of those missions were the result of his criticism of the administration of the Military College at

Chapultepec and the War Department. In January 1904, he was arrested by General Manuel Mondragón because of the publication of a critical article. Then, in 1908 he was again arrested by the Director of the Artillery Department and sent on a mission. It was that mission that caused Angeles to be absent from Mexico when the Revolution of 1910 swept President Díaz from power. After completing his mission in late 1911, Colonel Angeles returned home to be appointed by President Madero as the Director of the Military College.

While he restructured the Military College to conform to the French pattern, Angeles was promoted to General and became a loyal supporter of Madero's. In September 1912, he was pulled from his administrative position at the School to command troops against the rebellion in the South led by Emiliano Zapata. He was in the State of Morelos in February 1913, when the military revolt rocked Mexico City but returned to the city upon the personal request of Madero. When the revolt succeeded in forcing President Madero to resign, General Angeles was arrested and confined with the President and some of his cabinet members in the National Palace. But, instead of sharing in the fate of Madero, who was shot, General Angeles accepted a mission to France in August 1913.

TABLE 1. COURSES OF INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH MILITARY SCHOOLS
IN 1872.

A. Artillery Courses.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Effects of Powder | 14. Field Fortifications |
| 2. Motions of Projectiles in Space | 15. Tactics |
| 3. Motion of Carriages | 16. Military Communications |
| 4. Small Arms | 17. Strategy |
| 5. Projectiles and Cannons | 18. Attack and Defense |
| 6. Fire of Ordnance | 19. Topography |
| 7. Effects of Projectiles | 20. Geology |
| 8. Uniform Organization of the Artillery | 21. Metallurgy |
| 9. Organization of Field Artillery | 22. Manufacture of Small Arms, Ordnance and Powder |
| 10. Artillery in the Attack and Defense | 23. Munitions |
| 11. Design for Ordnance: Projectiles and Ordnance | 24. Mechanics |
| 12. Training of Batteries | 25. Resistance of Materials |
| 13. Military Art | 26. Construction: Masonry, Architecture, walls, and arches |
| | 27. Veterinary Art: Horse Care |
-

B. St. Cyr School for Infantry and Cavalry Courses.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. Physical Science | 10. Reconnaissance Survey |
| 2. Military Literature | 11. Redoubts, Armament, Intrenchments, Attack and Defense, |
| 3. Military History | |

CHAPTER I

The Reluctant Rebel

General Felipe Angeles stepped off the ship at La Havre, France on August 29, 1913, unofficially exiled from his native Mexico. Officially, Angeles went to France to study artillery materials for the Mexican War Department. Unofficially, the recently established government of General Victoriano Huerta sought to remove him as a potential threat to the new regime. In February 1913 Huerta commanded the military forces defending the National Palace against troops led by rebellious military officers. He secretly conspired with the rebels and betrayed the trust of President Francisco I. Madero. When the rebellion succeeded in forcing Madero's resignation cabinet members and certain people known to be loyal maderistas shared his confinement in the Palace. General Angeles was a strict supporter and friend of the President, and was one of those people arrested and held prisoner. (1)

After President Madero and Vice President José Piño Suárez were assassinated on February 22, the newly established government under Huerta's control offered Angeles governmental posts to neutralize his influence among Madero loyalists. The first offer was a mission to Belgium as Military attaché, and when Angeles refused the War Department proposed the command of federal troops in

the State of Michoacán. When he rejected the second offer Angeles was transferred to the military prison of Santiago Tlaltelolco for an unspecified term of confinement.(2)

It was not the first time Angeles adhered to his principles and accepted the consequences. Twice before he had publicly spoken out against military ineptness and the refusal of superiors to institute needed changes in the military. On both occasions he was arrested and confined, with resulting assignments on foreign missions. The same man who arrested him in 1904 for publishing an article which criticized the administration of the Military College was his protector in 1913. General Manuel Mondragón was a colleague of Angeles' at the Military College and the only professor who could rival Angeles in his knowledge of artillery. Although Mondragón joined the rebels in February and led the cadets of the College against Madero, it was a statement of his political views and not the abandonment of his friendship with Angeles. In his capacity as the new Minister of War under President Huerta, Mondragón protected Angeles from the firing squad or long term imprisonment. Angeles was aware of that protection and realized that as long as Mondragón occupied the cabinet post he would be sheltered from the continuing efforts of General Aureliano Blanquet to see him punished for his loyalty. The shield of friendship continued through the Spring of 1913 but suddenly disappeared in the early months of Summer, leaving

Angeles exposed to the wishes of his antagonist. (3)

On June 23, President Huerta removed Mondragón from his position in the War Department and quickly sent him to the United States on a mission. As Mondragón was escorted to the train station, General Blanquet quickly occupied his new position in charge of the War Department. Soon after deposing Mondragón, Blanquet offered Angeles a mission to Europe. Angeles knew that refusal of the mission could produce consequences of a terminal nature and quickly accepted the assignment. The practice of dispatching persons, considered dangerous to officials in power, on foreign missions was not new nor unique. Porfirio Díaz, the longtime President of Mexico, used the method of unofficial exile to neutralize political foes and uncontrollable military officers; and the practice survived Díaz's overthrow in May of 1911. Once his power base was stabilized, Huerta began the elimination of real and imagined enemies through the use of foreign missions. In addition to Mondragón, General Félix Díaz, a perennial rebel, co-conspirator in the Military Revolt of 1913 and aspirant to the presidency, was dispatched to Japan; and Francisco León de la Barra, the Interim President after President Díaz's resignation in May 1911 and huertista Minister of Foreign Affairs, found himself enroute to France in July of that year. (4)

Neither the city of La Havre nor the country of France

were unfamiliar to Angeles because of his previous missions to that country. While on his way to Paris, Angeles analyzed his situation. Fulfilling the assigned duties of his mission would indicate a professional association with and create an appearance of support for Huerta's government, which he believed to be based on the immoral foundation of deceit and treachery. Association with such a disreputable government would not only discredit his personal honor and integrity but prevent him from assisting in the restoration of a moderate and just government like Madero's. Yet, abandonment of the mission would end his long and illustrious military career as a federal officer. If he decided to disobey his orders and renounce the mission he needed an alternative. (5)

He found that alternative in the guise of an elderly gentleman named Venustiano Carranza who was the Governor of Coahuila. While Angeles languished in the military prison, forces in Mexico arose to challenge General Huerta's takeover of the government. Carranza and others who denied the legitimacy of Huerta's government drafted the Plan of Guadalupe on March 26, 1913 and sparked a counter-revolution. During that Spring and Summer the Constitutionalists, as they chose to call themselves, recruited revolutionaries in the northern States and began their struggle to depose Huerta. Despite their efforts the movement was still in various stages of guerrilla warfare

in August, except for a few victories by Álvaro Obregón in the State of Sonora and Francisco Villa in Chihuahua. During the latter months of the summer of 1913 the revolution was not a monumental uprising against a tyrant but more like an irritating leak that spurted and dripped, seeped and spewed. It was a revolution of farmers, bandits, and civil politicians that needed the help of a professional soldier. (6)

In Paris, Angeles conformed to the orders of his mission by reporting to the Mexican Minister, Francisco León de la Barra. Soon afterward he located Miguel Díaz Lombardo, agent for the Constitutionalist forces in France, who arranged a series of communications with Roberto Pesqueira. As the revolutionary representative in Washington, D. C., Pesqueira negotiated with Angeles concerning the offer of his knowledge and services to the revolution. Angeles' reluctance to simply leave France and join the revolutionary forces in Mexico was not based on ambitious motives nor material gain. Having reached the age of forty-four in June of that year, Angeles was no longer a young, impulsive man who whimsically tossed caution aside for an ideal. (7)

The offer of assistance was welcomed by the Constitutionalist government because of Angeles' reputation as an expert in artillery and an officer knowledgeable in the art of warfare. The Constitutionalist army lacked

professional military officers in their ranks, and by September of 1913 were still unable to control completely any State in the north. That situation indicated the desperate need for a man who could provide guidance in military strategy, and Angeles was commissioned to evaluate their strategy and furnish that advice. The Constitutionalist government sent funds for his passage to Mexico and some extra for the support of his family who remained in France, and allowed Angeles to reserve the right of incorporation into the revolutionary army. Only one problem remained to be solved by Angeles, that of providing an excuse for his absence from France. That cover story would assure his family's protection from persecution by Huerta's agents until they could be moved to another location. (8)

While decisions were being made concerning the acceptance of Angeles and his position in the revolutionary army, President Huerta dissolved the Mexican Congress, arrested some of the representatives, and converted the government into a military establishment. Then, while Angeles prepared a cover story for his absence an event occurred in northern Mexico that would later alter the General's life. On September 27, 1913, the Division of the North was formed with Francisco Villa as its commander. A few days before Angeles left France the Division stormed the Federal stronghold at Torreón where they added the

strength of eleven cannons to their forces. (9)

Angeles notified Minister León de la Barra that he was going to England to enroll his son, Alberto, in a college. Returning to his home in the city, he instructed his wife to confirm the story to all who inquired. If the subterfuge worked his family would be safe until arrangements could be made for their relocation. By October 6, 1913, the General and his eldest son were enroute to the United States, and from there to Mexico. Some unknown factor made Minister León de la Barra suspicious. As a result, he telegraphed the port at La Havre and ordered that General Angeles be held; but it was too late, Felipe Angeles was on his way home to Mexico. (10)

Upon his arrival at Nogales, Sonora, on October 16, Angeles did not find an army in the sense of organization and leadership. Instead he encountered an assemblage of undisciplined farmers and artisans led by unpolished amateurs. Some of the commanding officers had fought in the brief Revolution of 1910 while others served against the rebellions that rose against President Madero in 1912; yet they still lacked the organizational, tactical and strategical knowledge and skills necessary to produce an efficient military organization. A few of them had military experience in the federal army but most of those were relegated to lower command positions. Although few federal officers had more combat experience than the revolutionary

leaders, they did have leadership experience and knowledge of how to maintain discipline in a military organization.

(11)

The revolutionary leaders came from a variety of backgrounds, with few having regular army experience. Francisco Villa was a Chihuahua and Durango bandit who joined the 1910 Revolution and rose to command a division. Plutarco Elías Calles was a former teacher and inspector of schools; Salvador Alvarado, a former druggist; Francisco Murguía, a photographer; Juan Barragan, a student; and Lucio Blanco, a stock raiser. Besides Villa, the only other leader who had a record of military victories in 1913 was Álvaro Obregón. He was a former rancher and mechanic who served under Sonoran Governor José María Maytorena against Pascual Orozco's rebellion in 1912. (12)

A number of revolutionary dignitaries met Angeles at the train station in Nogales. Among them was Álvaro Obregón who personally escorted him to Hermosillo and introduced the renowned artillery officer to Venustiano Carranza. The First Chief of the Constitutionalist government immediately welcomed and praised Angeles, and the two men appeared to get along extremely well, for they were both educated and cultured gentlemen. First Chief Carranza was the member of a rich and powerful family of landowners in Coahuila. He spent twenty-six years in politics rising to positions of National Senator, State Governor, and, finally, Minister of

War in Madero's revolutionary government. The cordial relationship between Angeles and Carranza in the fall of 1913 must have caused great concern for Obregón and his followers because they needed a continuing influence with the First Chief to counter that of Governor Maytorena. (13)

In Sonora there were two groups struggling for control of the State. Governor José María Maytorena led one faction while the other was headed by General Álvaro Obregón. When President Madero fell from power in February 1913, Maytorena fled to the United States. In his absence, Ignacio Pesqueira served as acting governor and named Obregon commander of the Sonora troops. By the time Maytorena returned in July to resume his duties as Governor, Ignacio Pesqueira, Álvaro Obregón, Benjamín Hill, Salvador Alvarado, and Juan G. Cabral had brought most of the State under their control. Obregón and his followers reluctantly agreed to Maytorena's demand to be reinstated as the constitutional governor, and then began a campaign to force him out of power. As their campaign began, Maytorena started a movement to neutralize their control and reestablish his power base. Then came the event that threatened the balance of power in Sonora. (14)

In Mexico City, President Huerta scheduled national elections for October 26, 1913 to legitimize his government. That move must have been the stimulus for Carranza's decision to formally establish a complete

revolutionary government on October 20. He needed to appoint men in certain governmental cabinet positions to make his government conform to the guidelines of the constitution, and one of those positions was Minister of War. He needed a capable man to head the army, someone knowledgeable in military administration and strategy. A few days prior to his decision concerning the appointments Felipe Angeles had arrived, bringing a superior intellect, knowledge of military tactical and strategic theory, and years of experience as a soldier. (15)

Carranza announced his selection of cabinet members to the revolutionary leaders on October 20, 1913, including General Felipe Angeles as Minister of War. The naming of a former federal officer resurrected old suspicions and inflamed revolutionary jealousies. An atmosphere of distrust concerning the loyalty and intentions of ex-federal officers was common throughout most of the army. That apprehension stemmed primarily from the military revolt that toppled the Madero government and led to his death, and those suspicions naturally transferred to Angeles. Additionally, jealousy among revolutionary leaders who were afraid of losing their power or influence to more knowledgeable persons worsened the hostility toward Angeles. (16)

The primary source of the movement to prevent Angeles from gaining the post came from Obregón's army, and Obregón

himself personified the suspicious and jealous leader. Angeles' appointment seriously threatened the balance of power in Sonora because it appeared that he favored Maytorena. That friendship was based on their known loyalties to Madero and must have caused Obregon to suspect that Angeles would use the post to tip the scales to his disadvantage. As soon as the names of the appointees were announced, Generals Benjamín Hill, Manuel Diéguez, Salvador Alvarado, and Álvaro Obregón protested to Carranza. In addition to the suspicions and power jealousies, some of the generals resented Angeles for what appeared to be a privileged position by having the choice of incorporation into the revolution. (17)

Obregón personally went to Hermosillo to dissuade Carranza from placing Angeles in the cabinet position. Their conference resulted in the reduction of Angeles to Subsecretary of War, which Angeles deeply resented because he believed himself more capable of administering the post than any of the revolutionary generals. Although he was disgruntled over the demotion Angeles accepted his new title and duties. (18)

Angeles served in a non-combatant, advisory role as Subsecretary of War in Charge of the Dispatch of War with the duties of giving direction to the military forces. The influence that succeeded in forcing his reduction in office continued to hinder his effectiveness. His decisions and

orders relating to the displacement and direction of revolutionary forces were either countermanded or changed by First Chief Carranza, making the Subsecretary post a sterile exercise of evaluation and advice. Unable to counterbalance the influence of the Sonoran faction with Carranza, Angeles adopted an attitude that would preserve his soldierly honor and yet allow him to perform the duties. That attitude is reflected in his report concerning the planned attacks on Forts Mazatlán and Guaymas. He returned from a reconnaissance of the areas to express his professional opinion.

My opinion as a soldier is that both Guaymas and Mazatlán should be attacked in proper form, in order that the revolutionary march toward the south of Sinaloa proceed....only after having dominated and organized the regions of the north in a suitable manner...
You can decide as civilians and revolutionaries and can do what appears to you to be the best.
I have given my opinion as a soldier. (19)

His advice concerning the capture of those two coastal cities, both of which were in Obregón's area of operation,

was disregarded. Obregón's army held Guaymas under siege from the latter part of 1913 until the garrison evacuated the fort and city in July 1914 to reinforce Manzanillo. They also isolated Mazatlán as the war passed by and did not occupy it until August 1914. Guaymas contained 4,000 federal troops with fourteen cannons and four machine guns, and Mazatlán had at least fifteen hundred federals with six cannons and four machine guns. The capture of those two forts would have greatly increased the meager supply of artillery and machine guns that Obregón's army possessed in early 1914; but, Obregón evidently made his own decision and refused Angeles' advice. (20)

As Obregón and his forces pushed into the State of Sinaloa in late 1913, the Division of the North was smashing at the federal garrisons in Chihuahua. After an attempt to capture Chihuahua City, General Francisco Villa turned north and took Ciudad Juárez, the import point for supplies and arms across the border from El Paso, Texas. The spectacular victory at Ciudad Juárez established Villa's reputation in the United States as a brave, daring, and admirable person; but before the Division of the North could consolidate its victory, Villa was forced to defend the area against a huertista force coming from the south. The federals, augmented by General Pascual Orozco's Colorados, encountered Villa's Division at Tierra Blanca. After three days of fighting the federals were routed,

causing the federal garrison at Chihuahua City to leave the State capital to the Division of the North. By December 1913, Villa had isolated the federals in the area of Ojinaga on the Texas border. The assault on that garrison began on January 1 and ended with the federals' surrender on January 10, 1914, and was a critical lesson for Villa. Martiniano Servín, who commanded the Division's artillery, failed to utilize the cannons properly in stopping federal charges, neutralizing enemy fire or supporting Villa's troops. (21)

By the end of 1913, Angeles was committed to the revolution because federal authorities were aware of his abandonment of the European mission. He wished to escape the suspicious atmosphere, continuing character attacks, and degrading remarks about his loyalty, honor, and manliness made by Generals Hill, Diéguez, and Obregón. In his search for that escape, Angeles' attention was drawn to the Division of the North and Villa. After the victory at Ojinaga, he dispatched a congratulatory telegram to Villa. (22)

The receipt of a personal telegram from the Subsecretary of War, and from such a noted artillery officer must have had a considerable effect on Villa. The Commander of the Division of the North continuously desired praise and credit for his military accomplishments and endeavored to make the Division of the North the best fighting force in

Mexico. He appointed his brother, Hipólito, and trusted friends to purchase equipment and supplies from the United States. He formed an elite cavalry unit at Ciudad Juárez, called Los Dorados (The Golden Ones), who were supplied with the best arms and uniforms. He also authorized the formation of mobile hospital trains to accompany the army into battle and treat his wounded soldiers. In early 1914, he ordered the formation of a corps of mountain troops specifically for crossing and fighting in areas of high terrain. Those innovations resulted from his awareness that warfare was changing, and glorious cavalry charges and valiant infantry assaults were no longer sufficient to defeat the enemy on the battlefield. (23)

Along with his awareness that specialized military units were needed, Villa also saw machine guns becoming commonplace weapons and artillery a necessity of war. He recalled the adept use of cannons in 1912 by the artillery commander, Rubio Navarrette, when they served under General Victoriano Huerta against the rebelling forces of Pascual Orozco. Those memories, coupled with the inadequacy of his artillery at Ojinaga and the reconnaissance reports that his next objective at Torreón was heavily fortified, convinced Villa and his advisors of the need for an expert in artillery. (24)

One of the best artillery officers had just sent a glowing message of congratulations and the fact that

Angeles was a former federal officer did not adversely affect Villa's consideration of requesting his help. Numerous ex-federals were incorporated into the ranks of the Division of the North, and Villa benefited from their experience and knowledge. Besides, Villa's request for Angeles' services could only be temporary because Angeles was a member of the Constitutionalist staff and War Department with duties to perform. Once the artillery was effectively organized and the Torreón campaign over, Villa could search for a suitable officer to permanently command his new Artillery Corps. (25)

First Chief Carranza departed Sonora for Chihuahua in the latter part of February 1914. The governmental party was unable to travel by train because the rail line entered the United States for a considerable distance, so it traveled cross-country with General Angeles commanding the escort. Near Agua Prieta, Carranza received a telegram from Villa requesting the assignment of his Subsecretary to the Division of the North for the Torreón campaign with the object of reorganizing the artillery. He approached Angeles with the request and asked if he consented to the assignment. Angeles saw the assignment as at least a temporary relief from the political bickerings in Sonora and an opportunity to directly contribute to the war. He agreed to the assignment and left for Chihuahua City about the second week of March. (26)

The grand reception given by the Division at Chihuahua City to welcome Angeles was a pleasant change from the atmosphere in Sonora. Although he felt appreciated, his position in the Division was unorthodox. As Artillery Commandant he was subordinate to Villa; yet he retained the superior position of Subsecretary of War with the responsibility of directing the forces of the revolution, which included those of Villa's. Because of those simultaneous positions he was superior and subordinate to Villa, a peculiar situation of war. (27)

As Division Commander, General Villa retained responsibility for the operations, successes, and failures of his army, and maintained authority over all elements. Yet he was technically responsible to the War Department and the Subsecretary for the conduct of his operations. If it were two other men, the contradiction of positions may have resulted in conflicts over authority and jealous bickerings; yet, the question of authority and responsibility was not the only unusual aspect in the partnership of Angeles and Villa. (28)

The personalities of the two generals were antithetical. Unlike the educated and cultured Angeles, Francisco Villa received little formal education and lacked cultural refinement. Prior to the Revolution of 1910 he was the bandit Pancho Villa operating in the hills of Durango and Chihuahua. As Angeles adapted to the discipline and

atmosphere of the army, Villa adjusted to his trade and environment which was one of desperation and survival. While Angeles learned the technical skills of artillery in foreign schools, Villa mastered leadership skills that would later make him a reckless general. His daring and often unconventional methods produced a spectacular record of victories which usually included his standard method of frontal, mass assaults. That tactic, described as a flash of lightning or Golpes Terrificos (Terrible Blows), was his main plan of battle with more complicated battle tactics being integrated from the advice of his staff. (29)

As a hunted outlaw, Villa developed the tenacity necessary to survive and a conflicting, nonchalant attitude toward life which marked his personality and attracted respect. Along with streaks of cruelty and native shrewdness, he acquired a code of honor which rested on his personal word and behavior. While Angeles rarely displayed his emotions, Villa unpredictably fluctuated between extreme mood changes. His personal secretary recalled that his moods varied from agreeable and tender to hard and brutal. Unlike Angeles who maintained an emotional equilibrium, Francisco Villa was ruled by his emotions which varied from love and melancholy to intense hatred and murder. (30)

Villa considered the war and every battle a personal enterprise while Angeles approached combat from an

intellectual and relatively professional perspective. Contrary to Angeles' ability to conceal his anger, pain, and exaltation, Villa openly displayed his feelings and reactions. His emotional outbursts and sometimes irrational decisions were kept reasonably in check by the men he chose as advisors and staff officers, and the one man who could usually guide him in the right path was Angeles. (31)

Thus the union of the emotional, uncultured bandit and the scientific, military intellectual was formed. The elements of character which made that union successful were a mutual respect and the attainment of an understanding of the partnership. Villa respected Angeles for his knowledge and bravery; Angeles respected Villa for his emotional loyalty and willingness to accept advise. The compromise that negated the contradiction in authority and conflict of personalities was a separation of responsibilities. They accepted the fact that the coordinated use of artillery and troops won battles and, if one failed to support the other, the battle was lost. The compromise was based on that concept with General Angeles responsible to Villa for the conduct of his artillery and General Villa responsible to Angeles for the conduct of his troops. It was a compromise that was devastating to federals at Torreón, Zacatecas and other battles. As events evolved in Mexico, a third factor affected their relationship and welded their friendship. That factor was loyalty to the entity called "La División

del Norte". (32)

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CHAPTER II
THE MASTER OF ARTILLERY

At the headquarters of the Division of the North in Chihuahua City, General Angeles entered the turmoil of organizing for a major campaign. Reconnaissance reports of the objective at Torreón revealed that the area was strongly fortified with a great amount of artillery situated for a stubborn defense. Those reports caused the revolutionaries to realize they were no longer fighting the old federal army, commanded by elderly generals who were reluctant to accept and use modern tactics. Their adversary was the product of a reorganization by General Victoriano Huerta. (1)

Huerta was a compulsive organizer who could not tolerate an inefficient military unit in the state of disarray. One of his first projects after gaining control of the government in February 1913 was renovation of the army. It had become progressively stagnant under the administration of President Díaz, and although the Revolution of 1910 succeeded in replacing Díaz it failed to revamp the War Department. Huerta initially replaced the elderly Minister of War, General Angel García Peña, with Manuel Mondragón and then chose division generals, such as Joaquín Maas and José Refugio Velasco, who were competent at organization

and managing armies. He organized the new federal army around centralized strongpoints with outlying detachments, and increased the role of artillery. That increased use of artillery forced the revolutionary armies to adopt new techniques of offensive warfare or remain as guerrilla units. (2)

It was that reorganized federal army that the Division of the North prepared to assault at Torreón. Although some of the techniques for improving the army caused corruption and reluctance to fight, it was larger, better equipped, and superior to most of the revolutionary Divisions. None of the other three divisions of the Constitutionalist army were better prepared for the task than Villa's army which had 46 cannons of various calibers. The Division of the Northeast, commanded by General Pablo González, possessed eight cannons in March 1914; General Eulalio Gutiérrez's Central Division had no artillery, relying on guerrilla-type raids on the railroad; and the Division of the Northwest, commanded by General Álvaro Obregón, had ten artillery pieces in early April. In contrast, Villa's division was the most formidable army in Mexico in the Spring of 1914. Besides the large number of artillery pieces, his troops were armed with modern Mauser and Remington rifles, possessed thirty-five of the "most modern machine guns"(3), and even had a water train which accompanied them into the arid regions of northern Mexico.

(4)

Angeles quickly organized his Artillery Corps into two regiments, using 36 of their cannons. The 1st Regiment consisted of three batteries of artillery and was commanded by Colonel Martiniano Servín who had served with the Division of the North through 1913. The 2nd Regiment included the standard three batteries and an additional section of Mountain cannons. The commander of that regiment was Colonel Manuel García Santibáñez who had joined the Division in January. Santibáñez served as an artillery officer in the federal army in General Salvador Mercado's command, and when the garrison at Chihuahua City was abandoned in December 1913 he deserted the army. (5)

Angeles' guns were of French and German manufacture, ranging in caliber from 70 to 80 millimeter, and could be fired accurately up to 2 1/2 miles. The regular cannons were mounted on carriages which were attached to shell caissons and drawn by mules. The mountain cannons were light guns capable of being disassembled, transported over rough and hilly terrain, and reassembled in the vicinity of the target for firing. Although their effective range was considerably less, their mobility was suited for use by Villa's mountain troops and often accompanied cavalry units in pursuing the enemy. There were, in addition to the regular complement of artillery pieces, two large 80mm cannons affectionately and sarcastically called El Niño

(The Infant) and El Chavalito (The Young Lad). Because they weighed almost two tons each, they were mounted on armor-plated railroad cars and fired from those platforms. While Angeles reorganized the artillery new men were being added to the Division. (6)

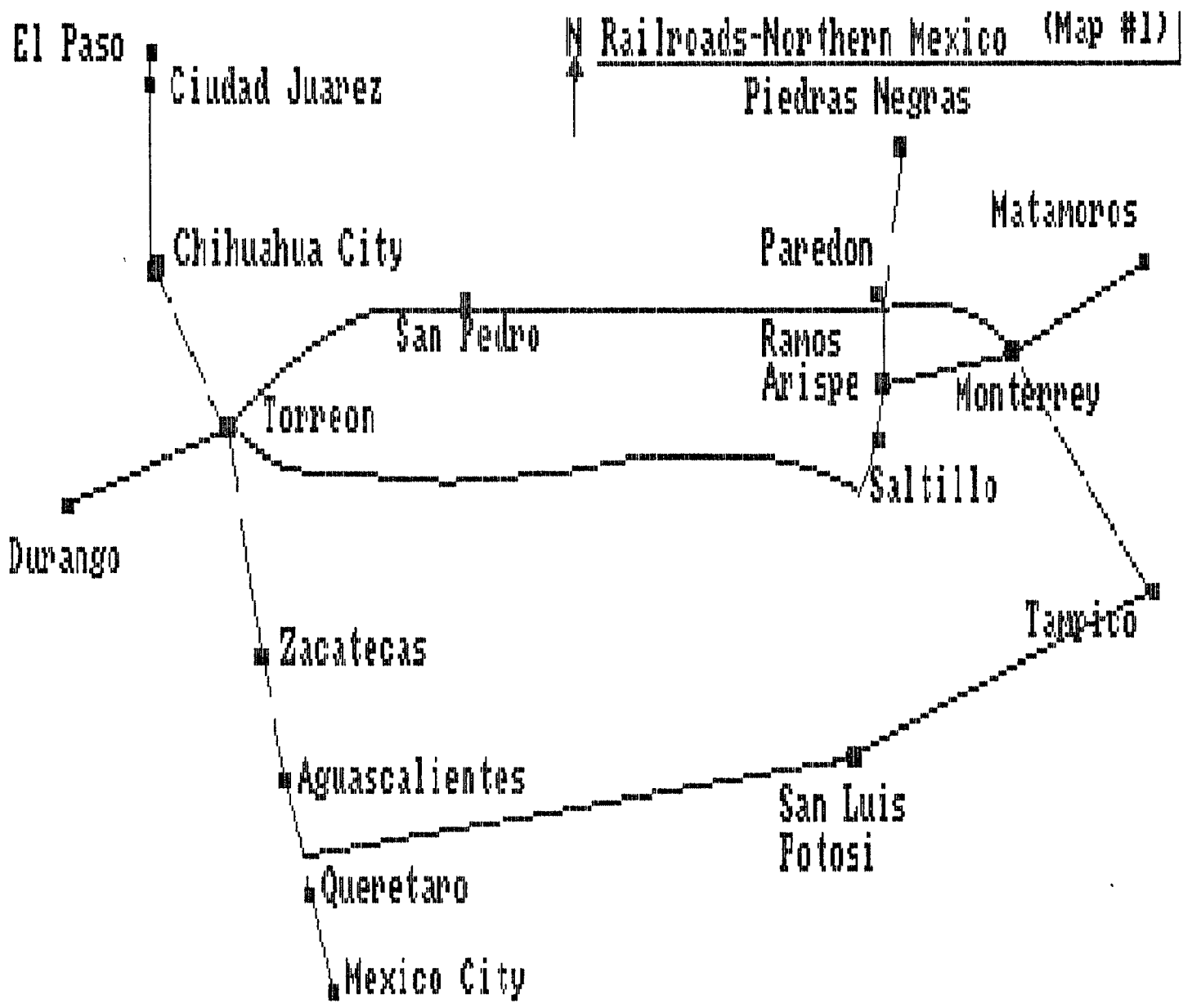
Villa received numerous men from the Sonora area who preferred the busy atmosphere of Chihuahua City to the ceremonial politics around Carranza. Most of those men were Madero loyalists, such as Roque and Federico González Garza. Roque led maderista troops in the State of Coahuila during the Revolution of 1910, served as a federal legislator during Madero's presidency, and was instrumental in starting the 1913 revolution against Huerta. His brother, Federico, was a lawyer who served in the Madero administration and later joined Carranza's government. They, like the rest who came, were assigned posts that suited their abilities. Not all who came from the west were attracted by the reputation of Villa. (7)

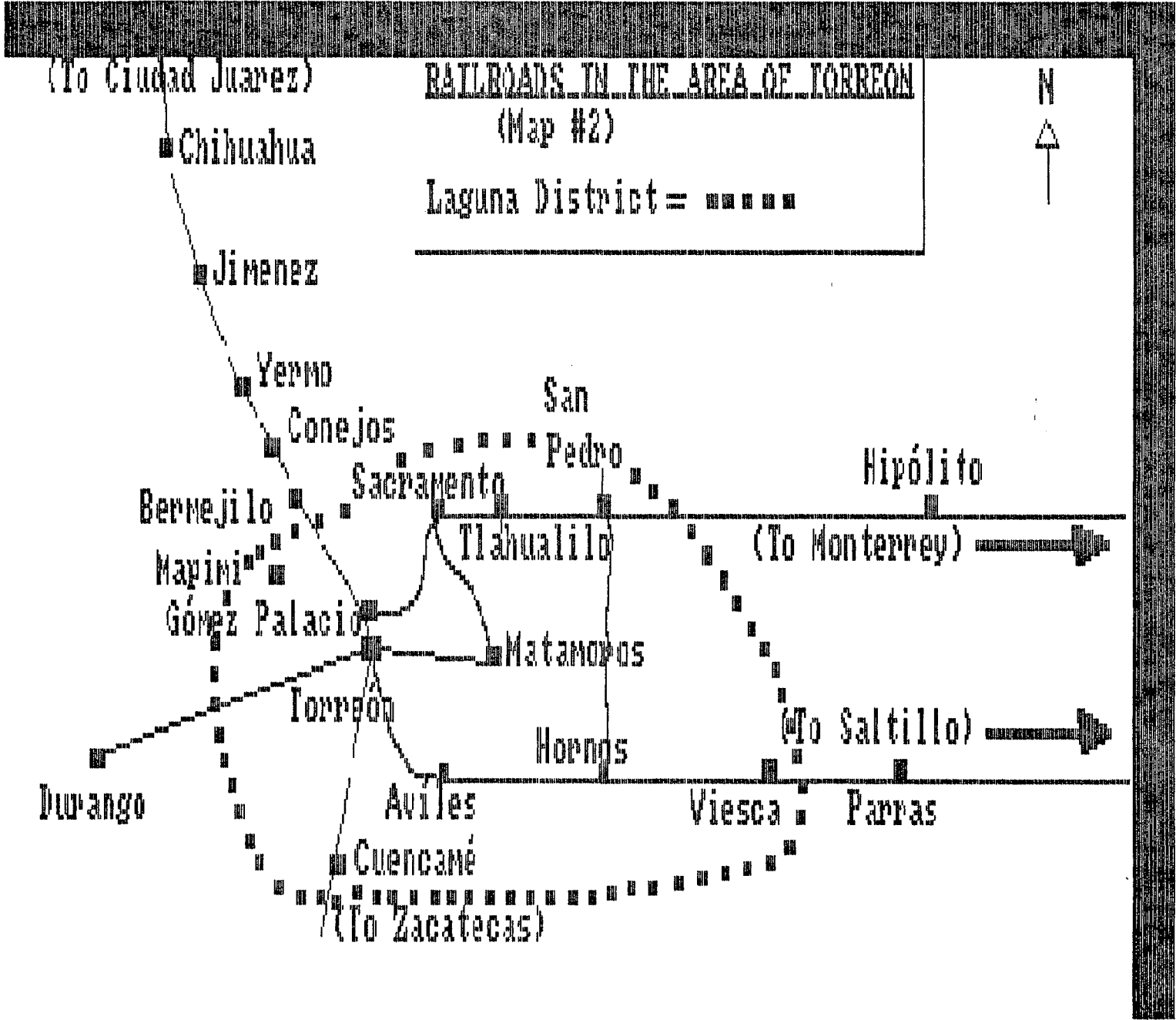
General Angeles also received men who came with the specific intention of serving in the artillery. They were men capable of performing duties of staff officers, battery commanders, section supervisors, gunners, or technicians, all the posts necessary to make the new Artillery Corps an effective unit. Among those men were: Federico Cervantes, a former federal officer and future Chief of the General's Staff; Major Gustavo Bazán, who joined in March 1914 just

before the battle of Gómez Palacio; José Herón González (Gonzalitos), who had been a student at the military college under Angeles and was to become a member of his Staff; and Vito Alessio Robles, a former federal artillery officer who was acquainted with Angeles since 1898 and joined prior to the battle of Paredón. (8)

While Angeles busied himself with his various duties Villa approached him with plans for the Torreón campaign. He requested the advice and approval of Angeles in his capacity as Subsecretary of War and simultaneously coordinated with his Artillery Commandant. Angeles reviewed and approved the plans as Staff Officer in charge of giving direction to the military forces, noted the requirements of the artillery and resumed his duties. Besides personnel and equipment assignments, he had to purchase or have manufactured a sufficient amount of shells for the various gun calibers, obtain carriages for the shells, acquire mules to pull the carriages, and inspect all equipment before the division began its move toward the Laguna District. (9)

The Laguna District was located in north central Mexico, overlapping the States of Coahuila and Durango. It was the site of an ancient lake that evolved into flat plains with rich soil, surrounded by low mountains. Due to the fertility of the region, cotton became the primary agricultural product in the 1890's and the district





3

developed into a commercial center. The increase of commerce attracted railroad construction and by 1913 it was one of the centers of commerce and transportation in northern Mexico. Torreón was the nerve center of railroad traffic for the area and was connected to other centers such as Monterrey and Saltillo, to the east; Chihuahua City and Ciudad Juárez, to the north; San Luis Potosí, to the southeast; and Zacatecas and Mexico City, to the south.

(10)

With the increasing use of railroads to transport armies and Torreón's central location, possession of the city was of prime importance. Occupation of Torreón assured an army not only control of the Central Railroad, that stretched from the United States border straight to the capital of Mexico, but dominance over two other major railways. A revolutionary force attempted to capture the city in the summer of 1913 but the effort was uncoordinated and failed. In October of the same year, Villa led the Division of the North in a successful assault on the city but by December 9th it was back in federal hands. (11)

The vanguard of the Division of the North left Chihuahua City on March 15, 1914, followed by fifteen trains carrying 7,600 troops and 36 artillery pieces. Besides the troops aboard the trains, another 2,000 under General Tomás Urbina moved cross-country; 4,000 Durango troops under General Calixto Contreras moved eastward toward Torreón; and an

additional 1,500 soldiers under General José Isabel Robles destroyed railroad tracks east of the city. Those forces were superior to the army Villa led against the same objective in 1913, with double the number of troops. He must have felt confident they could again capture the federal stronghold in a couple of days; but he was facing a different commander, one who was just as determined to be the victor as Villa. (12)

General José Refugio Velasco, Commander of the Division of the Nazas, had established a network of listening posts within a radius of 60 miles from his stronghold at Torreón. Using Cavalry and Explorer units at those outposts, he hoped to receive warnings of any rebel advance. Villa concentrated on those outlying posts before attempting an assault on Torreón. It is understandable why he needed to capture the posts along the line of march and in nearby areas, but the others were far removed from his advance and contained garrisons too small to be a threat. Because of the direction of march from Chihuahua most of the attacks on outposts merely drove the federals back toward their main base, reinforcing the garrison there by over 1,000 men. (13)

On March 20th, the main body of the Division moved south toward the outpost of Bermejillo. With their artillery still aboard the trains, the infantry pushed in front along the tracks while cavalry rode the flanks. Following the

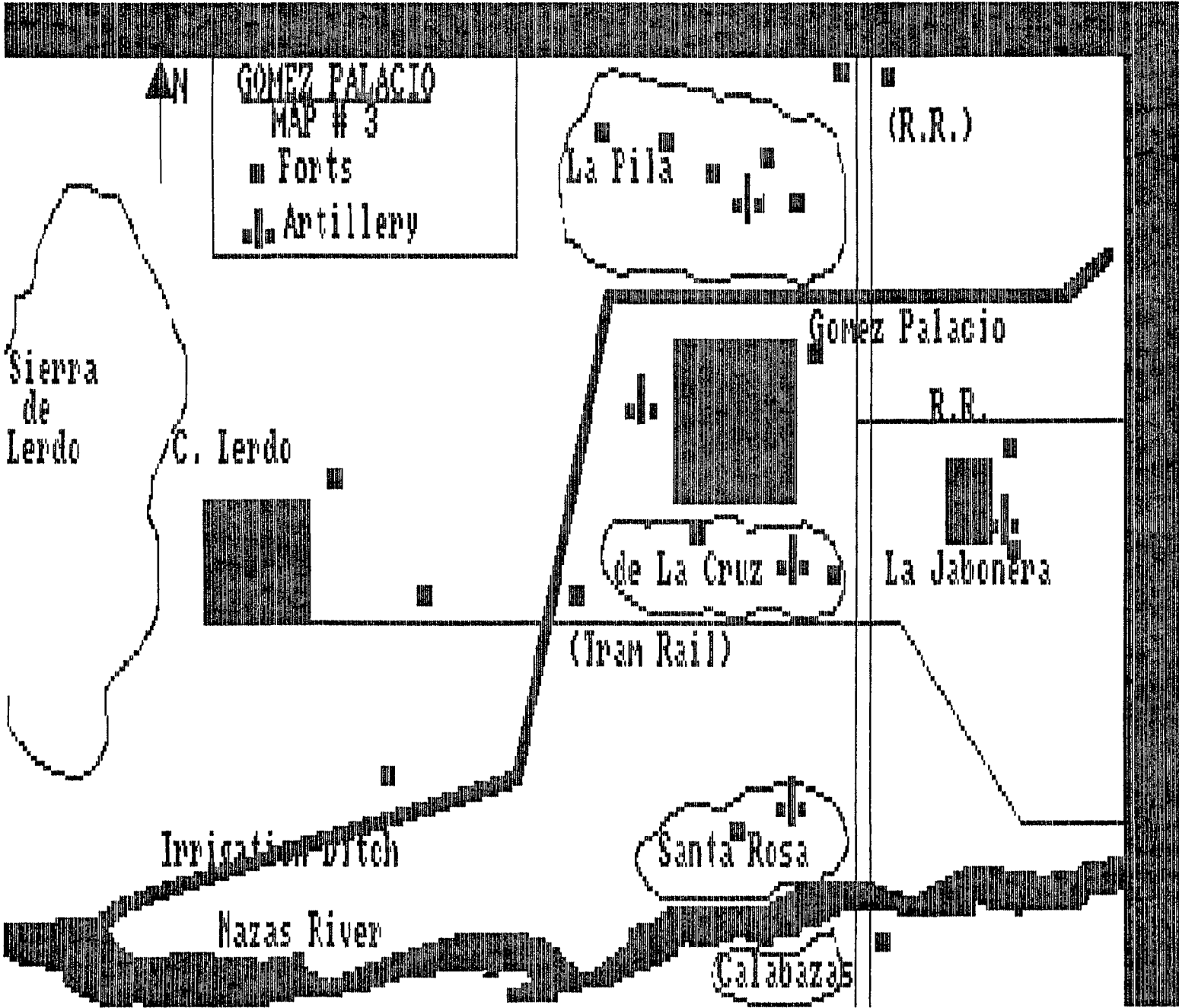
capture of the outpost, Angeles made a long distance telephone call. After identifying himself to the operator at Torreón and requesting to speak to General Velasco, he waited for the federal commander. "Good afternoon, My General", Angeles cordially spoke when Velasco identified himself on the telephone. "Good afternoon," Velasco answered, and quickly asked. "From where are you speaking?" When Angeles notified him of the location, Velasco wished him well and then asked, "What did we do to you?" (14)

Velasco's reference to Angeles' relationship with the federal army must have caused a long pause, while fleeting memories of his long years of service passed through his mind. "Nothing," Angeles responded, probably wishing to avoid the issues that brought him to his present circumstances. He must have felt uncomfortable as the representative of an army in rebellion against the government, particularly while talking to a man he had known during his years in the army. He quickly continued before Velasco could pursue the line of questioning, "With the object of evading a useless spilling of blood and to comply with what we believe is a duty to humanity, I ask you for the city of Torreón." There was silence on the telephone lines. (15)

Velasco, who was an old veteran of the federal army, must have considered the request of surrender a brazen act on the part of Angeles. He probably considered it

unthinkable to surrender his Division to an army of rebels when his men were well fortified and prepared for attack. He stalled for a while and then gave the telephone to a junior officer. The officer spoke in an optimistic tone, attempting to convince Angeles that it was he who should consider surrender. Villa took the telephone and informed the officer that he was coming with his Division to take Torreón by storm and indicated that defeat for the garrison would not be enjoyable. When his colorful threats did not produce fear in the officer, Villa's temper flared and he threatened the worst for the garrison if it did not surrender. When the federal officer continued with the verbal joust, Villa hung up. After the phone call Villa directed the army down the same route he had taken in September 1913 in his advance on Torreón. (16)

On March 22, the Division stopped six miles north of Gómez Palacio at the Infernillo ranch near El Vergel because the tracks beyond that point were severely damaged. Along the banks of the Nazas River and in front of the army, there were three cities: Torreón situated south of the river in the State of Coahuila and the twin cities of Ciudad Lerdo and Gómez Palacio along the northern side in Durango. The federal forces had spent the last few months building entrenchments and forts, arranged in an exterior and interior defense system to protect the city of Torreón. Velasco commanded over 7,000 troops in the area with 18



pieces of artillery and 10 machine guns. It was not the loosely fortified and defended city the Division assaulted and captured in two days of fighting five months before. (17)

By 4:30 in the afternoon Angeles had his artillery unloaded and the Division formed a battle line across the tracks. As the troops pressed forward seven federal cannons bombarded them from fortified positions. Left of the tracks was the neighborhood of La Jabonera, nestled between rails that veered eastward toward Monterrey and stretched south into Torreón. In that area were two fortifications, four artillery pieces, and 600 cavalry troops. (18)

To the right of the tracks was Gómez Palacio, setting behind La Pila hill which was a fortress protected by three companies of infantry and four artillery pieces in five forts dominating the plains below. Part of a cavalry division waited in the city behind the hill and a heavy platform-mounted cannon sat at the railroad station. Beyond the city were three fortified hills, de la Cruz, Santa Rosa and Calabazas. To the right and behind Gómez Palacio was Ciudad Lerdo with four more fortified positions. Connecting the network of defenses in Lerdo, Gómez Palacio and Torreón was a series of tram rails, normally used for urban transportation but capable of transporting reinforcements and artillery between towns. (19)

As the line advanced, Angeles rode with forward units to

scout for gun positions. He was unable to bring the guns into action to counter the federal artillery because the enemy was out of range of his guns and the cannons could not be positioned while the battle line moved forward. From their point of departure, the artillerymen had to wait until the Division covered at least three and a half miles before the guns' breachlocks could be opened and shells prepared for firing. While covering that distance, the Division suffered a considerable amount of casualties under the barrage but pushed forward. (20)

To determine the best gun locations, Angeles plotted enemy strong points, determined the distance from those points to possible positions for his guns, calculated the height of the fortified hills, and then determined effective firing. Once those calculations were complete, he chose positions for the guns, the type of shell to be used and elevation of the barrels. He began placing the guns just before dark and by dawn they were ready to support the primary attacks that would concentrate on the two strongest points of the defense: La Pila and La Jabonera. He placed 16 cannons on San Ignacio hill under the combined command of Colonels Servín and Santibáñez. Placement on the hill increased the guns' range and enabled the shells to hit higher on La Pila hill. He took eight pieces, which he personally commanded, and moved them into a woodland east of the railroad tracks. (21)

On the morning of March 23, the first of a series of desperate and bloody assaults against Gómez Palacio began. As the Division attempted to envelop the town from both flanks and mount a simultaneous attack on La Pila hill, the guns on San Ignacio hill and those in the woodland concentrated their fire on the federal artillery positions. Their main objective was to silence the federal cannons while they covered troop movements and drew federal fire from the brigades. The capture of La Pila was the primary objective of the assaults because the summit dominated the entire area. (22)

Angeles rode behind the troops in their assault on La Pila searching for gun relocation points. Although the center was reinforced to 7,000 men they could not successfully climb the hill against the intense rifle, machine gun and artillery fire. As the attacks continued the railroad tracks south of Vergel were repaired allowing the two big guns to move forward, and before nightfall El Niño and El Chavilito begin firing at closer range. The battle raged until night when the exhausted Division halted and held their captured ground. (23)

During the night General Maclovio Herrera's troops stormed and captured Ciudad Lerdo which threatened the federal's left flank. While Herrera's troops pushed into Lerdo, Angeles' artillery engaged in its first deadly duel with the federal guns, an occurrence that became common

during the campaign. The next morning Villa met with his officers and staff instead of mounting another attack. They reconsidered the battle strategy and decided to change to night attacks because of their vulnerability during daylight hours. Troop movements would begin in the late afternoon so the brigades could orient on their objectives but assaults would not begin until after dark. Not only would darkness mask troop movements but help the artillery commanders to accurately locate federal guns by the flash of their fire. Prior to the Torreón campaign the night, mass attack was not a common offensive tactic but, after it proved successful, Villa used it again; and by 1915 the tactic was common practice in World War I in Europe. (24)

Angeles took advantage of the lull in fighting to scout forward, specifically for gun positions where the gunners could fire directly on La Pila's fortified position instead of using less accurate indirect fire. As he made calculations and measurements for his cannons, gunners adjusted El Niño to fire on the hill. To train the barrel of the large gun in on its target, angles of the railroad track were measured; azimuths taken from its location to the hill and that information compared to the altitude and direction of the hill. Those calculations were then adjusted to allow for factors of wind and projectile drift. Once those computations were made the cannon barrel slowly revolved toward La Pila hill. To prevent the recoil of the

gun from moving the armored car, hydraulic stands were lowered at the corners and then El Niño began to thunder. (25)

After the brigades were in position and awaiting the signal for the night attack Angeles and Villa went into the darkness to scout the front and confer on coordination of artillery fire with troop movements. They agreed on a technique of fire support which was later called creeping fire. They shifted the center of the attack to the left of La Pila against La Jabonera while brigades assaulted the hill from the west and the troops to the east attempted to circle behind Gómez Palacio. When the soldiers began attacking at 9:00 p.m. Colonel Santibáñez's guns fired at the base of La Pila hill, a safe distance in front of the advancing troops, as El Niño bombarded the the summit. The gunners of the 2nd Regiment elevated the gun barrels to correspond with the forward movement of the soldiers and their shells blasted holes in barbed wire and destroyed other obstacles with a walking barrage. The troops charged forward over ground cleared by the artillery and upward toward the summit where the defenders were being pinned down by the barrage. (26)

By early morning the effects of the artillery fire assisted in capturing four of the five forts on the summit, but the victory was short lived. The federals launched a desperate counterattack and forced the exhausted rebels

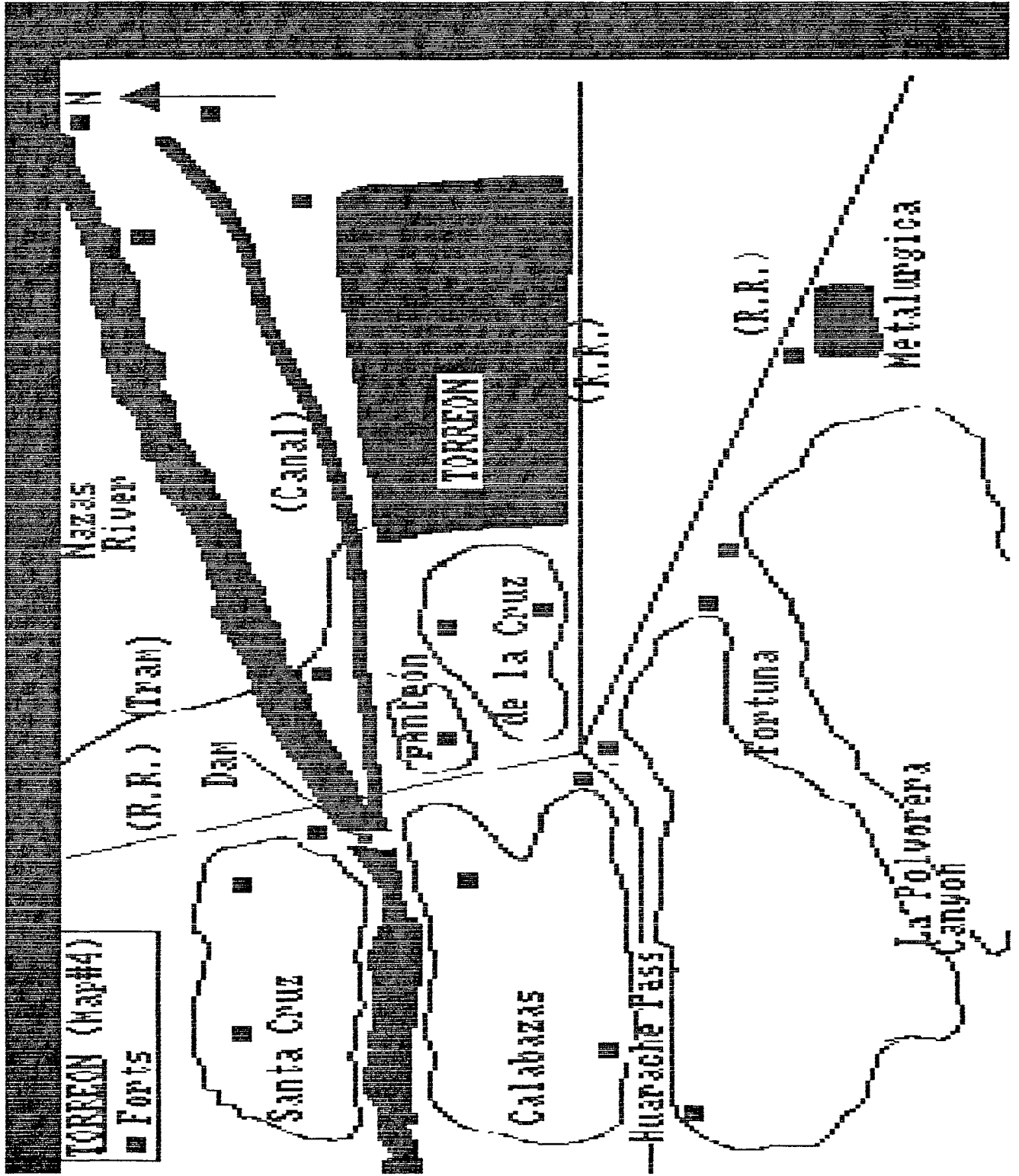
down the slopes and onto the plains below. A cavalry charge, with artillery support, was launched at the same time to draw attention from the main counterattack and silence the rebel artillery. Angeles had moved some guns close to Gómez Palacio and was delivering a devastating barrage. With the good location of Casa Redonda in his possession, he was determined not to withdraw the guns in the face of the cavalry charge because that act would leave the troops exposed to further attacks. To prevent his gunners from pulling the guns back he drew his pistol, forcing them to hold their ground and fire at the charging federals. The cannon fire turned the attackers and saved the center; and when daylight came the battle ended for weary troops who pulled back to rest. (27)

Railroad tracks were repaired during the morning of the 26th and El Niño and El Chavilito moved closer for a more effective bombardment. With the two big guns firing at close range, Angeles pulled the rest of his artillery back to El Vergel for a rest. The federals saw the units returning to Villa's army from silencing outposts and realized the next rebel assault would be victorious. As Villa and his commanders planned another night attack, the federals mounted an assault from the railroad station in Gómez Palacio to cover their retreat south across the Nazas and to safety in Torreón. (28)

While the Division of the North assaulted the hills

around Gómez Palacio, the three other Divisions of the Constitutionalist army were busy. General Obregón divided his Division of the Northwest to hold Guaymas under seige and push south along the Sonoran Pacific Railroad toward Culicán. General González split his Division of the Northeast into four units to continue fighting small engagements north of Saltillo and east of Monterrey, while one moved toward Tampico. Farther south, General Eulalio Gutiérrez and his Central Division continued to wage guerrilla warfare against the railroads between Saltillo and San Luis Potosí. (29)

Villa and his commanders were unaware of the federal retreat from Gómez Palacio and assembled 14,000 men for another great assault. Angeles took command of the 1st Artillery Regiment and moved it toward La Jabonera with the center under the command of General Tomás Urbina. As the Division advanced on the federal fortifications the only resistance encountered was on La Pila hill, where some federal soldiers remained to prevent the hill from being used to stop the retreat. Villa's troops immediately occupied the town and busied themselves with other duties. They spent the rest of the day and that night clearing the battlefields of corpses. There were so many dead men on La Pila that they were collected and burned. While the troops buried or burned the dead, Angeles and Villa offered General Velasco another opportunity to surrender, which was



answered with a federal bombardment of the Gómez Palacio area. (30)

The federal commander was unaware that Villa had obtained sketches of the defense positions around Torreón, and as he and Angeles ate dinner on March 27th they formulated new plans of attack. If the sketches before them were correct, both were aware of what awaited on the other side of the river. Torreón was nestled into the eastern side of a group of hills with narrow canyons protecting the west side and the wide, dry bed of the Nazas River across the northern side. Eighteen fortifications surrounded the city with six strong positions. Calabazas hill had five fortifications with artillery which dominated the area between Gómez Palacio and Torreón, and covered one side of Huarache canyon to the west. South of Calabazas a series of hills with artillery emplacements dominated the canyons of Huarache and La Polvorera. Metalúrigica hill protected the city from the south with artillery, and the strong positions of la Cruz hill and the Panteon were fortified to directly protect the urban center. In addition to the artillery pieces on the hills the large 80mm cannon had been moved from Gómez Palacio and placed at the railroad station in Torreón. (31)

The general advance on Torreón was basically a replay of Villa's movements during the last days of September and first of October 1913. Both campaigns included the advance

through Bermejillo to El Vergel, an attack on Avíles and Gómez Palacio, and the capture of Gómez Palacio and Ciudad Lerdo before striking at Torreón. Although the same basic plan of attack was used, the results were quite different. The first attack on Gómez Palacio was made with approximately the same amount of men Villa commanded in 1913 against the same target and failed miserably. Twice that number of troops, 12,000, made the second assault and it also failed. Whereas it took only five hours to capture Ciudad Lerdo and Gómez Palacio in 1913, it had taken four days to take the same objectives. In 1913, they had swept across the Nazas River and occupied Torreón within ten hours but it is doubtful if Villa believed the Division could accomplish the same feat after looking at the defense plans. (32)

The federal artillery began a concentrated bombardment of Gómez Palacio in the afternoon of March 27th and continued to shell the area into the night and the next day. The shells were not seriously damaging the Division's positions so Angeles ordered his guns to hold their fire and let the federals expend their ammunition. He reconnoitered the area for two days to verify the defense sketches, measure distances and choose potential artillery emplacements; and by the evening of March 28, the Division was ready to assault the bastion. (33)

The two main advances concentrated on strong points to

the west and north of Torreón, with a secondary assault on the east where the defenses were weaker. Colonel Santibáñez commanded one regiment of artillery at Ciudad Lerdo and fired on the western hills to cover the assault by Durango forces from the west. Angeles personally commanded the second regiment in the center because of the absence of Colonel Servín, who had been transferred to command an infantry unit. Angeles' guns were on Santa Rosa hill, south of Gómez Palacio, and fired on the fortifications in front of Torreón to support the direct attack toward the Nazas River. (34)

During the night, General Calixto Contreras' Durango troops took Calabazas and La Polvorera hills, which were critical for the final assault on the city; but lost them in the early morning. Another coordinated attack was launched at noon the next day against Calabazas hill and Coyote dam, which sat in front of the hill; but it also failed. By darkness the fighting and artillery fire decreased along the lines and the battlefield was quiet until early in the morning when federal artillery opened fire. During the morning of the 30th Angeles' cannons and the federal guns took turns bombarding each other's defenses. By noon El Niño and El Chavilito were calibrated to coordinates of federal positions and began firing; and that long range and deadly fire silenced the federal artillery for a while. (35)

In the quiet of the afternoon, Villa received a request from Velasco for a cease fire. The federal general proposed a cessation of hostilities for a period of forty-eight hours so the dead and wounded could be collected. Villa held a conference with Angeles and George Carothers, the United States agent assigned to Villa's army by the State Department. Suspecting that Velasco's intentions were not to bury the dead and treat the injured but to either strengthen his defenses or evacuate, they agreed to send a denial. The refusal was followed by a day and a half of artillery duels with the guns of the two opposing armies intermittently shelling each other's defenses. (36)

While the guns thundered on March 31, the War Council of the Division of the North conducted a trial. They found General José Carrillo guilty of failing in his duty by not holding the line on Calabazas hill and sentenced him to be shot. After Carrillo's execution Colonel Martiniano Servín was permanently withdrawn from the artillery corps and assigned to command part of the general's troops. With the loss of Colonel Servín and the men who were killed or wounded, Angeles saw a need to reorganize his artillery command before the attacks resumed. In the late hours of the night he dictated that reorganization to his aid and went to bed. The rest of the night was quiet and the next day was occupied with more artillery duels. (37)

Villa met with Angeles and Urbina in the afternoon to

consider the attack scheduled for that night. When they discussed the placement of troops, Angeles and Urbina agreed it would be best to leave the federal garrison a route of escape from the city. They based that suggestion on the desperate and bloody defense encountered at Gómez Palacio and the few days of battle in front of Torreón. Angeles concluded that to completely surround the garrison would produce unnecessary bloodshed, and he may have recalled Maxim #67 of Napoleon's Principles of Warfare which stated that: things that appear impossible can often be accomplished when the only alternative is death. A desperate and brutal assault on a cornered army invited disaster and would result in too many casualties for the División. Although his suggestion may have also been based on an honorable concept of generosity to a worthy adversary, his main argument probably appealed to Villa's sense of humanity and compassion. Villa agreed with them and did not issue the orders to block the railroad from Torreón to Viescas. (38)

After dark on April 1, the attack was launched on the north, west and east, leaving the south open. Angeles' guns fired down from their position on Santa Rosa hill on the defenders of Coyote dam and across the river into the city of Torreón. The shelling was coordinated to cover the third desperate assault on the dam, which if taken would give them easier access to the city. While artillery shells

exploded in Torreón, the Durango troops captured Calabazas and La Polvorera hills which gave them control of the two western canyons; and another force entered the outskirts of Torreón from the east. The Division was quickly crowding in on the federals but the defenders desperately fought back. During the night the forces from the east encountered federal resistance at the bullring, Salvador Hotel, Cathedral and military barracks in Torreón. Then dawn came and the battle ended. (39)

After a couple of hours of welcomed quiet, the federal guns resumed their shelling of Gómez Palacio and Santa Rosa hill. Villa met with Angeles in the afternoon to discuss plans for the attack that night but they could not accurately plot their strategy without an updated report on the location of the units. The fighting of the previous night was so furious that some units advanced farther than expected, and both Villa and Angeles lost contact with some. Angeles prepared to perform a complete reconnaissance, including assessment of the federal defenses and location of the Division's lines, but his trip was delayed. A strong wind swept across the arid plains, blew up dust clouds and reduced visibility to near zero. (40)

Once the dust cloud had passed Angeles left Gómez Palacio in an automobile for his reconnaissance. At the same time, the federal cavalry launched an attack into

Huarache canyon and federal guns increased their fire on the Division's positions. As Angeles scouted the lines he discovered the federals had evacuated the city and fortifications during the dust storm, taking the escape route left open to them. The Division moved into Torreón early the next morning and accepted the surrender of federal troops left behind to cover the retreat. When news of the surrender reached some villistas on la Cruz hill one of them blew a bugle which stimulated a general firing of rifles and salvos of artillery to celebrate the great victory. (41)

Torreón was captured but the victory was not yet complete. As the Division occupied the city, Velasco fled eastward with 6,000 soldiers and 16 cannons. Although he was pursued by two brigades of villista cavalry, Velasco was moving toward federally held territory and safety. The threat to the Division's victory was not their inability to overtake the fleeing federals but the possibility of their turning north at Hornos station on a branch railroad. That branch line led north to the town of San Pedro de las Colonias where it connected the northern and southern railways. That move by Velasco would allow him to join another federal force that was waiting in San Pedro. (42)

From the time of the first attack against the defenses of Torreón on March 28th Villa had dispatched various units to the San Pedro area to prevent those federals from

entering the action. They had been dispatched toward San Pedro from the east to either reinforce the garrison at Torreón or aid in retaking the city. If Velasco turned north and joined the 3,500 federals at San Pedro there would be a combined force of 11,000 capable of storming the ill prepared defenses and exhausted troops of the Division. When Villa sent cavalry after Velasco's retreating army he also dispatched a couple of telegraphers to keep him advised of their movements; but regardless of Velasco's intentions, the Division's hold on Torreón would not be secure with a federal outpost only 25 miles to the northeast. That outpost had direct access to the Monterrey and Saltillo garrisons by rail and could be transformed into the staging point for an assault and had to be eliminated. (43)

CHAPTER II

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CHAPTER III

THE DESERTS AND MOUNTAINS

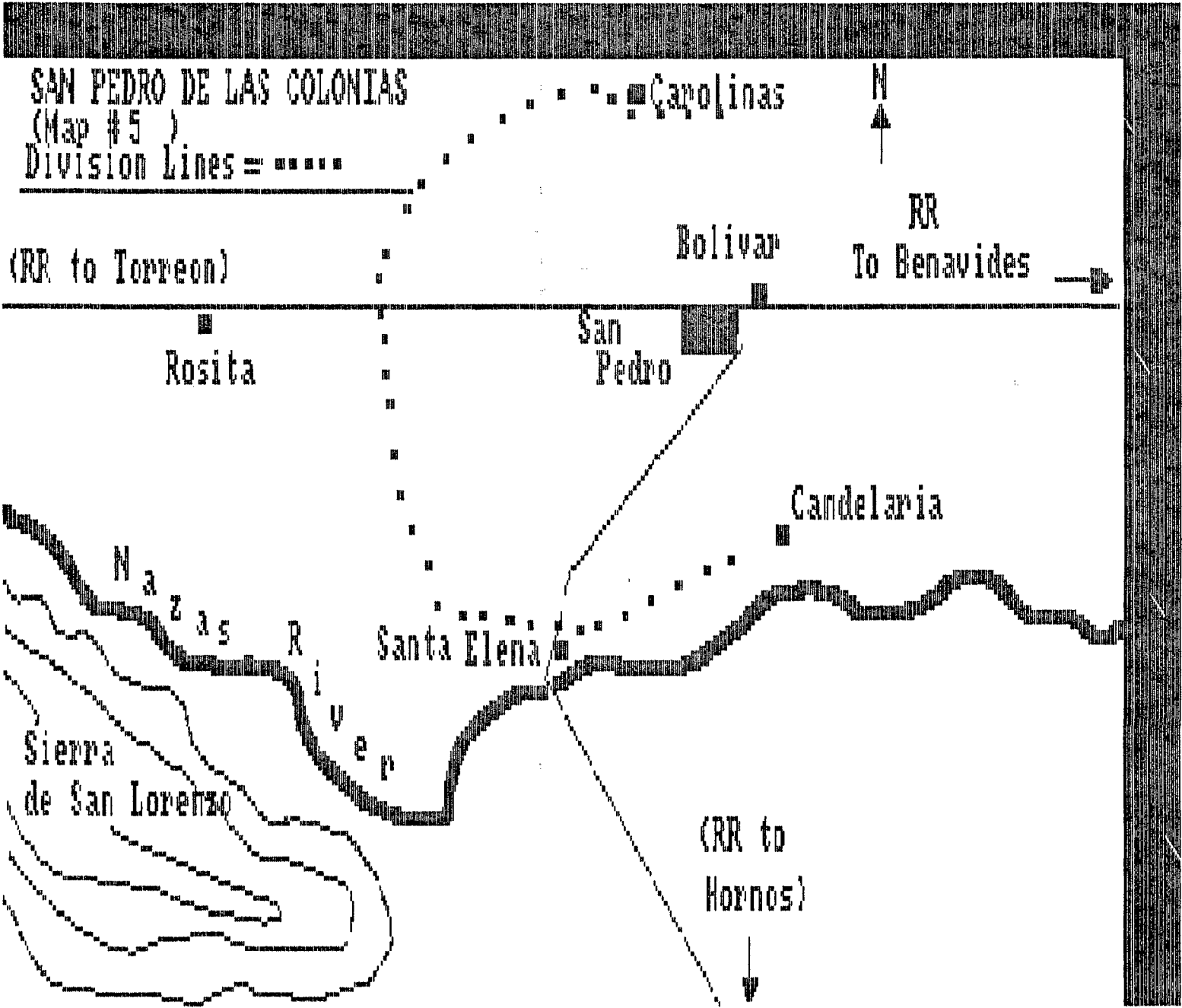
General Villa telegraphed Carranza from Gómez Palacio announcing his victory and expressing the great sacrifice the Division suffered in the campaign. When the First Chief received the news, he was in Ciudad Juárez enroute to Chihuahua with his government. Unlike the majority of revolutionaries Carranza was not overwhelmed with delight, although he must have been pleased that the first step had been taken to expel the federals from his home State of Coahuila. That attitude of indifference resulted from his exclusion from initiating the campaign, not the significance of the victory. If he did not order it, the victory could not be important. That reaction reflected his growing resentment of the independence that Villa had in his operations. (1)

When the Division made its triumphal entry into Torreón on April 3, Villa and Angeles were occupied with more pressing matters than Carranza's opinion of their success. Villa immediately began sending troops toward San Pedro, and within two days 6,000 soldiers and most of the Division's artillery assembled under the command of General Urbina west of the federally occupied town. They must have

considered the assault on San Pedro as a mop up operation because only half of the Division's forces were dispatched. With Velasco's army continuing its flight eastward and Urbina's forces considered to be more than sufficient to overwhelm the garrison at San Pedro, Angeles and Villa elected to stay in Torreón where other duties awaited. (2)

As Villa busied himself with the forceful expulsion of Spaniards from the city, Angeles considered his future. The Laguna campaign and his assignment to the Division of the North were both coming to an end and he faced the prospect of returning to the company of Carranza. He must have felt a certain reluctance at the thought even though he would not be returning to Sonora where Obregón and his generals had undermined his relationship with Carranza. Chihuahua City was far from Obregón, who was advancing through the State of Sinaloa, but the position with Carranza must have seemed shallow compared to the challenging responsibilities in the Division. (3)

In the brief time he served with the Division, Angeles developed a strong attachment to that nonentity. He had accompanied the Division as it marched out of Chihuahua like an ancient army, swept through the State of Durango compelling federal garrisons to quickly retreat, stormed and broke the defenses of Gómez Palacio and delivered a crippling blow to the huertistas by crushing the garrison at Torreón. The Artillery Corps he formed and commanded in



battle had been bloodied in those eleven days of combat and proved its worth. It had withstood the terrible bombardments; returned the fire, shell for shell; and was instrumental in the great victory. No other revolutionary army possessed what he had organized and commanded, and that idea must have intrigued General Angeles.

By April 5, the battle line around San Pedro extended from Santa Elena, southeast of the town; across the branch railroad leading to Hornos; then westward and north to the railroad leading to Gómez Palacio; and north by east to Carolinas, north of the town. That day Urbina ordered a general attack against the garrison, and the fighting continued into the next day when he pulled the troops back for a rest. While the villistas relaxed General Benjamín Argumedo led 600 cavalrymen of Velasco's command across the Nazas River east of Santa Elena, through federal lines established to prevent the rebels from completely surrounding San Pedro, and into the town. The next day the cavalrymen tried to leave with thirty railroad cars filled with ammunition, equipment and supplies for the federals waiting near Viescas but were stopped and turned back by Urbina's troops, who held the railroad leading south. (4)

Meanwhile in Torreón, Angeles and Villa discussed plans for the Division's next campaign, the advance south toward Zacatecas. Both blamed General González for the presence of federals in San Pedro because of his failure to cut rail

lines farther east and stop the movements westward. González continued to confine his forces to the Monterrey area and maneuver them for a strike against that city. When Urbina made the first assaults on San Pedro on April 5, González's forces attacked the defenses of Monterrey and General Luis Caballero launched an assault on Tampico. Neither attack succeeded but Caballero's caused confusion that resulted in an international incident. (5)

By April 7 the rebel forces were in the outskirts of Tampico and threatening the federal garrison. Some American sailors, who were in the area to evacuate United States citizens, entered the battle zone and were arrested by federal troops. Although the federals soon released the sailors, United States Admiral Henry T. Mayo made unreasonable demands for an apology by the federal commander which were refused. While the insignificant incident was being amplified and developed into the basis for invasion, Caballero's forces were repelled. (6)

The day after the American soldiers were arrested in Tampico a force of 2,000 federals attacked Urbina's troops near Santa Elena from the northeast. Although the attack was stopped by cavalry and artillery fire from the rebel lines, it did divert attention from the San Pedro-Hornos railroad. During the attack General Argumedo led a supply convoy of railroad cars across the river and hurried southward. When the supplies and news of the situation at

San Pedro reached Velasco at La Soledad he changed his fleeing army into one advancing to the aid of fellow soldiers, and by the next day was marching north. (7)

When Angeles and Villa received the news of Velasco's change in direction, they knew the importance of San Pedro had just increased. They also knew that although the garrison was small some of Huerta's most trusted and competent generals were in the town. Francisco Romero commanded the garrison which included Joaquín Maas, Commander of the Division of the Brave; Carlos García Hidalgo, Commander of the federal Division of the North; and Javier De Moure, sent by Huerta himself. With Velasco moving north, Villa and Angeles had the opportunity to defeat most of Huerta's best generals in one battle. They seized the opportunity and left Torreón with 2,000 additional troops and the rest of the artillery the same day that Velasco turned his army north. (8)

Upon arrival in the San Pedro area the two generals immediately made a reconnaissance. Looking east and south from the cliffs west of San Pedro they estimated it would take Velasco twenty four hours to move his forces from La Soledad. If they could defeat the garrison and be in possession of San Pedro before Velasco crossed the Nazas River, they could crush both armies separately. They formulated plans for a coordinated effort between the infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and issued orders for a

swift attack and seizure of San Pedro. (9)

In the early morning hours of April 10, 8,000 troops of the Division advanced across the desert from the north, west and south. Under the cover of artillery fire they assaulted the federal trenches and barricades. The strongest federal artillery position was at the panteon, a building constructed and dedicated to the dead. During the night of April 9th Angeles ordered artillery placed on an adjacent hill above that position and when the attack began his guns maintained a continuous bombardment of the federals. Expecting more shells to be delivered to his position, Angeles directed his gunners to continue firing until they exhausted their supply of ammunition; but the shipment did not arrive and the cannons were silenced. Due to the desperate defense of the garrison, the attack could not continue without artillery support and was halted after fourteen hours. (10)

While Angeles anxiously awaited the delivery of artillery shells, plans were being formulated far to the north in the United States for military forces to seize and hold the city of Veracruz. The planned invasion of Mexico was based on the flimsy justification that the Mexican government would not humble itself to the flag and power of the United States and properly apologize for the arrest of the sailors at Tampico. While foreign politicians were busy with their pencils, the Division of the North waited and

hoped the artillery ammunition would arrive before Velasco's army; but their hopes were dashed when Velasco's troops pushed through their lines and began entering San Pedro in the late evening of the 10th. (11)

The arrival of Velasco's forces raised the garrison's strength to over 9,000 men with twenty-six cannons. Knowing that the Division could not hope to defeat a superior force in defensive positions, Villa sent for an additional 4,000 troops. Angeles used the time to place artillery batteries to support the next attack. Within two days the Division was reinforced to 12,000 and on the morning of April 13 launched a fierce attack on San Pedro. The assaults were covered by artillery barrages and quickly crushed the outer defenses, pushing the federals back into the town. (12)

After resisting the onslaught for over twelve hours, Velasco ordered the withdrawal. Cavalry troops charged out of San Pedro to the north and south in attempts to open an avenue of escape for those who could not leave by train. The northern side proved to be the easiest to penetrate and some federals fled in that direction. The remainder of the forces desperately held the center of town against the overwhelming forces of the Division while artillery, supplies, ammunition, and their wounded were loaded on trains for evacuation. As the Division pushed in to capture the town the next morning, 4,000 troops and their artillery which were left behind to cover the retreat drastically

increased their fire and caused heavy casualties in the rebel ranks. (13)

By noon the garrison fell and General Villa entered San Pedro behind a captured military band. Seven hundred of the captive soldiers elected to join the Division and fight against the government. Another five hundred were not given a choice. They were members of the Colorados, a unit of irregular troops formed by General Pascual Orozco in 1912. Orozco led them in his revolt against President Madero, and when General Huerta overthrew Madero they joined the federal army. Villa fought against the Colorados in 1912 and strongly disliked them, which caused him to order all of them executed. While Villa was arranging the execution of Orozco's men, Angeles inspected the abandoned federal cannons but discovered they had been disabled. (14)

The federals fled eastward from San Pedro onto the desert, pursued by the Division. The troops who escaped northward circled around to rejoin those on the railroad and the combined force fled toward Saltillo; but after traveling only twenty miles they were stopped at Benavides Station by destroyed railroad tracks. Caught on the desert with little or no water, many of the federal troops died of thirst as they held back assaults from the west and repaired tracks to the east. Villa ordered a full assault on April 16 in an attempt to crush the federal force instead of allowing them to escape. As he rode to the front

lines with his escort of cavalry during the battle, Villa moved too far forward in the excitement and confusion. A federal cavalry unit spotted the small force and charged out to flank them. Angeles saw how the situation was evolving and led some troops in a counterattack that turned the federal cavalry and saved Villa from being killed or captured. (15)

As the federals fled across the desert they abandoned twenty trains because they lacked water to operate the engines. At Hipolito they met federal troops who were coming to their aid, and the combined force turned eastward to safety. By the time Velasco arrived in Saltillo he commanded only 1,200 of the 6,000 soldiers he had led out of Torreón on April 2nd. The humiliation of the defeat of five of Huerta's best generals was a devastating blow to the federal army in the North, but the great rebel victory was overshadowed by the actions of the United States. (16)

United States Marines landed at Veracruz on April 21 and occupied the city. The invasion was a result of President Woodrow Wilson's desire to depose President Huerta and force Mexico to establish a constitutional government under someone other than Huerta or Carranza. Veracruz was the primary import point for arms and munitions for the Huerta government and the occupation severely curtailed those shipments. Although it was planned as a measure against the Huerta government, the invasion and occupation caused many

Constitutionalists to consider an alliance with Huerta to repel the North Americans. (17)

The most vocal revolutionary general was Obregón. On the day of the invasion he urged Carranza to declare war on the United States but Carranza refused to take such drastic action. Two days later he suggested freeing the federal garrison at Mazatlán, which he had under seige, so they could defend their country against a feared attack on the west coast. Carranza again counseled against impulsive actions, preferring to use diplomatic channels and address the issue more conservatively. He drafted a message to the United States government strongly protesting the violation of Mexico's sovereignty and suggested that the action could cause a war between the two countries. (18)

Angeles attended a cabinet meeting on April 25 at Chihuahua City in which Carranza informed them of his actions and read his message of protest. Although he disagreed with Carranza, Angeles remained silent during the meeting because the other members present were loyal followers of the First Chief and agreed with him on everything. A couple of days later he accompanied Villa to Ciudad Juárez where they publically stated their position. Angeles, with Villa's concurrence, viewed the occupation of Veracruz as a benefit to the revolution because the port had been controlled by their enemies, and they received the means to resist the revolutionary forces through Veracruz.

Losing that means to resist the revolution was thus a liability for Huerta and an asset to the Constitutionalists. (19)

When Angeles and Villa publicly supported the occupation of Veracruz and reassured the United States they had no intentions of fighting them, there were political and practical motives behind the statements. They realized the North American government not only wished to see Huerta deposed but preferred the establishment of a government similar to Madero's, not one headed by Carranza. Those desires corresponded to the wishes of Angeles and Villa because both were loyal supporters of Madero and believed Carranza was only temporary chief of the government. Besides the political reasons they foresaw a problem of supply. The Division's line of supply stretched from Torreón, through Chihuahua, and into the United States at El Paso. Arms, ammunition, supplies, and equipment flowed down that line, and neither Villa nor Angeles wished that flow to stop. The arms embargo had been lifted in February 1914 and if it were reinstated the victory over Huerta would be delayed. (20)

The failure of Angeles and Villa to support the official Constitutionalist policy, as stated by Carranza, increased the First Chief's suspicions of their intentions. When he visited Torreón in early May to discuss plans for the Division's next campaign, Villa enthusiastically presented an

outline for the advance southward along the Central Railroad and the capture of Zacatecas. Carranza opposed those plans and ordered Villa to lead his forces eastward to take Saltillo, the capital of Coahuila. He justified that demand as a strategic move to assist González in gaining control of the northern states. Villa strongly protested against the Saltillo campaign and insisted on moving on Zacatecas, and the two plans were submitted to a board of revolutionary generals for the final decision.

(21)

During the meeting of generals at Torreón, Angeles argued vigorously in favor of the Zacatecas campaign. He naturally believed himself the most qualified to speak on strategy because his primary duties in the government involved directing the armies in the revolution; and as Subsecretary of War he probably assumed that his opinion would weigh heavily on the decision. Using logic to state his points, as he usually did, Angeles stressed the fact that the federal army in the northern area was demoralized after their defeats at Torreón and San Pedro. That demoralization reduced their fighting ability, and with that reduction in their ability to resist, the Division of the Northeast could easily conquer the remaining federal strongholds. He insisted that the penetration of central Mexico was necessary to move closer to victory; but his arguments were disregarded. With Carranza presiding over

the board, his wishes were obeyed and the Division was ordered eastward. (22)

For Villa the rejection of the Zacatecas plans was a threat to his independence of operation and control of the Division. To Angeles it was more than a mere dismissal of battle plans. It was another example of his professional military advice being rejected in favor of personal desires, as had occurred in Sonora. The actions of Carranza and the refusal of the generals on the board to listen to reason pushed Angeles closer to Villa and the Division. Their attitudes were demonstrated a couple of days later when neither Angeles nor Villa attended a supper given for Carranza by the generals of the Division of the North. (23)

The increasing disagreements between Carranza and General Villa were primarily the result of their mutual distrust of the men around each other and passions for personal victory. Each man was a caudillo, or regional authoritarian, who was extremely protective of his power; yet each man maintained or extended that power by different means. Carranza was a political patriarch who exchanged favors and gained allegiance with subtlety, and he maintained that power through the dependence created by those favors. Villa was the adventurous and daring leader who gained power as a result of his deeds of valor and bold action. He gained allegiances through hero worship, and maintained them with the use of fear and belief in his

invincibility. While the main contest was between Villa and Carranza a third element, that was to become a controlling factor, entered the picture. (24)

That third element was General Angeles who was neither a caudillo with an established power base nor did he have the type of obligations that plagued the other two. Unlike Villa and Carranza who possessed provincial viewpoints of evolving affairs, Angeles maintained a cosmopolitan perspective of events. He did not view them in the context of how they would benefit or injure him, but how they corresponded to what he perceived as reality. Although he was aware of Villa's faults, which sometimes contradicted his value system, he also saw an honest man who believed in the people. He believed Villa to be a man who would listen to reason, if it was presented in the proper manner, and honor his word. In contrast he saw Carranza as a devious man who was unwilling to listen to reason, if it countered his personal desires, and progressively demanded blind obedience to his desires and decisions. (25)

Angeles believed that Carranza's requirement of unquestioning submission was the cause of the First Chief's refusal to see the obvious. The Division of the North was the strongest of the revolutionary armies and was poised at an advantageous point on the Central Railroad, thus it was the logical choice for an attack on Zacatecas. He considered Carranza's stubborn interference with the

Division's movement south and its diversion to other regions as a mark of military incompetence. In his opinion, sacrificing a swift victory for personal motives was to be strongly resisted because it would prolong the revolution and cause further damage to Mexico. However, Angeles did not believe the issue of a Zacatecas or Saltillo campaign warranted the extreme measure of disobedience. (26)

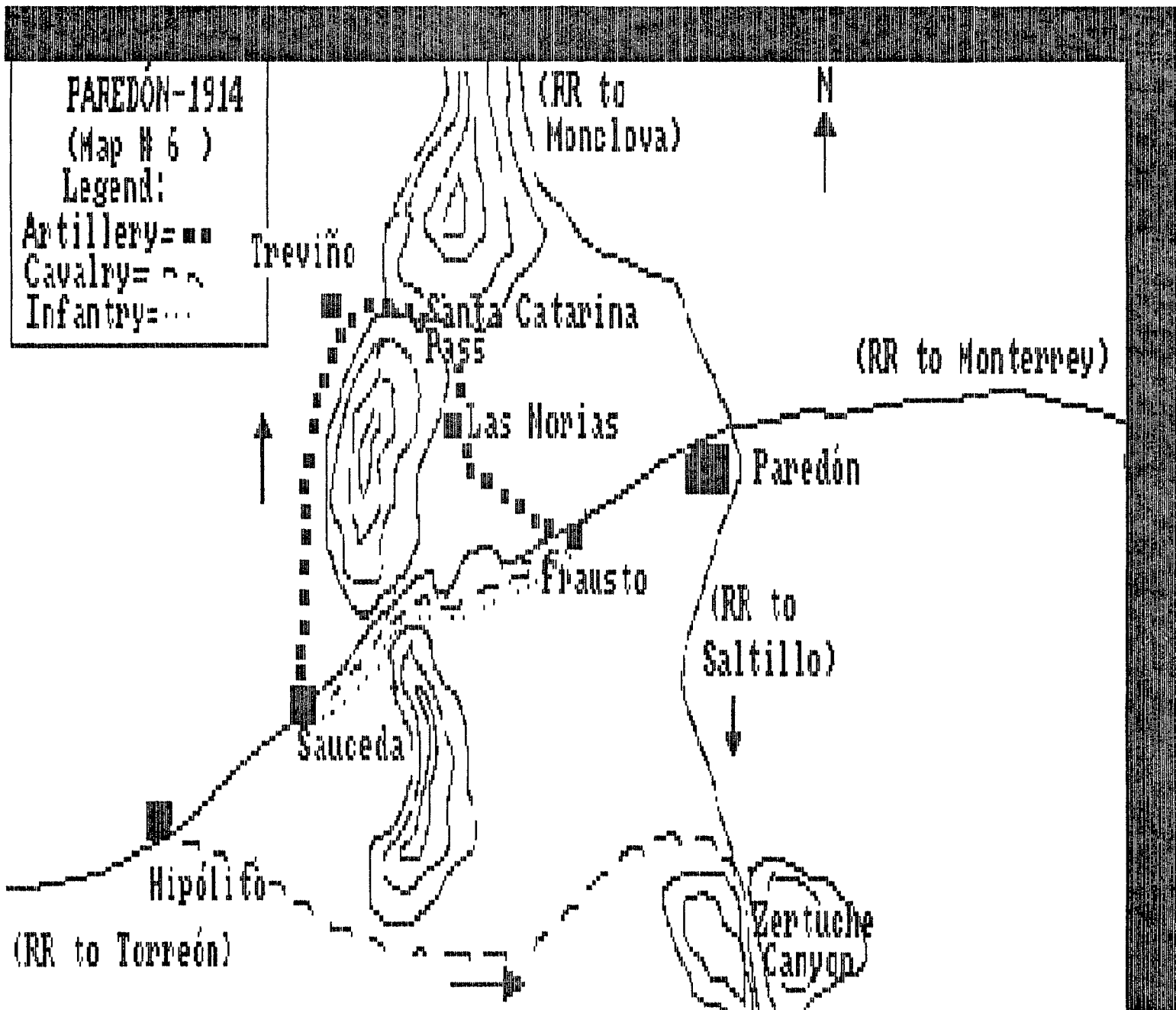
Displeased with the choice of campaigns but willing to cooperate, Villa issued orders for the Division to prepare for the trip eastward. The vanguard of the Division left Torreón on May 11 under the command of Angeles, who had received his commission as a General of Brigade in the latter part of April. It took the familiar route through San Pedro de las Colonias and eastward for 155 miles to Saucedo station, beyond which the tracks were destroyed. From Saucedo Angeles and his new aid, Colonel Vito Alessio Robles, immediately scouted the 27 mile area that separated them from the federal garrison at Paredón. Colonel Robles was an educated man who had served as an engineer officer in the federal army. He remained loyal to Madero during the revolt by General Huerta and joined the Constitutionalist movement but disagreed with the First Chief and left. In May he traveled from Sonora to join the Division of the North and was assigned to Angeles. (27)

As the rest of the Division arrived at Hipólito, Angeles examined the area around Paredon with the aid of a

geographic chart of the State of Coahuila, and formulated his plans for the attack on the town. On May 15, Colonel Robles delivered those plans to Villa at Hipólito. Angeles' plans were structured in concise and consecutive phases of troop and equipment movements, with the coordination of unit actions and a logical synchronization for the isolation and defeat of the federal garrison. Although the plan involved the complex movement of 10,000 troops, thirty-six cannons and all of the equipment and supplies for an army that size, it was stated in clear and simple terms. (28)

Angeles even included reasons for the necessity to quickly isolate and defeat the garrison. He reminded Villa that a total of 15,000 federal troops were in the area, divided into three garrisons. While Paredón contained only 5,000 troops with 10 artillery pieces, General Pascual Orozco was a short distance away at Ramos Arizpe with 2,000 cavalry and General Joaquín Maas commanded another 8,000 at Saltillo. Villa immediately saw the logic in the plan and issued orders to correspond with the design. (29)

Paredón sat at the intersection of two railroads: one connecting Saltillo with Monclova and the Texas border to the north; the other ran east to west connecting Torreón with Monterrey and the east coast. The areas north and east of the junction were controlled by the Division of the Northeast, so the only logical direction for the garrison



to withdraw was south. To prevent that possibility, 2,000 cavalry troops went southeastward from Hipólito to a position 25 miles south of Paredón. They were ordered to destroy the railroad in Zertuche canyon, but not until the morning of May 17. On the 16th, the rest of the Division traveled on trains to Saucedá where 8,000 infantry and cavalry troops detrained. From there they followed sixteen miles of damaged railroad tracks through Josefa canyon to Frausto, only 12 1/2 miles from Paredon. (30)

The Division's artillery could not travel through the canyon, so it turned northward at Saucedá, according to Angeles' plans. From there the long column of guns, armor, carts, equipment and supplies crossed rough country with Angeles directing their movements. As the troops confidently marched forward over dusty, rough roads, Angeles rode the length of the column again and again attending to details of proper marching order, and assuring himself they were progressing according to the plan. After passing the village of Treviño, they entered the mountains and turned eastward toward Santa Catarina pass. Once across the pass they came out of the mountains and down onto the desert at Las Norias. (31)

After thirty-two hot, grueling miles the artillery column joined the rest of the Division in Frausto. Although their assembly point was relatively close to Paredón, a high hill stood between the two points and masked their

movements. The artillery formed files of carriage and guns, one behind the other, and followed the cavalry. As the battle line moved forward, Angeles rode with cavalry leaders in front to pick proper locations for the guns. When they passed the abandoned village of Flores and adjacent hills the troops spread out into attack formation. The federal garrison was unaware of their presence in the area and federal cavalry units were making excursions to the north and east guarding against an attack by González's troops. At Rancho San Juan, one and a half miles from Paredón, Angeles met with Villa and they issued orders for the attack. (32)

Angeles sent his battle orders back to Major Gustavo Bazán and joined the forward elements for the assault. The infantrymen mounted behind cavalrymen for a swift advance across open ground, a practice that was common in the Division because it created swift attacks and reduced casualties. When the signal was given, 8,000 soldiers charged across the hot desert. Federal artillery immediately opened fire from San Francisco hill, southeast of Paredón, but it did not slow the attack. The charge was so swift and unexpected that resistance was weak, and within thirty minutes the attack on Paredón was over with the federals either killed, captured or in retreat. Although his artillery had not fired a shot, Angeles positioned some of the guns while troops were entering the

town. With the federals desperately fleeing, he quickly formed four batteries of guns in column to advance behind the pursuing cavalry. (33)

The Division occupied the town and took control of the major railroad intersection. As Angeles examined the results of his plan, he was informed that only 2,000 of the defenders escaped. The rest of the 5,000 were either killed, wounded or captured. Along with the captured soldiers were 10 cannons, ammunition, supplies, trains and 3,000 guns. Among the prisoners was a wounded federal officer whom Rodolfo Fierro wanted to shoot, in accordance with the new law issued by First Chief Carranza. The Law of Benito Juárez dictated that all captured officers would be shot, but Angeles interceded. He told Villa that it was inhumane to shoot a wounded person because he could not defend himself. While Felipe Angeles was trying to follow humane rules of war, Francisco Villa had other ideas. He ordered that all healthy federal officers be shot, in accordance with the Law; and those who were wounded should first be cured of their wounds, in the interest of humanity, and then they were to be shot. (34)

General José Isabel Robles' cavalry chased the fleeing federals into Saltillo and stopped at Ramos Arizpe, six miles north of the city. While soldiers of the Division skirmished with federals north of the city, Angeles positioned guns in the mountains surrounding Saltillo. When

three trains were derailed by villista troops at Certucha, panic spread through the federal garrison and city. With the country to the north, west, and east under the control of González and Villa, General Joaquín Maas ordered his 8,500 troops to evacuate the city and move south toward San Luis Potosí. (35)

Soon after his entry into Saltillo on May 21 Villa appointed Jesús Acoña governor of the State of Coahuila, according to Carranza's orders. Carranza planned to move the Constitutionalist government back to Coahuila and wanted a man in the state office who was loyal, and as insurance against Villa appointing someone else, he sent Acoña with the Division on its campaign. With the Saltillo campaign finished except for transferring military command to González, Villa and Angeles discussed their future strategy. The Division could advance south from Saltillo to take San Luis Potosí and probably move farther down to take Aguascalientes, but Angeles believed that move unwise. Their supply center was in Torreón with lines extending north to the United States border. If they turned Saltillo over to González and pushed south, the supply lines would not only be over extended but subject to the desires of Carranza through González. (36)

After eliminating the possibility of using the eastern route to the center of Mexico, they again turned to the plans of moving against Zacatecas. Before Carranza

interfered with those plans the Division had acquired enough munitions, provisions and supplies to mount the attack southward but the majority of those supplies had been expended in taking Saltillo, and must be replenished before mounting the next campaign. While Villa waited in Saltillo for González to assume command of the city, Angeles and some other officers returned to Torreón to refit and reinforce the Division for the push southward.

(37)

CHAPTER III

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER IV
DISOBEDIENCE OF THE GENERALS

Upon his return to Torreón from Saltillo Angeles immediately began reforming and supplying the Division for their long planned attack on Zacatecas, but he discovered that Carranza had not been idle. Taking advantage of Angeles and Villa's absence, the First Chief initiated another plan to frustrate their campaign. He met with Generals Pánfilo Natera and Domingo Arrieta in Durango and authorized the formation of a new army Division with Natera as commander. The first mission of the First Division of the Center was to advance and capture the city of Zacatecas. (1)

While Villa was transferring command of Saltillo to González on May 28, Natera and his generals left Durango to complete the formation of their new Division. Villa returned to Torreón and learned of the new development, but neither he nor Angeles believed the meager 7,000 man force of Natera's could take Zacatecas, particularly without artillery. Confident that only the Division of the North was strong enough for the task, they continued reorganizing and preparing for what they considered their campaign. (2)

Soon after Saltillo was turned over to González Carranza began relocating the revolutionary government from

Chihuahua. On June 4 he arrived in Torreón where a banquet was prepared for him by the generals of Villa's Division. Villa chose not to attend the banquet because of self-doubts concerning his ability to control his anger over Carranza's recent scheme. He absented himself from the city and left Angeles to represent the Division command. During the social function at the Casino de la Laguna, Angeles made a speech in which he applied his diplomatic skills to deliver a veiled warning to the First Chief. He stated that, "we revolutionaries of the Division of the North venerated the memory of Madero and were expecting such a legal government as Madero had given us...",⁽³⁾ not one like that of Huerta or Díaz. The warning disturbed Carranza because he understood the meaning behind the words, and noted an implication of loyalty transfer in Angeles' words.

(4)

Although Angeles still held the post of Subsecretary of War in Carranza's cabinet, he had experienced the formation of a bond that overpowered the fidelity of government service. That bond was the comradeship within the Division which resulted from shared misery, toil and danger of victorious campaigns. The feeling of brotherhood among the members of the Division centered on and was sustained by the symbol of that union which had evolved into a demanding mistress. The Division of the North represented their cumulative effort and collective success in becoming the

strongest and most formidable military unit in Mexico. The record of victories gave its members great pride in being an active part of that organization, and that pride caused the development of an almost fanatical loyalty. It was that loyalty which Carranza sensed in Angeles' speech and the tone served to increase his suspicions of Angeles' intentions. (5)

While Villa and Angeles continued preparing for their advance southward along the Central Railroad, Carranza returned to his power base in Saltillo and monitored the progress of his new Division. Natera began his attacks against the 1,800 man garrison of Zacatecas on June 10, but the fortified hills around the city were too strongly defended to be taken without artillery. Natera would launch furious assaults for four days but realized by the 11th he needed additional troops for victory. On that day he requested that Carranza send reinforcements, and it was that request which exploded into a major confrontation. (6)

While Carranza drafted a telegram to General Villa, international commissioners met in Niagra Falls, New York. The conferences began in May, with representatives from the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, the Mexican Federal government and Constitutionalist government, trying to mediate the problems in Mexico. While the representatives of the two Mexican governments attempted to arrange for the American evacuation of Veracruz, other

Mexicans and the United States were pressing for a coalition government in Mexico that was agreeable to both Huerta and Carranza. A list of proposed names for Provisional President was presented to the assembly on June 11 which included that of Felipe Angeles. Although he was a member of Carranza's War Department, Angeles was also an officer attached to Villa's army, a former federal soldier, and trusted by other elements inside and outside of the country. United States Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, urged his representatives to press for the acceptance of Angeles because he believed Angeles was able to consolidate the factions. The Secretary praised him as, "...a man of great intelligence and high character,..." and stated that he, "...has the confidence of the army. Would possibly be more acceptable to the military men of Mexico than anyone else mentioned." (7)

Villa received a telegram from Carranza on June 11 requesting his assistance by dispatching reinforcements to Natera at Zacatecas, but Villa replied that it would be wise to suspend the attack. As one of Villa's major advisors, Angeles believed Carranza had made a mistake in ordering Natera to attack the city with an inferior force and little support. He and Villa knew that Carranza dispatched that force without regard for the safety of the soldiers merely to hamper the Division's operations, and they resisted cooperating with the First Chief. Villa

received a second telegram the next day in which the First Chief ordered 3,000 troops with two batteries of artillery be sent to Natera. Villa reminded Carranza of their conference in Torreón where it was agreed that once the Saltillo campaign was completed the entire Division would move on Zacatecas under his command. He again requested that Natera suspend the attack because it would take atleast five days before his Division could arrive. (8)

The next day, June 12, 1914, the two men participated in a telegraphic conference, with the First Chief in Saltillo and Villa in Torreón. Carranza repeated his order for reinforcements, added a demand for immediacy, and directed Villa to also send rifles and ammunition. He then specified that either General José Isabel Robles or Tomás Urbina, whom he considered merely attached to the Division by his orders, should command the reinforcements. Villa promptly notified him that General Robles was sick and unable to command such a force, Urbina was absent from Torreón, and the railroad between Torreón and Zacatecas was not completely repaired. After presenting points that frustrated each of Carranza's demands, Villa asked the accusatory question of who was responsible for the error in sending those forces when more powerful ones were available. He ended the transmission with a refusal to place his men under the command of another general and surrender credit for victory. The telegraph lines must have

hummed in those few minutes because tempers were flaming.

(9)

Carranza again ordered Villa to send the reinforcements, increasing the number to 5,000 with all of the Division's artillery, and stated that the commands of Generals Urbina, Contreras and Robles were not part of the Division but attached units. At the end of the telegram he refused to authorize or consider movement of the entire Division. Villa quickly questioned the reasoning behind the refusal and Carranza abruptly replied that it was because he ordered it. At that point in the confrontation Villa decided to wait until the next day to continue while he considered the situation and a possible solution. (10)

When he found the situation unchanged on the morning of the 13th, Villa notified Carranza that he resigned his command of the Division of the North. Following the dispatch of his resignation, and while he awaited the First Chief's response, Villa sent for his generals. Angeles was located and informed, without an explanation, that Villa wished to talk to him in the telegraph office. He found Villa sitting beside the telegrapher in the crowded office and the other generals standing with solemn faces. Angeles seated himself beside Villa and waited for an explanation. While waiting, he listened to the phrases of disgust and heated comments of other generals. After piecing together fragments of conversations he surmised that a crisis

existed. Most of the generals believed Carranza would realize he needed Villa at the head of the Division and a compromise would be reached. Upon understanding the situation, Angeles declared that Carranza would definitely and gladly accept Villa's resignation, and the confident tone of his statement caused panic among the officers. (11)

Villa knew that Angeles was right in his evaluation of the situation and presented the command of the Division to Angeles. Carranza's reply soon came over the wire, confirming Angeles' declaration and creating havoc among the generals. The message instructed the generals to choose a temporary commander from among themselves to serve until a permanent one could be appointed. Angeles was positive the new commander would be the First Chief's brother, General Jesús Carranza, and perceived that move as the end of the Division as an independent fighting unit. If he was right, the Division would soon be under Carranza's total control unless something was done. The other generals, motivated by fear of dissolution of the Division, suggested drastic actions to force Carranza to repeal his orders and deny Villa's resignation. One of the more irate was General Maclovio Herrera who ordered the telegrapher at gun point to send a message calling Carranza a son-of-a-bitch. (12)

Angeles also felt apprehension and regret but stressed the importance of self-control and moderation; but his pleadings failed to calm the generals. At that point he

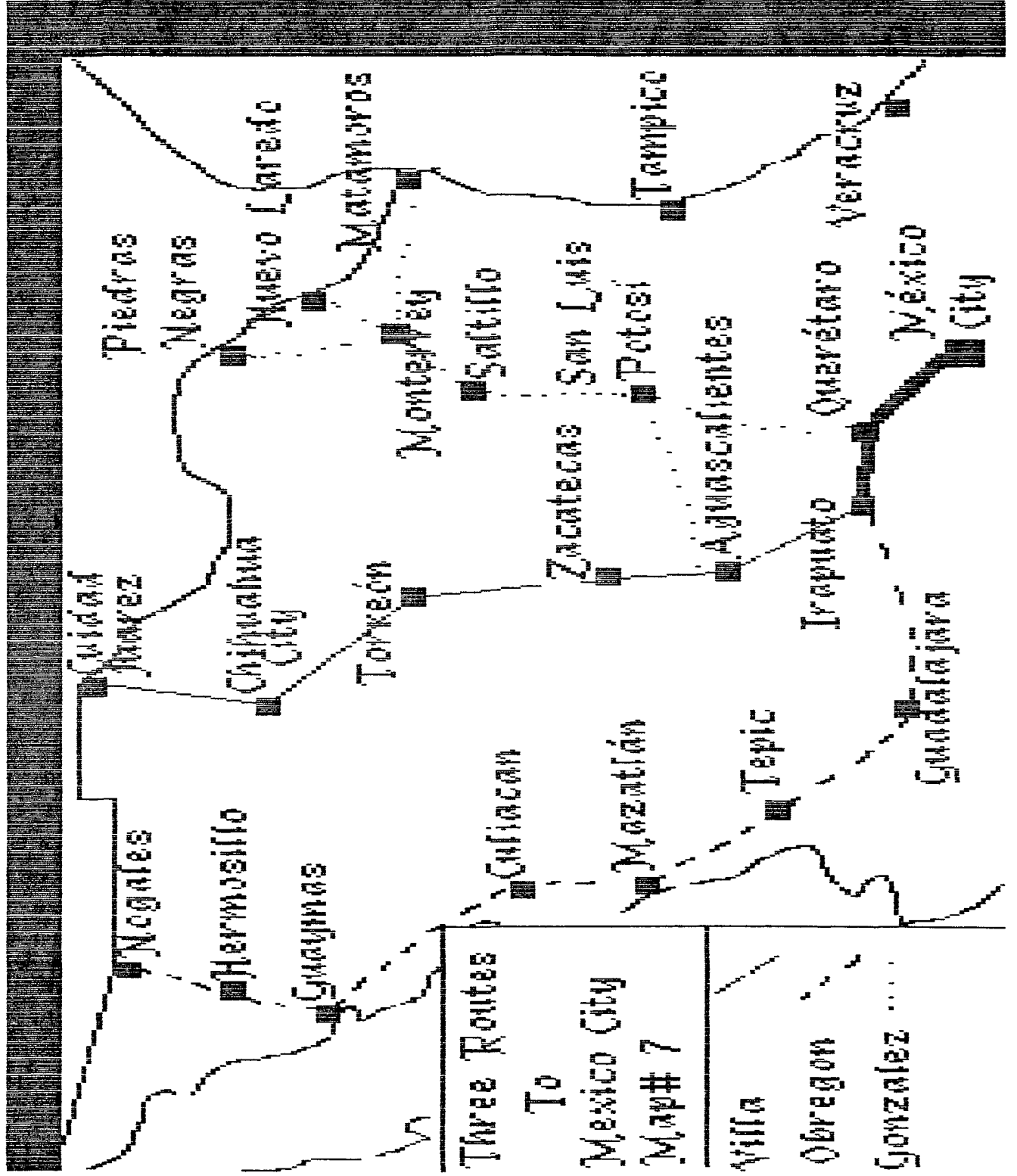
asked them if they preferred to march against Saltillo and Carranza or against the huertistas at Zacatecas. Such a question, in that moment of heated emotional turmoil, was gambling with the future of Mexico, the integrity of the Division and the honor its members. If the answer was to strike at Saltillo the nation would be plunged into a civil war within a revolution, and that situation would certainly label the generals of the Division as reactionaries determined to sabotage the cause of the Revolution. (13)

The blatant statement of their mental dilemma caused the generals to hesitate and reflect long enough to allow tempers to cool down. Angeles knew every general in the Division and was aware they had allowed their emotions to block out reasoning. The prospect of assaulting their own government and its leader suddenly appeared radical, and the generals settled into a confused state of doubt. The atmosphere of bewilderment convinced Angeles that everyone needed time to reflect, examine their alternatives, and determine the consequences of each possible course of action. (14)

By the time Angeles asked the critical question in the telegraph office Natera's forces had suspended their attacks on Zacatecas; thus, the critical question was no longer reinforcing another Division but loyalty and obedience. The controlling factors of that question were: to whom were they loyal and what guiding principle would

they obey. The generals asked Carranza to reflect on the consequences of his actions and optimistically requested him to revoke the acceptance of Villa's resignation; but their hopes were dashed when the First Chief refused the request. He persisted in his demand that they immediately choose a replacement for Villa and send the reinforcements as ordered. That continued stubbornness only served to infuriate and further confuse the officers. Ignoring the demand for immediacy, Angeles arranged a meeting for the next morning to allow them to examine their feelings and desires. (15)

While the telegraph wires buzzed between Saltillo and Torreón, the situation in Sonora deteriorated. General Plutarco Elías Calles, the military commander of the State, and Governor José María Maytorena gathered soldiers to forcefully remove the other from power. Because Calles was backed by the resources of the Division of the Northwest, Governor Maytorena solicited Villa's help. The request arrived a couple of days before the telegraphic confrontation and Villa forwarded it to Carranza for action, and the First Chief probably delegated the matter to Obregón because Sonora was in his area of operational responsibility. General Salvador Alvarado was sent to resolve the problems but he was not the disinterested party needed in Sonora. Instead, he was a close associate of Obregón's and one of the generals responsible for Angeles'



Three Routes
To
Mexico City
Map # 7

Villa
Obregon
Gonzalez

demotion from Minister of War, and that affiliation placed him in opposition to Maytorena. When Alvarado arrived in Hermosillo, Calles' forces had Maytorena's troops surrounded and under seige. Although Alvarado ended the seige, the Sonoran conflict would continue to inflame and disrupt the course of the revolution, pulling Angeles into the melee. (16)

As Angeles considered the grave situation and their limited alternatives, he examined the causes. He viewed the line of the Central Railroad, which extended through Torreón, Zacatecas, and Aguascalientes, as the natural line of operation for the Division of the North. That conclusion was based on his comprehensive perspective of the strategy for victory over General Huerta. With Obregón's army moving down the western railroad from Hermosillo through Guadalajara, and González's forces pressing from Saltillo through San Luis Potosí, the logical route for the Division was in the center. To Angeles it was simple logic, three routes and three armies uniting for the entrance into Mexico City. (17)

If that strategy was followed and properly coordinated, victory over Huerta would have been assured; but logic and reason were corrupted by political manipulation of armies and the desires of Venustiano Carranza to direct military operations personally. Carranza had deliberately demeaned the Division's victories and attempted to force his will on

their operations. The only unit he failed to control was the Division of the North, and that independence of operation resulted in glorious victories that severely injured the enemy's ability to fight. While the Division stormed enemy garrisons and planned operations directed at their strongest points, other units floundered or stalled in a sea of political dictates. (18)

Angeles perceived the inability of other units to advance rapidly along their natural line of operation as a result of the disregard for a "fundamental principle of the art of war" (19) and their dependence on Carranza's authority. In his opinion, using all available forces with the primary objective of defeating the enemy was elemental because of the historical lessons concerning that principle. It was obvious to him that a commander never had too many forces, only too few; and dividing those forces reduced the ability to deliver a crushing defeat, as one would "flatten a mosquito", (20) thus prolonging the war. He had personally experienced the corruption of military principles through political intrigues in Sonora and viewed the formation of the new Division as a similar tactic. (21)

He also believed Carranza intentionally disregarded the fact that a splendidly equipped and fully manned division was available when he sent that inferior force to attack Zacatecas. He knew they would have to be reinforced and that situation gave him the needed justification to weaken

the operational ability of the Division, and prevent its advance toward the heart of Mexico. The one factor Carranza did not consider in his planning of the intrigue was the cohesion of the component units and commanders of the Division. By June 1914, the Division of the North was no longer merely a collection of soldiers, equipment and supplies but a living entity that demanded loyalty to survive. (22)

Angeles perceived his duty in the context of a grander scheme, above the immediate circumstances, and arrived at his conclusion through logical analysis of the facts, as he knew them. If the generals obeyed Carranza's orders the Division would no longer operate independently. Angeles assumed that he would be named temporary commander of the Division and doubted if he could obey those orders, knowing they fluctuated with the political atmosphere and power struggles. Then Carranza's brother would take command and they would no longer have the aggressiveness and leadership that Villa contributed, and the spirit and strength of the Division would be destroyed. With the weakening of the enemy's greatest threat, Huerta's forces would fight with new vigor and assurance, thus prolonging the revolution. That delay of victory would cause more bloodshed and postpone the return of a lawful government. To prevent that from occurring, Angeles concluded that the generals had only one choice which was to disobey Carranza's orders. He

perceived it as an act necessary to the cause of the revolution and humane principles by which he tried to live.

(23)

Insubordination to superiors was an act of dishonor to a professional soldier. His duty was based on obedience of orders and that duty dictated the degree of military honor. General Angeles had lived with that code of conduct for 31 years of his life and adhered to those principles until logic told him they were wrong. He had previously challenged superior authorities in the army, because of principles he believed superceded his duty to remain quiet, and suffered the consequences of those breaches of discipline. Those instances were examples of the conflict between his belief in the military code and his personal ethics. So, Angeles was not a stranger to abiding by his principles and suffering the consequences. (24)

On June 14, the generals of the Division assembled and concurred with Angeles' analysis of the situation and conclusions. After agreeing that they must perform the distasteful act of insubordination a telegram was drafted that firmly and moderately stated their position and decision. They again asked Carranza to revoke Villa's resignation and ended with the declaration that the Division was immediately moving south under the command of General Villa. Expecting no reply, they turned their attention to Villa and convinced him that it was his duty

to the Revolution and Mexican people to continue as commander. It is doubtful if Villa resisted for long or offered any rebutals to the declarations, because he regretted the hasty act that was submitted in a moment of emotional outrage in response to Carranza's unreasonable stubbornness. (25)

Carranza refused to accept the fact that all the generals were willing to disobey his orders and believed Angeles used his position in the War Department to force their agreement. Because of Angeles' higher position in the command structure, Carranza held him personally responsible for their actions. To assure himself of their determination to challenge his authority, he repeated the orders and reiterated his refusal to allow Villa to command the Division. Upon receipt of the telegram, Angeles speculated as to what would convince the First Chief of their determination. (26)

On June 15, he sent a personally drafted telegram to the First chief explaining their actions and intentions. Angeles frankly stated in undiplomatic and accusatory language that Carranza's intentions were known. He referred to the "malignant resolution" to remove Villa from command and the "principle of obedience to a Chief who defrauds the hopes of the people". He further accused Carranza of having a "dictatorial attitude", creating "disunion in the States", and ineptness in foreign relations. He concluded

by accusing the First Chief of desiring blind loyalty and obedience, and stated that the decision of the entire Division of the North to march on Zacatecas was "final". (27)

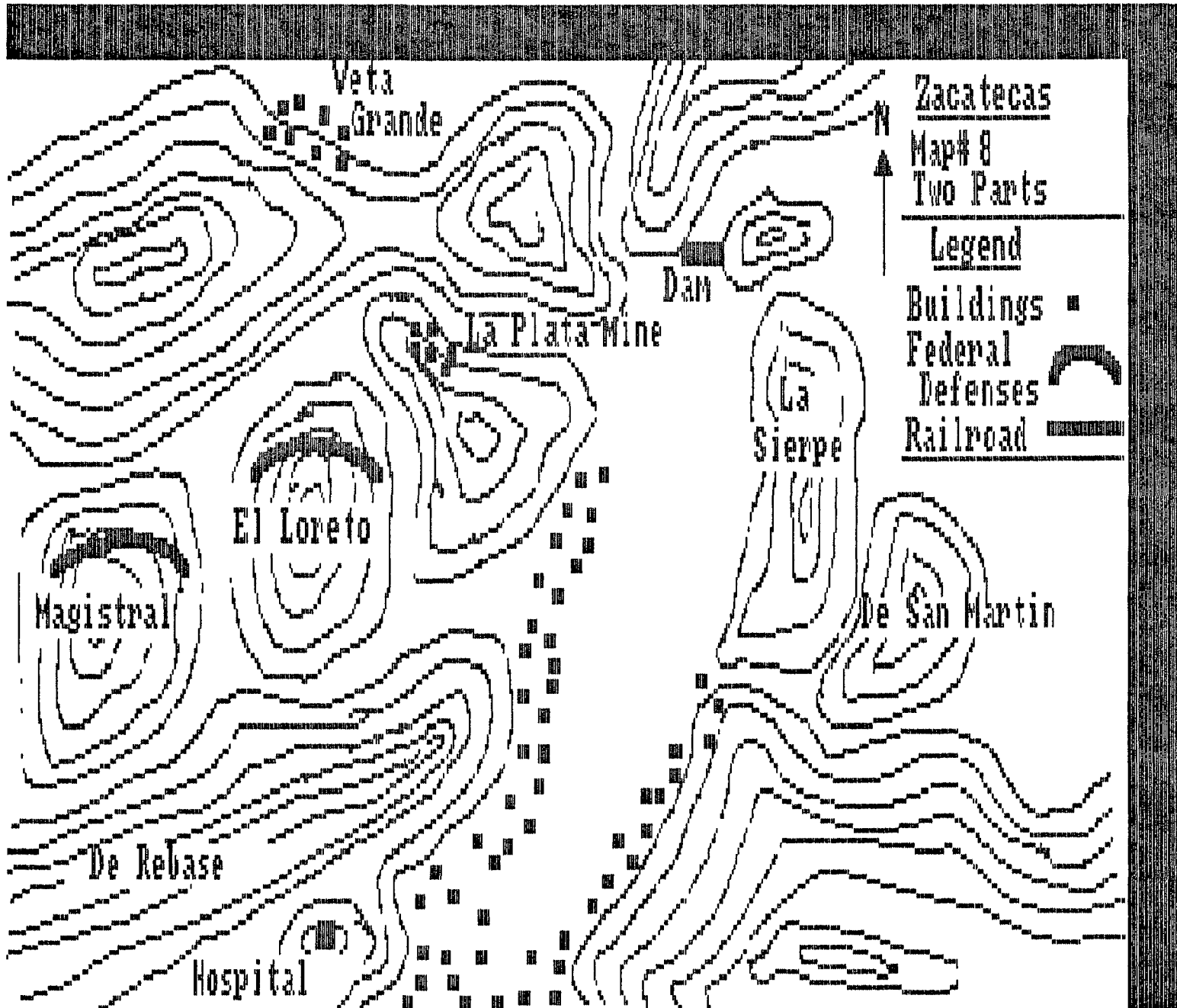
General Francisco Villa was back in command with renewed faith in his generals and the future of the Division of the North. He knew, as the others did, that the Division would survive because of the determination and loyalty of the leaders and men. Villa complied with Angeles' declaration that the advance south would be started immediately by sending Urbina toward Zacatecas with two brigades the next day. Angeles followed on June 17th with five trains of artillery and joined Urbina north of Zacatecas. The two generals were charged with planning and preparing for the attack on the federal stronghold, evidently with Angeles in charge of the overall strategy and Urbina directing the tactical problems and placements of troops. (28)

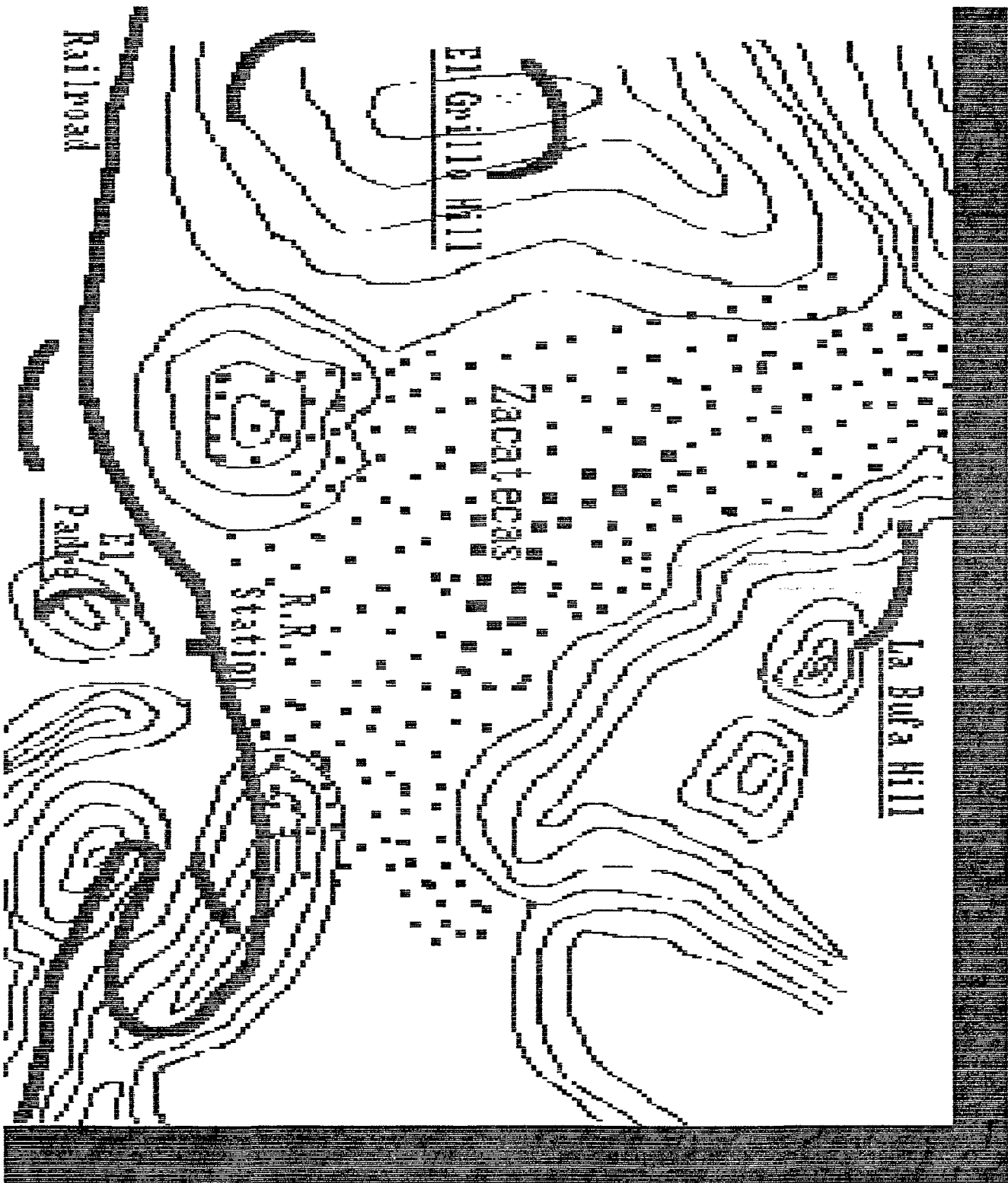
Angeles directed the offloading of his artillery at Calera station, 15 miles northwest of Zacatecas, and ordered the corps to remain in camp. Meanwhile he left in his automobile with an escort of thirty men, provided by General Manuel Chao, to scout the area around the village of Morelos. When they entered the village federal cavalry rushed them from the nearby hills and forced them back to San Vicente, where they repulsed the attacks and withdrew to the safety of Calera. After joining Urbina in

dispatching the brigades commanded by Generals Maclovio Herrera and Manuel Chao south to San Antonio and Cieneguillo, Angeles prepared to return to Morelos. (29)

With the assistance of General Trinidad Rodríguez and his brigade, Angeles again entered the village. While the troops cleared the hills of federal soldiers, he inspected the surrounding countryside from a nearby hill. He was satisfied with the area as a preliminary location for the artillery and brought 36 cannons from Calera. The next morning he entered the abandoned mining village of Veta Grande with General Natera acting as his guide. From the summit of a hill south of town, he looked down the arroyos and valley that turned and twisted southward. Four miles away was Zacatecas and to either side were the huge fortified hills of La Bufa and El Grillo. Down the valley and on top of the high hills were 14-15,000 federal troops waiting for the attack. On the hills of El Grillo and La Bufa were eleven cannons and an additional one mounted on an armored railroad car between the railroad station and the town of Guadalupe. As he surveyed the terrain and defenses, Angeles must have noted that the federal guns on the hills were positioned on the extreme summits exposing them to the fire of his cannons. (30)

Angeles saw the ruins of buildings in an adjacent valley to his left that was the La Plata mine. After comparing the terrain with a map and analyzing the geography in relation





to the use of artillery and movement of troops, he concluded that the area was the key to the coming battle. The mine was in a secluded location at the base of a hill, hidden from both Magistral and Loreto hills which were south of Veta Grande. There were three hills near the mine which could be used for artillery positions, with inclines facing six directions. After the area was cleared of federals Natera walked the area with Angeles who decided to bring the artillery to the secondary area. (31)

At Morelos, he ordered Major Gustavo Bazán to move two groups of artillery to the mine area, but told him to wait until after dark to position them. As a consequence, the federals did not know their locations. Angeles and Urbina met with Natera and his generals in the afternoon and sent them south of Zacatecas in the area of Guadalupe. Before leaving for a reconnaissance of the southern areas, Angeles advised Urbina that his two brigades would be placed in the Veta Grande area in the coming battle and then dispatched a brigade and a regiment to Veta Grande to protect his artillery. (32)

Angeles met with Herrera and Chao in the town of San Antonio, southwest of Zacatecas, to fulfill his promise to scout the area for proper gun emplacements. He chose a hill near the town as the most advantageous location and searched for exact positions. As he methodically chose each one, Angeles explained to Herrera the importance of

artillery, "...where the cannon thunders, the enemy hides and our infantry advances, and when the enemy ventures to stick their heads up, then they have our infantry on top of them and they hurriedly abandon the position."⁽³³⁾ That was one of the guiding principles Angeles used in his planning of the Zacatecas battle. He was determined to perfect the technique of coordinated artillery fire and infantry assaults which he and Villa began at Torreon. After returning to Veta Grande, he sent ten guns under the command of Major Carrillo to the San Antonio area to support the attacks and prevent the federals from retreating in that direction. ⁽³⁴⁾

On the morning of June 21, Angeles took his regular morning bath which not only refreshed him but served to establish the routine of the day. He firmly believed in Napoleon's Maxim #82, which stated that "The actions of a great general results from planning and genius, not chance or destiny."⁽³⁵⁾ In order to obtain that great action, he had to be alert and prepared to think clearly. After all the controversy over the Zacatecas campaign and the dilemma that preceded the distasteful act of insubordination, Angeles was not going to depend on chance. Recalling the tactical lessons taught in the French military schools, he must have examined the three requirements: preparation, mass and impulsion. If he planned and prepared thoroughly, utilized every available soldier, and struck with force,

Zacatecas would fall and the disobedience would be justified. (36)

He found the gunners of his 28 cannons at Veta Grande waiting for the signal to return the federal artillery fire. Although the batteries were suffering under the shelling from La Bufa and El Grillo, Angeles ordered them to hold their fire and conserve shells. He was not going to place himself in the situation that occurred at San Pedro when they exhausted their shells and the battle had to be delayed. He had ordered a reserve supply of artillery shells but they had not arrived, and he would not again wager a battle on a timely delivery. While the guns remained silent, he was informed that the brakes on some of them were defective. Without brakes to keep the guns relatively stationary during firing the recoil would move the cannons with each shot and reduce their effectiveness. To assure accuracy and prevent gunners from being crushed by their own guns, Angeles sent for his artillery mechanic who was in San Antonio. (37)

Although the problem of cannon brakes demanded immediate action and could be quickly resolved, another problem presented itself that was unsolvable. Angeles received a telegram from Carranza removing him from the post of Subsecretary of War in the Constitutionalist government. The removal was based on Carranza's loss of confidence in Angeles and his disobedience at Torreón. Thus, Angeles took

the blame and suffered the consequences for all the generals of the Division in refusing to obey Carranza's orders. The news was disheartening but probably not unexpected. He had examined the possible consequences and decided on his priorities. His priority at the moment was the battle and he turned his attention to it. (38)

By the next day the artillery brakes were being repaired and his older brother, Major Eduardo Angeles, established a first aid station near the gun emplacements. While Angeles inspected the gun positions near the mines, General Villa arrived. Angeles had been waiting for three things before starting the battle: first, the arrival of Villa who would lead the Division; second, the rest of the brigades; and finally, his reserve ammunition from Torreón. All three arrived on the 22nd, and the final phases of preparation could be made. He walked the area with Villa, explaining his arrangements and plans for the battle. Like his plans for the battle at Paredón, they were arranged in orderly phases of combat. The key to the capture of the city were the dual mountains, El Grillo and La Bufa, that dominated the valley; but before they could be captured secondary objectives had to be taken. One of the first hills scheduled for attack was La Sierpe on the east side of the valley, because it was higher in elevation than El Grillo and would give his artillery dominance. In addition, they must capture El Loreto and Magistral hills on the west side

of the valley, and Los Padres hill and the railroad station to the south of the city. Once those secondary positions were secured, attacks could be launched on the two main mountains and then against the city of Zacatecas. (39)

While he pointed out enemy positions and the planned direction of attacks, Angeles noticed the old mine shafts of La Plata. His artillerymen were still suffering under federal artillery fire and he saw the shafts as places of safety until the battle began. The guns were placed inside the shafts which not only sheltered them from the shells but hid them from view. The two generals continued their examination of positions and terrain into the early part of the night, making final adjustments to troop dispositions. The combination of Angeles and Villa exemplified the perfect military partnership. Angeles was the organizer, planner and task master, while Villa provided the heroic flair, energetic leadership and desire to lead the men into combat. They were ready to prove that the partnership was better than before and a formidable force. (40)

On the morning of June 23, Angeles sent messengers to the various commanders concerning their assignments and informed them that the assaults would begin at exactly 10:00 a.m. He then went to La Plata mine, ordered the artillery out of their hiding places, and positioned them to cover the troops. At the designated time, 23,000 troops advanced toward their first objectives under artillery

fire. Villa led 5,000 in simultaneous assaults on Magistral hill and the west side of Loreto hill, while Colonel Raúl Madero assaulted Loreto on the east side with 1,500. On the other side of the valley, Urbina led an assault on Sierpe hill from the north with 3,500, as Colonel Martiniano Servín commanded 2,500 from the west on the same hill. Meanwhile in the south, Natera charged El Refugio hill and the west side of Los Padres hill with his 5,000 men; Maclovio Herrera directed 3,000 against the railroad station and the east side of Los Padres hill; and Domingo Arrieta commanded 2,000 men in taking Guadalupe and pushing toward La Bufa. (41)

While Colonel Carrillo directed his ten guns, situated on the hill above San Antonio, in the support of the three advances in the south, Angeles supervised the artillery support on the north. The terrain in the area of the La Plata mine, which he had chosen for the guns, allowed the artillery to support all major attacks on the three primary mountains. With seven guns in each of four positions, he directed the bombardment of enemy positions on Sierpe, Loreto and Magistral hills at the same time, while troops crossed the open ground from their assembly point to the vicinity of attack. Meanwhile, El Niño sat on its platform beyond Pimiento Station and fired on El Grillo. (42)

The shells from Angeles' guns blasted the ground in front of the attacking troops and diverted federal

artillery fire away from them. Both armies used schrapnel shells which exploded in the air, raining bullets down on the soldiers, gunners and crew. Angeles' used that type of shell in a concentrated barrage on Loreto hill, and within thirty minutes it was captured by Villa and Madero's troops. When he saw the flag raised on the summit, Angeles immediately went to search for new gun positions to better support the continuing attack on Sierpe hill and bombard La Bufa. (43)

As he and Villa rode up the side of Loreto hill, federal soldiers hidden in buildings of the old Loreto mine fired on them. Although they were in personal danger, both were more concerned with giving support to Servín's attack on Sierpe, which was faltering under heavy fire, than their own health. Angeles immediately ordered the artillery moved up but it was half a hour before the first gun arrived. In the meantime, he and Villa supervised rifle and machine gun fire across the valley to prevent the federals from mounting a counterattack against Servín. (44)

As each artillery piece arrived on Loreto Angeles immediately put it into action against Sierpe, and within fifteen minutes the federals were evacuating their positions. With Sierpe secured Angeles turned his attention to the south and El Grillo. Near the summit, where he needed to place cannons, he encountered a combination of small arms fire from federals and shelling from the guns on

El Grillo and La Bufa. He collected some infantrymen who were left behind and ordered them to clear the federal troops off the hill. Once that was done, his guns began answering the federal fire. (45)

While the soldiers and artillery conquered Loreto and Sierpe hills, the forces to the south struggled for their objectives under direct artillery fire from both La Bufa and El Grillo. To take pressure off the southern advance and press against the main hills, Angeles moved all of the artillery from the Veta Grande area and divided the batteries. From positions on Sierpe hill they supported Urbina's assault on La Bufa, and from Loreto they covered Villa's attack on El Grillo. Five hours after the attacks began, Los Padres and El Refugio hills were taken in the south, and assaults were launched on El Grillo and La Bufa in the north. After two more hours of fighting, the federals were abandoning El Grillo and La Bufa, Natera and Herrera's forces entered the southern outskirts of the city, and Angeles' guns bombarded the city of Zacatecas. (46)

Eight hours after the battle began the federals started evacuating the city. First, they moved eastward toward Guadalupe but were turned by Carrillo's artillery fire and the forces of Domingo Arrieta. After seeing that route blocked, they turned westward in an attempt to reach the town of Jerez but were driven back by Natera's troops. In

desperation they turned north hoping to escape through the area of Veta Grande; but as they moved up the valley, Angeles' guns shelled them. Trapped between the forces of Urbina and Villa in the north, and Natera and Arrieta coming from the south, they scattered into a disorganized mob. Most of them again turned south and east toward Guadalupe with the hope of breaking out toward Aguascalientes; but they stumbled onto 7,000 troops that Angeles had posted along the road to prevent reinforcements from reaching Zacatecas from Aguascalientes. The murderous fire on the Guadalupe road ended the battle of Zacatecas and almost totally annihilated the federal defenders. (47)

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER IV

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CHAPTER V

GENERAL OF THE ARMY

Suddenly the artillery pieces were quiet. Federal cannons no longer thundered from atop El Grillo and La Bufa hills, and the rattle of rifle fire was far away. When silence filled the valley, Angeles did not want to hurry off his mountain and rush into Zacatecas to taste the victory. Instead, he needed to prolong the solitude and relish the stillness. For him the challenge was over because it was in the planning, not in taking the city. He had taken a force of revolutionary soldiers and some cannons, arranged them in a certain manner, and totally defeated the fortress city. He walked down from Sierpe hill and across the flat with Major Federico Cervantes, Enrique del Valle, and his brother, Eduardo Angeles. (1)

They arrived at the wall of a dam and sat in silence. Angeles was disturbed and needed the diversion because in the last few minutes of the battle, as he watched the mass of troops blundering about in the valley and being shot down, he realized the awful success of his plans. He designed them with skill, considering every aspect, and formulated them with the intention of a swift and complete victory; but the fearful flight of the federal troops and

their suicidal rushes into the waiting guns was etched in his memory. His plans did not include nor had he anticipated what happened. He assumed the garrison commander would surrender once the officer realized defeat was imminent. (2)

To distract his thoughts and block out the sounds of distant gunfire, he and his companions spoke of world happiness. They visualized an ideal time when there would be no war and people could live in peace. Angeles probably touched on the subject that had caused his need for tranquillity, his universal love of mankind. As he said later, "This is my failing: to love all Mexicans, and further more, to love all of humanity, even down to the animals, because at times we are ourselves worse than they." (3) That day he had witnessed mankind's savagery in its extremes: human bodies torn apart by artillery shells, men crazed with anger and fear killing other men without hesitation, and honorable soldiers blissfully slaughtering frightened and broken men. (4)

They sat on the wall of the dam exchanging personal philosophical beliefs and expressing their hopes for an ideal life until an evening breeze blew down the canyon. Although the breeze refreshed them after the heat of battle, it also carried the stench of a dead horse that lay nearby. Angeles stood facing south, knowing the moments of solitude were over. Down the valley was Zacatecas and the

final part of the battle that he dreaded, entering the defeated city and seeing the death and destruction. He decided to delay that moment by spending the night at Veta Grande and face the unhappy experience in the morning. (5)

As he lay in bed that night, Angeles was able to push aside the humanitarianism in him and allow the soldier to emerge. He could not resist admiring the precision with which the battle was fought, the perfect coordination of artillery and infantry acting in unison to capture objectives in well defined and logical phases. He considered it the perfect efficiency that he and Villa had strived for since the capture of Torreón. The Division of the North was finally at the height of its fighting capacity. As he mentally reviewed the battle phase by phase, searching for errors, visions of the wounded and dead returned. He was saddened by the memory of wounded soldiers who continued to fight and those who pleaded for death to take them. Before falling asleep he recalled with admiration the reluctant charge of the soldiers on Loreto hill against the barricaded federals, which he considered, "the heroic effort of the feeble spirits to march stooped against the tempest of death:..."(6)

On the morning of June 24, Angeles entered Zacatecas with his staff. With the influx of thousands of victorious soldiers no quarters were available in the city, so they turned east toward Guadalupe. It was there that Angeles saw

what he had visualized the day before from his position on Sierpe hill. Corpses of men and horses were scattered for four and one half miles on and beside the road. None of them had rifles or side arms and most were stripped of their boots, hats and even outer clothing. (7)

Walking among the bodies, he was reminded that most of those dead soldiers had not voluntarily fought for the government of General Huerta. He knew the federal army was having trouble getting new recruits, and had resorted to forcibly drafting men into the ranks. If those men had been given a choice, they too may have been in the ranks of the revolutionaries. Looking at the still bodies, he concluded that most of them probably were friends of his in a common cause because they too wanted peace and a government based on freedom without the injustices. Although he knew his duty was to make every effort to defeat the enemy, it bothered him when the enemy was a fellow Mexican and a fraternal brother. (8)

Looking over the sea of mangled corpses, he saw the results of his military efficiency, the outcome of his battle plans to prevent the federal escape to safety. He and Urbina agreed that the federals would attempt an escape by the Guadalupe road and considered that in their placement of troops. Preventing their escape to join other federal garrisons in the area was a strategic necessity for victory and it succeeded. Of the soldiers in the Zacatecas

garrison only 2,000 escaped, leaving behind over 5,000 dead, 2,500 wounded and 5,500 captured. He had planned the battle but not the slaughter on the Guadalupe road nor the mass executions in the city. His plans which were conceived with logic and reason became a contest ruled by emotions. Terror and panic had gripped the federals, causing them to react erratically. That irrational behavior placed them at the mercy of men controlled by revenge and the emotional rush of battle. (9)

Allowing three days for the news of the defeat at Zacatecas to reach other federal garrisons, Angeles led seven brigades of cavalry southward. Seventy-five miles south of Zacatecas, they passed a railroad junction where a rail line entered from the east. Commanding that intersection meant control over traffic coming from Tampico, Saltillo and San Luis Potosí. Ten miles farther south, Angeles led his troops into Aguascalientes which had been evacuated by the federals. After a tremendous victory at Zacatecas and the capture of Aguascalientes, the obvious move was to continue southward but it was impossible. (10)

Soon after the confrontation with General Villa and the resulting disobedience of the generals, Carranza took steps to punish and hamper the Division of the North. He stopped their coal supplies from the Monclova area and the arms and munitions coming through Tampico. Both supply points were occupied by González's army, thus under Carranza's

control. In addition, the First Chief instructed his agents in the United States to make every effort to stop the flow of supplies across the border to Villa's army. After the fierce battle at Zacatecas the Division was low on munitions and supplies but the critical shortage was coal for their trains to transport the army. Without the means to move or the ability to fight, their victorious push southward was stopped at Aguascalientes. (11)

Without the means to advance southward, the Division returned to its base of operations at Torreón where the generals busied themselves with reforming, refitting and waiting for enough supplies to begin another campaign. In an attempt to mend their bad relations with Carranza, the generals dispatched delegates from their ranks to Saltillo with a group apology while Villa attempted to arrange a conference between the two factions. While efforts were being made to prevent relations from worsening Angeles adapted to his new status in the Constitutionalist army. (12)

When he was an officer attached to the Division and filling the post of artillery commander, Angeles operated with a minimum of staff personnel. By June 1914 he still had only five men on his staff: Major Federico Cervantes, Major José Herón González, Major Eduardo Angeles, Major Gustavo Bazán and Captain Espinoza de los Monteros. After his removal from the post of Subsecretary of War he was

incorporated into the Division as a general and the new position demanded more responsibilities. To fulfill those additional duties, he increased his staff by ten men. He was then given a railroad passenger car to serve as his headquarters which he altered to suit his method of operation and Spartan taste, and appropriately named it Zacatecas. While Angeles put order back into his life Villa completed arrangements for a conference at Torreón. (13)

During the second week of July 1914, three representatives of the Division of the North met with the same number of delegates from the Division of the Northeast in Torreón. In the course of four days, they discussed and debated proposals that would hopefully mend the fracture of the revolutionary union. The major provisions of the resulting pact were: General Villa would retain his command of the Division of the North; the structure of the government, to be implemented at the end of the revolution, would be subject to the influence of a convention of revolutionary generals; and Carranza was expected to resolve the continuing conflicts in Sonora. There were rumors of a secret provision that Angeles was to command the entire Constitutionalist army, but if that provision truly existed it was either rejected by the carrancistas or negated by later events. (14)

One week after the Torreón Conference ended, President Victoriano Huerta resigned his office and fled the country.

Before the conferences were held, dissensions in the revolutionary ranks appeared to be destroying the movement and offered Huerta hope of victory; but the pact signed at Torreón presented the appearance of reunion. That appearance of reconciliation may have contributed to Huerta's decision to leave. Although the abdication sounded the triumph of the revolution and removed the basis for the federal army to continue fighting, it also produced new reasons for dissention in the Constitutionalist ranks. (15)

Francisco Juan Carbajal was left in the capital with the title of Provisional President and the undesirable responsibility of surrendering the government to the revolutionaries. His primary concern was to prevent retributions against federal soldiers and people who had supported Huerta. He requested terms of surrender from Carranza but when the answer was unconditional surrender of the capital, Carbajal searched for another option. Being aware of the bad relations between Carranza and Villa, he contacted the general asking for reasonable terms for surrender of the capital. Although Villa also demanded unconditional surrender and Carbajal subsequently surrendered to Carranza, the fact that he privately negotiated with Villa angered Carranza and increased his suspicions of Villa. As surrender negotiations continued the federal army began to realize the futility of resistance. (16)

Federal garrisons began capitulating in the West, allowing Obregón's army to advance more rapidly. Mazatlán, which had resisted the attacks of the Army of the Northwest for over six months, surrendered four days after Huerta's resignation; Colima fell soon after, as the army moved against Manzanillo; and the garrison at Guaymas, that had endured a long siege, abandoned the city to reinforce the federals at Manzanillo. After long months of delays Obregón's army gained momentum and by the end of July occupied both Guadalajara and Manzanillo. As his army turned eastward from Guadalajara, González's forces pushed south from San Luis Potosí toward Querétaro. Thus, the two armies were swiftly moving down what Angeles referred to as their "natural line of operations".⁽¹⁷⁾ But there was one element missing from Angeles' concept of the convergence of armies, the Division of the North. Carranza had effectively isolated it from the grand entry into the capital. ⁽¹⁸⁾

By turning south from San Luis Potosí and passing through Querétaro, González was the first to arrive on the outskirts of Mexico City. But as his army entered the suburbs, González realized that not all of the factions under the Constitutionalist banner were pleased with the turn of events. General Emiliano Zapata's troops, who entered the city from the south, resisted González's approach but retreated after a few skirmishes. The retreat did not signal Zapata's acceptance of Carranza as leader of

the country but represented a temporary lull in his continuing resistance. (19)

Emiliano Zapata was not alone in his displeasure. Governor Maytorena, who had been struggling for a year to regain his power in Sonora, saw no resolution to the problems under Carranza. General Alvarado failed to quiet the controversy and beseiged Guaymas with his troops. When Maytorena arrested Alvarado and some of his soldiers it sparked another confrontation with Calles, resulting in a battle near Santa Ana on August 16. Maytorena believed himself to be in a desperate situation and responded by threatening to start a revolution against Carranza with Villa as his ally. While whispers of rebellion spread across the North, loud rumblings of discontent radiated through the capital. Federal army officers were displeased with the proposed disbanding of the army and rumors circulated that they may form a union with General Villa to force the acceptance of their candidate for President, which was Felipe Angeles. (20)

After the conferences at Torreón, Villa convened a personal convention of generals in Ciudad Juárez and established alliances with other factions, among them was Governor Maytorena. When the Governor found himself again battling Calles' forces, Villa sent 2,000 cavalry troops from Chihuahua to reinforce Maytorena and uphold their pact. While Maytorena occupied the border town of Nogales,

the Division of the North moved south. Coal and other supplies were restored after the Torreón Conference giving them mobility and fighting capability. (21)

Villa and Obregón met with Maytorena during the last part of August and concluded an agreement they thought would solve the problems. Maytorena agreed to serve as military governor under Obregón in exchange for the replacement of Calles with General Benjamín Hill; but Hill was a close associate of Obregón's and possessed intentions similar to Calles. When the fighting continued Villa and Obregón agreed to send General Juan G. Cabral to assume command of both armies in Sonora. Meanwhile, Angeles went to Sonora on September 6, probably to assess the situation and attempt to restrain Hill's operations. After conferring with his friend, Maytorena, Angeles may have traveled to Baja California to arrange other alliances. (22)

The Territory of Baja California had remained an obscure sideshow of the Revolution and was out of the mainstream of the movement of armies. Obregón sent a few small military units and some civilian administrators across the Gulf of California as his army pushed south along the coast but the peninsula remained outside of Constitutionalist control. In the summer of 1914, federal officers stationed on the peninsula saw that Huerta's government was losing and began forming alliances with followers of Maytorena and Villa. Control of the peninsula would have extended Villa and

Maytorena's control of the northern area and given them more border area with the United States for supply purposes. Angeles was probably chosen for the mission to Baja because of his diplomatic abilities and the fact that he was a former federal officer who could establish a rapport with the federals and conduct preliminary talks.

(23)

While Angeles was absent from Chihuahua, representatives of the revolutionary forces held conferences concerning leadership of the new government. Villa proposed to his representatives that Angeles be considered for the office of President but the proposal was dismissed as unrealistic. Some revolutionaries still considered him a federal officer and he had bitter enemies within the army, particularly General Obregón who would surely oppose the nomination.

(24)

By September 11 conferences were also being held on the peninsula between federal Colonel Esteban Cantú and Major Baltasar Avíles of the Division of the North. Those talks resulted in a pact uniting the forces of Mexicali, Ensenada, Tijuana and Tecate with the Division of the North and Maytorena's army. On the same day, Angeles was back in Sonora where he found Hill attacking Maytorena's forces at Nogales. By September 20, two military units left Chihuahua for Sonora: one, composed of 5,000 troops under the command of General Juan G. Cabral; and another 4,000 cavalymen

commanded by Angeles. Both forces arrived in Sonora within three days but General Angeles was ordered to return immediately to Chihuahua with his forces. The reason for the hasty recall was a fight that occurred between villistas and carransistas when Carranza tried to close the railroad between Zacatecas and Aguascalientes. The attempted closure was to prevent Villa from moving closer to the capital and possibly influencing the Convention of Generals scheduled to meet on October 1. but only worsened the situation. (25)

As Angeles turned eastward, Maytorena refused to surrender command of his army to Cabral and moved toward Cananea. The next day, Villa officially broke relations with Carranza and urged the acceptance of Fernando Iglesias Calderon as Provisional President. Carranza refused to surrender his position, insisting on allowing the Convention of Generals decide. As relations deteriorated the main body of the Division of the North moved closer to Zacatecas but without one of its most faithful generals, Maclovio Herrera. He had served beside Francisco Villa since April 1912 and fought in all of the Division's battles; but in September he joined his brother, Luis, and went to serve in Carranza's army. He would later face General Angeles in battles in the Northeast. (26)

Sporadic fighting between villista and carrancista troops occurred in various locations as the tension

increased. Within two days of his return from Sonora, Angeles left Chihuahua City with 20 cannons to join the four brigades in Torreón. The move to strengthen Torreón was a reaction to the arrival of 12,000 carrancista troops in Saltillo who intended to strike westward and capture Villa's supply base. On September 28, the generals of the Division of the North, including Angeles, signed a manifesto rejecting Carranza as head of the government. That made the break official and sounded the beginning of a civil war. (27)

The Convention of Generals assembled three days later in Mexico City without representatives from Villa and Zapata. After some heated discussions, they voted to move the Convention to Aguascalientes to assure villista representation. They convened in that city on October 10 with the villista delegates present and led by General Angeles. While the representatives argued over qualifications of delegates, Villa concentrated his forces north of Aguascalientes and Carranza moved forces up from the south; both hoping to pressure the Convention to favor their side in the contest. Wishing to establish order in the assembly, the delegates pressed for the election of General Antonio I. Villarreal as President of the Convention when some members insisted that Zapata should be represented before the final vote. (28)

In the middle of October, Angeles led a commission of

four men to Morelos where he had been the zone commander in 1912. After a discussion with Zapata and selection of representatives, the party traveled through carrancista lines and boarded a train in Mexico City. Instead of returning directly to Aguascalientes with the zapatista delegates Angeles took them past the city and on to Guadalupe where they met with Villa. The zapatista delegation entered the Convention on October 26 where they joined in an alliance with the villistas. (29)

Angeles was leader of the conservative element in the Convention and had a viewpoint very similar to that of Francisco I. Madero. Like Madero, he supported most of the reforms of the Revolution but wanted them implemented in an orderly manner to prevent damage to the country. He urged moderation in a radical atmosphere and spoke against unreasonable acts against the rich and foreigners. He believed that the rich were the ones who possessed the knowledge necessary for national survival in a capitalist world, and persecution of foreigners or refusing to compromise with them created international friction and prevented needed investments and assistance. Yet, he believed in the sovereignty of his country and the right of the people of Mexico to decide their own fate. While a member of the Convention, he served on the Commission of War and Government with Obregon and others, whose members proposed that both Carranza and Villa resign their posts to

assist in the establish of peace. (30)

Carranza refused to resign and on November 2 the Convention elected General Eulalio Gutiérrez temporary President of Mexico. Two days later the new Secretary of War and comrade of Angeles, General José Isabel Robles, sent him on a mission to Mexicali, Territory of Baja California. The mission was probably a follow up to the pact signed in September with Colonel Esteban Cantú and designed to transfer the allegiance to the Convention government. In his absence the Convention declared Carranza a rebel against the legal government of Mexico and named Villa commander of the Conventionist army. With his new title and authority, Villa immediately began moving his forces toward Mexico City. (31)

Angeles returned from his mission in time to rejoin the Division in its approach to the capital and on November 28 he led the vanguard into the outskirts of the capital. After a week of waiting for Villa to arrive and the carrancista forces to evacuate the city, he joined with the 60,000 villista and zapatista troops for their triumphal parade through the streets on December 6, 1914. (32)

Once the celebrations settled down, Villa met with Angeles and other generals to explain his plan for placing three armies in the field against the carrancistas. Angeles was to lead one army into the Northeast to capture that area; Urbina would move eastward to capture the port and

oilfields of Tampico; and Villa would lead an army into the western areas where he already had 15,000 troops under the command of Generals Rodolfo Fierro and Calixto Contreras moving toward Guadalajara. Angeles disagreed with the strategy and frankly expressed his opinion. He proposed that they retain the base of operations at Mexico City and strike directly at Carranza in Veracruz with an army of 40,000 men. Villa feared losing support of the northern States because of the line of supply through Torreon and hesitated to agree. (33)

Angeles insisted that it was unwise to give Carranza time to reorganize and build his army but Villa was determined to allow Zapata's forces to push through Puebla and assault Veracruz, while he maintained control of the North and West. Angeles ended his argument with a profound analogy: "...but those lesser dangers will disappear when the great danger that Carranza represents has passed. These other chiefs are like hats hanging on a rack; the rack is Carranza, and the best use of our forces is not to pick off the hats one by one but to topple the rack, because then all the hats will fall." (34) General Villa did not listen to the advice and would later regret that fact. (35)

After receiving orders to mount the Northeast campaign, Angeles began organizing his army. A great number of things had changed in the nine months since he first come to the Division of the North. His original regimental artillery

commanders, Martiniano Servín and Manuel García Santibáñez, were no longer in charge of the guns. Santibáñez still commanded artillery but was with Villa in the western campaign and would distinguish himself a couple of months later at the battle of Sayula. Servín, who was transferred to command infantry troops at Torreón and later led one of the assaults on Sierpe hill at Zacatecas, was a general of infantry assigned to Angeles' command. (36)

Other men who followed those first two commanders had served with valor in subsequent battles but were then unavailable to command his artillery or be members of his general staff. Colonel Federico Cervantes who had served so well as his chief of staff replaced Angeles as a delegate to the Convention and would not be available for duty; Gustavo Bazán who had commanded artillery at Paredón and served on Angeles' staff at Zacatecas was also commanding artillery in the West like Santibáñez; and José Herón González, the former student of Angeles' who joined the artillery corps before the battle of Paredón, had been transferred to an infantry command like Martiniano Servín. (37)

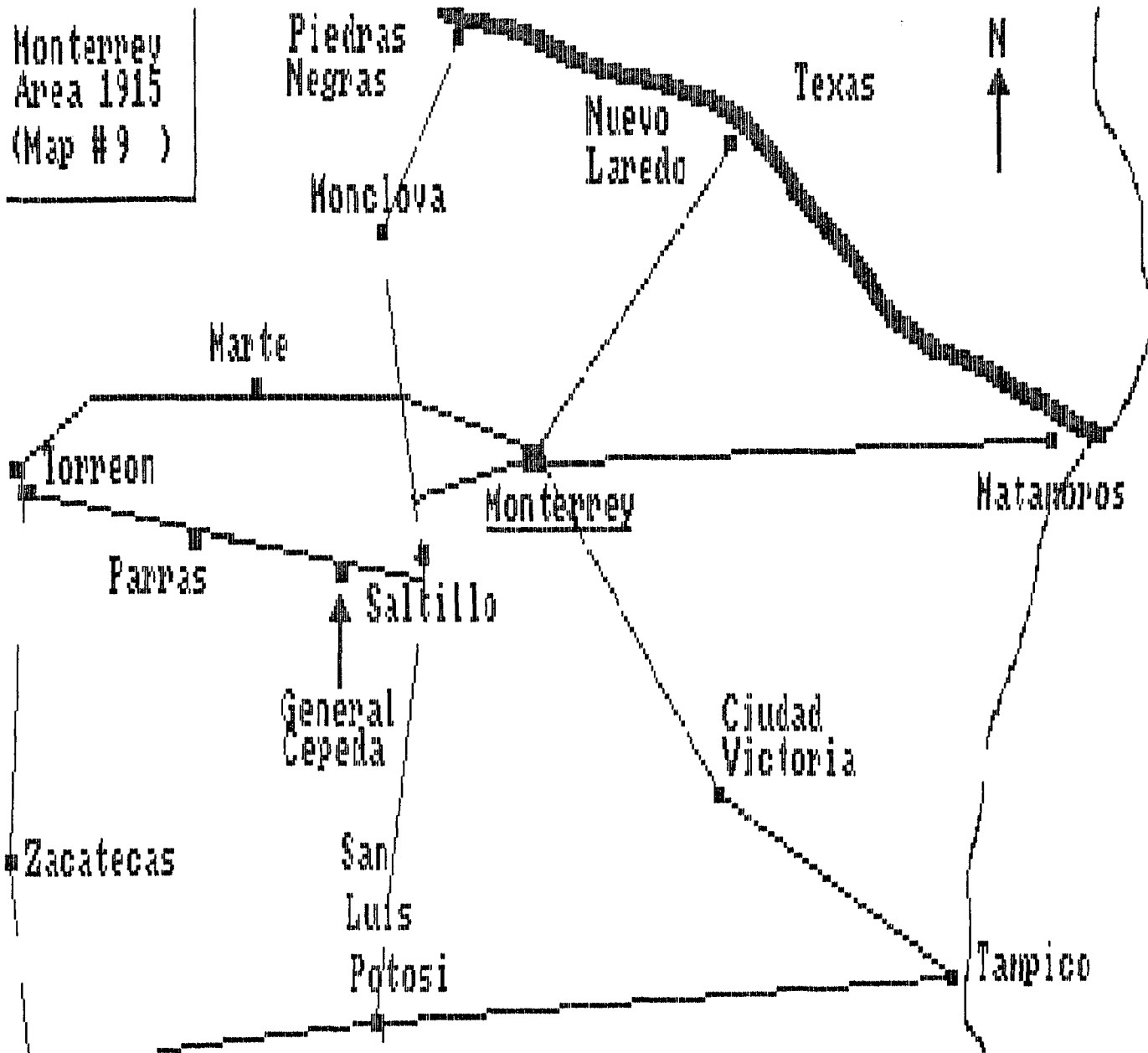
To gain greater assistance with the details of organization, Angeles first concentrated on reorganizing his staff. With a preference for men with military experience to fill the vacancies, he searched for qualified former federal officers and there were many available.

There was at that time an abundance of former soldiers in the capital who were mustered out in August and September when Obregón disbanded the federal army. He first assigned former federal officer José Romero as his chief of staff, then recruited two former federal generals, Joaquín Mendoza Sota and M. Luna, who would be invaluable on his staff in helping to recruit good soldiers and understand the demands of command priorities. With their assistance, he added nine more officers to the staff and filled the ranks of his army. (38)

General Angeles left Mexico City on December 17, 1914 with 6,000 troops and 60 artillery pieces. As commander of the Army of the Northeast, his responsibilities were no longer limited to the artillery. To assure the continued efficiency of that military arm he carefully chose his commanders. Colonel Gustavo Duron González, who commanded the artillery, had distinguished himself at the battle of Zacatecas and proved to be proficient in his duties. The two section commanders, Colonels José María Jurado and Miguel Saavedra, were also men of great talent with the cannons and served Angeles well at Zacatecas. The convoy traveled north to Torreón where they were joined by four brigades of cavalry and Angeles was briefed on the situation in the Northeast. (39)

Carrancista troops had moved out of Saltillo and Monterrey along the two railroads toward Torreón and one

Monterrey
Area 1915
(Map # 9)



group had already established a garrison at Parras, halfway between Torreón and Saltillo. The other units were reported to be moving out of Paredón while Generals Maclovio Herrera and Antonio I. Villarreal waited east of that town with two armies. Using the intelligence reports and his knowledge of the area east of Torreón, Angeles applied the principles of warfare and formulated strategy for his Army of the Northeast. (40)

The main body of the army, which included four brigades of infantry, two brigades of cavalry and 52 cannons, left Gómez Palacio about December 25. They moved north and east by railroad through territory familiar to Angeles. Not far from Gómez Palacio they passed by San Pedro de las Colonias where he commanded the artillery against General Velasco in April; then continued eastward on the route he had traveled with the Division vanguard in May toward the great victory at Paredón. At Marte station, 111 miles east of Torreón, the army was stopped by damaged railroad tracks on December 28. While the tracks were being repaired, Angeles sent a cavalry unit farther east toward Hipólito to scout and reinforce the enemy's belief that his main advance was coming along that route, as it had in the Spring of 1914. (41)

As the main force arrived at Marte, General Emilio Madero led his cavalry east from Torreón along the southern rail line to Viesca where his trains were also stopped by

destroyed tracks. Leaving a crew to repair the tracks, he unloaded his cavalry and moved across country toward the town of Parras. There he swiftly attacked and captured the federal garrison, eliminating the threat closest to Torreón. Following Angeles' orders, Madero then continued his march to the town of Guadalupe, 10 miles east of the town of General Cepeda, and waited. (42)

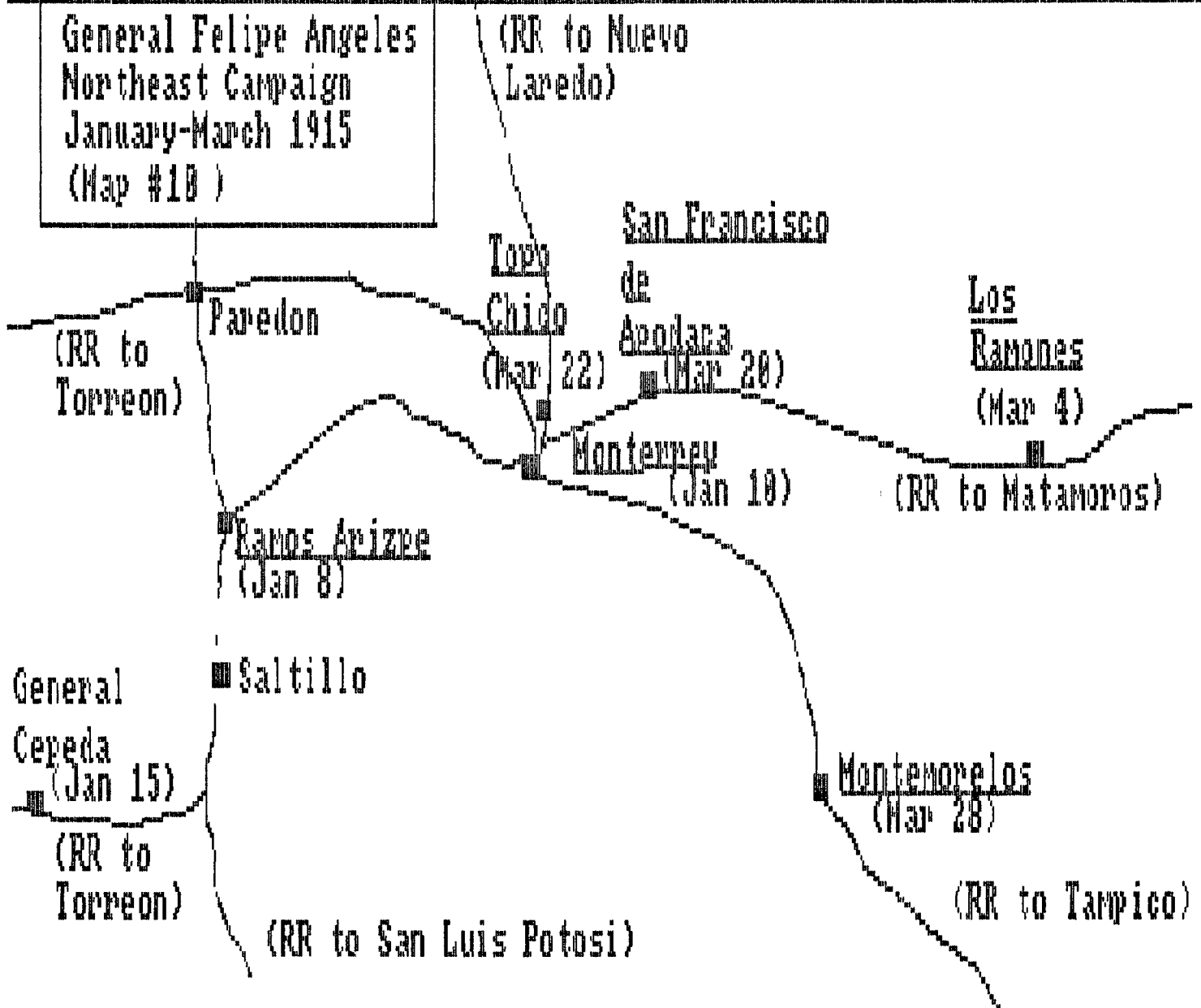
Angeles left his trains at Marte station, along with General Macario Silvas' brigade to continue cover movements, and turned his army away from the northern railroad. By departing on the night of January 4, 1915 the darkness masked their movements and his army was able to cross the 19 miles to Seguíñ on the southern rail line before dawn. They quickly turned east from Seguíñ and joined Madero at Guadalupe where the army rested through the next day, preparing for a night attack on the town of General Cepeda. (43)

Angeles planned his operations with precision, based on the situation as it existed when he left Torreón. He employed not only the principles of the French army which stressed: "Security of action, Mobility of action, Concentration, and Surprise", (44) but incorporated many of Napoleon's principles of warfare. By moving along the northern railroad which he believed the enemy expected and switching to the other one, he misled the enemy as Napoleon suggested in Maxim #16. He then applied Maxim # 18

to his march from Marte to Seguíñ which recommended the use of night to move armies to a better position. After that, he utilized Maxim #4 in arranging for the meeting of his two units 45 miles from Saltillo. Those tactical considerations were based on the belief that his flanks and rear would be protected as he advanced on Saltillo. Luis Gutiérrez, the brother of the Conventionist government President, occupied San Luis Potosí to the south; to the east General Alberto Carrera Torres was moving toward Ciudad Victoria to keep González's forces occupied; and Angeles' army had cleared the federals to the west. Besides the protection afforded to his flanks and rear the continued maneuvers along the northern rail line assured him that the main armies of Herrera and Villarreal would not interfere. But, while Angeles was maneuvering his army events in Mexico City were altering the situation around him in the Northeast. (45)

A new Revolutionary Convention assembled on January 1st to consider replacing President Eulalio Gutiérrez because of disagreements over his methods and choice of cabinet members. While the delegates determined his future, President Gutiérrez was detained at his house by two of Villa's cavalry brigades. The clash of wills between his brother and General Villa added to the unstable situation in the capital and caused General Luis Gutiérrez to question his choice of governments. He learned that three

General Felipe Angeles
Northeast Campaign
January-March 1915
(Map #10)



villista armies were closing on the area of San Luis Potosí and decided to move his troops north to join the carrancistas at Saltillo. (46)

Angeles sent four brigades of cavalry to storm the town of General Cepeda, 35 miles southwest of Saltillo. They attacked on the night of January 5, and by morning captured the 300 man garrison and occupied the town. News of the defeat at General Cepeda surprised the garrison of Saltillo because they believed Angeles' army was moving on the northern rail line where Herrera and Villarreal were located. On January 6, those two carrancista armies attacked what they thought was Angeles' main army at Marte station. The few hundred men left on the northern line by Angeles could not resist the advance of 8,000 soldiers and withdrew toward Torreón, abandoning the trains and equipment in their flight. (47)

As Angeles moved closer to Saltillo, Herrera and Villarreal realized they had been deceived and turned back toward Paredón; but they were 87 miles from Saltillo and Angeles was only 35 and closing on the Coahuilan capital. With an enemy army advancing and their main forces too far away to protect the city, the Saltillo garrison fled northward. Angeles' army occupied Saltillo on January 7 and accepted 600 carrancistas into their ranks. By 5:00 p.m. that evening, the vanguard encountered advance units of the carrancista armies which were moving down from Ramos

Arizpe. Angeles' army of 10,000 and the combined forces of Herrera and Villarreal with 15,000 formed battle lines and prepared to fight. While Herrera, who was commanding the carrancista line, waited for his artillery to arrive from Paredón, Angeles planned his tactics and maneuvered troops for an attack. (48)

At 5:00 a.m. on the morning of January 8, a thick fog settled over the battlefield. Facing an enemy with superior numbers, Angeles saw the low, hazy cloud as a benefit and grasped the opportunity. He placed General Santiago Ramírez's brigade in reserve and established a line of infantry with the support of 60 cannons behind them. With the fog covering movements, he sent General Madero to the far right of the line with his Cavalry Division and ordered the infantry on his far left, commanded by General Servín and Colonel José Herón González, to make a strong attack on the enemy. The infantry attack was designed to draw attention from Madero's movement and force the enemy pull units from the right to reinforce the left. After issuing those orders, Angeles personally led an infantry attack on the right to further confuse the enemy about his main attack and cause them to move any reserve units from the rear. (49)

Madero's cavalry rushed around the enemy's left flank, turned, and attacked them at La Libertad in their rear. The confusion of the surprise attack in the fog, combined with

heavy assaults by the infantry led by Angeles and Servín on both ends of the line, caused chaos within the carrancista army. Servín's infantry swept into Ramos Arizpe on the heels of the fleeing carrancistas but the general was killed by an enemy rifleman in the town. Angeles used a classical Napoleonic movement directly from the textbook by requiring the enemy to deploy its reserves to the line, directing attention to the front line with assaults and using the fog as his cavalry screen for the envelopment.

(50)

In his haste to escape northward, General Villarreal left some private papers behind in Ramos Arizpe which soon fell into the hands of Angeles's troops. Angeles was quite interested in the contents of those papers because they exposed a conspiracy among the leaders of his government and the enemy. There were letters from Conventionist President Gutiérrez and Generals José Isabel Robles, Lucio Blanco, Eugenio Aguirre Benavides, and Mateo Almanza proposing to eliminate both Villa and Carranza from power. Angeles immediately notified Villa, who was probably not too surprised because he had already accused Gutiérrez of conspiring with Obregón for the same purpose. Although the discovery of the papers was of major importance, Angeles saw more immediate benefits from the battle such as the capture of 3,000 carrancista soldiers, confiscation of great amounts of munitions, supplies and trains, and

control of the railroad junction to Monterrey. (51)

Three days after Angeles captured Ramos Arizpe, Villa led a three day assault on Guadalajara which was supported by artillery under the command of Colonel Gustavo Bazán. On January 14th, Generals Manuel M. Dieguez and Francisco Murguía abandoned the city and withdrew northward. That victory in the West was followed the next day by the evacuation of Monterrey when Herrera and Villarreal divided their forces into two separate armies for better operating efficiency. One man who left the city with the carrancistas was Vito Alessio Robles. He had joined the Division of the North in May of 1913, accompanied Angeles in his reconnaissance of the Paredon area and carried the general's battle plans to Villa. A short time before the battle of Ramos Arizpe, Vito and Miguel Alessio Robles deserted Villa's army and joined the carrancistas in Monterrey. But those two men were not unique in their transfer of loyalty. The entire fabric of revolution and war was shreading and suspicion became an ordinary attitude. Loyalties became confused and reasons for fighting for a certain government or person were becoming vague. (52)

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER V

1. Angeles, Batalla De Zacatecas, pp. 23-25.
2. Ibid, pp. 22-24 and 27.
3. Cervantes, Felipe Angeles, p. 344.
4. Angeles, Batalla De Zacatecas, pp. 21, 23, and 24.
5. Ibid, pp. 24-25.
6. Ibid, pp. 25-26.
7. Ibid, p. 27.
8. Cervantes, Felipe Angeles, p. 344. Angeles, Batalla De Zacatecas, p. 28.
9. Guzmán, Villa Memoirs, pp. 230 and 239. Angeles, Batalla De Zacatecas, pp. 27-28. RDS, Carothers to Secretary of State, File No. 812.00/12473, July 5, 1914.
10. Angeles, Batalla De Zacatecas, pp. 28-29. Guzmán, Villa Memoirs, p. 243.
11. Ibid, p. 244. Brito, Lugarteniente Gris, pp. 129-131. Angeles, Batalla De Zacatecas, p. 29. Christopher R. Stewart, Pancho Villa's Munitions, Master's Thesis, Missoula, University of Montana, 1979, p. 83.
12. Brito, Lugarteniente Gris, p. 127. Guzmán, Villa Memoirs, p. 240.
13. Ibid, p. 243. Cervantes, Felipe Angeles, pp. 172-173.
14. RDS, Cobb to Secretary of State, File No. 812.00/12470, July 11, 1914. RDS, Carothers to Secretary of State, File No. 812.00/12717, July 9, 1914. Guzmán, Villa Memoirs, pp. 251-252.
15. RDS, Cardoso de Oliveira to Secretary of State, File No. 812.00/12497, July 15, 1914.
16. RDS, Cardoso de Oliveira to Secretary of State, File No. 812.00/12516, July 16, 1914. RDS, Secretary of State to T. J. Canova, File No. 812.00/12517, July 17, 1914. Guzmán, Villa Memoirs, pp. 270-272.

17. Angeles, Batalla De Zacatecas, pp. 38-39.
18. Lamego, Historia Militar: Tercera Parte, pp. 293 and 295-296. Cervantes, Villa, p. 189.
19. New York Times, July 31 and August 1, 1914.
20. Guzmán, Villa Memoirs, pp. 249-250 and 289. Major General J. F. C. Fuller, The Conduct of War 1789-1961, New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press, 1961, pp. 152-153. RDS, Hostetter to Secretary of State, File No. 812.00/12147, July 30, 1914. RDS, Cardoso de Oliveira to Secretary of State, File No. 812.00/12788, August 9, 1914.
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CHAPTER VI

THE DIVISION OF THE NORTH

On January 16, 1915, General Angeles led his victorious army into the city of Monterrey. From the balcony of the Iturbide Hotel he spoke to the citizens of Monterrey and his soldiers. After assuring the people that their property was safe from confiscation and his army was not there to persecute them, the general made a statement referring to the enemy as mistaken brothers. The reference by a villista general to carrancista soldiers as brothers was unique, confusing, and yet reflective of Angeles' character. (1)

The statement reflected his belief that all Mexicans were brothers in a common cause, above those espoused by various factional leaders. He believed they were all fighting for the betterment of their country, and it was the leaders who confused the situation and misdirected the people. They disrupted rational thought with emotional pleas of patriotism and capitalized on petty jealousies and regional hatreds to obtain power; and those men would perform any deed necessary to attain their goals. Unlike those soldiers who were physically forced into the federal army and died at Zacatecas, the carrancista soldiers were

psychologically manipulated by political propoganda and false beliefs. Although they chose which army to fight with, their choice was not made without a type of coercion. He explained that the political schemes causing those brothers of Mexico to continue fighting were perpetrated by such men as Obregon and other generals who were dangerous animals. (2)

The same day Angeles made his speech about patriots being misled through political schemes, the results of political intrigues were unfolding in Mexico City. President Eulalio Gutiérrez escaped from his villista guards and the city, taking three brigades of troops and over half of the national treasury. The day after Gutiérrez's departure the delegates elected Roque González Garza the new President of the Convention. The change of presidents in the Convention government created a third faction because Gutiérrez still claimed his position as leader, and gave Villa firm control over the Convention. (3)

As Gutiérrez fled northward, Villa established his headquarters at Irapuato and sent 4,000 soldiers to Aguascalientes. The reason for the movement of troops was twofold: first, to have an extra force in that location to dispatch to the capital if Obregón quickened his advance westward from Puebla; and second, to prepare for the advance toward San Luis Potosí and Tampico. While Villa

prepared for maneuvers in the center and on the East coast his army in the West was being defeated. The carrancistas attacked Guadalajara and, after one day of heavy fighting, pushed Fierro and Contreras' troops out of the city. The villistas' failure to successfully resist the enemy forces resulted from their inability to coordinate the movement of infantry with artillery fire, a technique perfected by Angeles and Villa in numerous battles; but those two generals were not present to contribute their personal skills in the defense of the western city. Angeles was in Monterrey receiving invitations to a conference with followers of President Gutiérrez and Villa was in Irapuato issuing orders to his troops to chase and defeat the same man. (4)

Eugenio Aguirre Benavides, who defected from the Division of the North and left Mexico City with Gutiérrez, arranged a conference of generals in Saltillo to convince them that peace could be obtained only after the elimination of Villa and Carranza. Three generals from Angeles' command attended the conference and Angeles received an invitation, but refused to attend. Upon being informed that some of Gutiérrez's generals were in San Luis Potosí, Villa dispatched two forces from Aguascalientes. As those forces advanced northward by separate routes Aguirre Benavides telegraphed Angeles in an attempt to convince him to abandon Villa and the Conventionist government. (5)

In his reply on January 24, Angeles refuted the arguments of Benavides, stating that the Convention was the just and legal government of Mexico. Having served as a delegate to the Convention, Angeles had first hand knowledge of its composition and operation, and he believed it could fairly govern the country. If Benavides had simply expressed a desire to eliminate Villa and Carranza without mentioning the Conventionist government, Angeles may have conceded because he had previously supported the retirement of both men for the good of Mexico. But he would not consider supporting the destruction of the Convention and what it represented to him. (6)

Angeles also expressed support of the speech made by Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama at the Convention in October. He too believed the national flag was used for political scheming by appealing to the emotions of the people, as he had expressed in his speech at Monterrey; and in reality the flag was only a piece of cloth that symbolized the peoples' patriotism. Angeles further stated, "I believe that to continue at the side of President Gutiérrez is stupid...."(7) because he negotiated with carrancistas, as proven by Villarreal's documents. He regretted that Benavides should take such a course and expressed his belief that Villa was a true patriot of the people. (8)

Four days after the telegraphic conversation, Eugenio Aguirre Benavides and Miguel M. Acosta led 30,000 troops

out of San Luis Potosí. At San Felipe they encountered the villista forces under Urbina and Agustín Estrada and were severely defeated. As the battle raged at San Felipe, the Convention evacuated Mexico City and reassembled in Cuernavaca. That departure resulted from their lack of troops to advance and engage Obregón's army which was nearing the city. Their surrender of the capital to an advancing carrancists army exemplified the desire of both sides to spare the destruction of the capital, which probably resulted from the damage and destruction which occurred during the February 1913 revolt. (9)

Obregón entered and occupied the city after a swift penetration of zapatista territory. He had moved east from Veracruz, defeated the zapatistas in Puebla, and pushed straight for the capital. It was the reverse route planned by Villa for Zapata's conquering army, but the zapatistas advanced only as far as Puebla. When Obregón moved out of Veracruz, they offered stiff but brief resistance and retreated back to the mountains of the South. (10)

In the Northeast, Angeles was undaunted and less surprised by his government's loss of the capital. He had advised Villa to strike at Veracruz with the combined forces they had in Mexico City. At the same time Carranza and Obregón feared an attack by the combined forces of Villa and Zapata because they doubted if they could resist such an army. Villa listened but would not jeopardize his

agreement with Zapata, which designated that area to the southerner's army. Angeles knew he had tried to convince Villa to do the logical thing and was probably content with his efforts; but he had other orders to obey. (11)

Control of the northeastern area and prevention of carrancista penetration was Angeles' first priority. With his army at full strength, Angeles was able to capture two major cities and gain control of the railroads to the west; but with the Army of the Northeast reduced to less than half strength holding that territory was doubtful, much less advance and occupy more. With only 4,000 available troops, Angeles was expected to guard both railroads leading westward to Torreón; garrison Saltillo, Monterrey and other strategic points; and defend that area against three armies. Herrera sat poised with one army blocking the railroad north to Nuevo Laredo at Topo Chico, two miles north of Monterrey; Villarreal's army waited twelve miles east of the city, at Apodaca, on the railroad to Matamoros; and González was advancing from the southeast, taking possession of the railroad to Ciudad Victoria. (12)

On the first of February, Angeles notified Villa of the situation in the Northeast and requested reinforcements so he could strike out against the armies. Villa believed Angeles capable of holding the area and stressed his need to use any additional troops to recapture Guadalajara. He assured Angeles that Urbina would soon be assaulting

Tampico, and those attacks would draw pressure from the Monterrey area. A few days later, Villa led a 10,000 man army with artillery against Guadalajara and forced the carrancista forces out. Diéguez and Murguía withdrew their carrancista army northward to Sayula where they were again defeated by Villa's army on February 18th. In the battles of Guadalajara and Sayula, Villa used the skills of Manuel García Santibáñez and his artillery to launch coordinated attacks and bombardments of the enemy's lines. With the enemy routed at Sayula, Villa then pushed into the State of Sinaloa and at Tuxpan telegraphed Angeles of the victory.

(13)

Angeles again attempted to advise Villa on strategy by recommending that he send the main body of the army North. They could defeat Herrera, Villarreal, and González; and then help Urbina capture Tampico. He saw that the State of Chihuahua and most of Coahuila were under their control, Maytorena could offer sufficient resistance in Sonora until reinforced, and only two states in the North were left to conquer: Nuevo León and Tamaulipas. Those were the States in his area and could be easily taken with the main force of the army. With the carrancistas in Sinaloa fleeing in defeat and caught between the villistas and Maytorena, he saw no further threat in that area. Once they controlled the North, Northeast and border area, they could again push into the center of Mexico. Villa again did not see the

advantage in the strategy that Angeles proposed. (14)

Although Villa knew of Obregón's advance from Veracruz for many weeks he assumed Zapata would block it. When the carrancista advance continued, he had stationed a force at Aguascalientes to prevent Obregón's entry into the capital; but that force had been dispatched to fight Gutiérrez's men near San Luis Potosí. Although Obregón was able to occupy the capital, Villa evidently did not consider his presence an immediate threat, or at least one that took priority over the western campaign. Mexico City was the dividing line between villista and zapatista regions and when Obregón began moving his forces north and west out of the capital he entered Villa's territory. (15)

About the same time Obregón's army began its move, Villa received a message from Angeles that changed his mind about the importance of the Northeast. Angeles stated that Luis Gutiérrez and Herrera were moving from the area of Monclova toward Chihuahua with the intentions of capturing Torreón. It was Villa's most sensitive spot because he believed Torreón and his control over the State of Chihuahua necessary for his army to continue operating. That threat convinced Villa that without the control of the Northeast his supply lines were not safe. (16)

After a hasty trip to Chihuahua, Villa sent a brigade eastward into Coahuila to stop the invasion. Meanwhile, he gathered 35,000 troops and was in Monterrey by the 3rd of

March. The additional troops must have been a welcome sight for Angeles after long weeks of defensive warfare because the day after Villa's arrival he advanced eastward out of Monterrey along the Matamoros railroad. At Los Ramones, 40 miles east, he attacked and routed Luis Caballero and Villarreal's armies. While he inventoried the fruits of the battle which included cannons, artillery shells, and equipment, General Hernández crossed Coahuila and engaged the army of Gutiérrez and Herrera at Sabinas, north of Monclova. He quickly defeated them and moved north toward the border town of Piedras Negras. (17)

In Monterrey, Angeles and Villa decided on their campaign strategy. They sent two brigades southeast against González's army at Cadereyta; another brigade northward to secure the Nuevo Laredo rail line and attack Gutiérrez and Herrera; and a fourth unit eastward to complete the capture of the railroad to Matamoros. The success of those movements would give them control of all railroads out of Monterrey, give them dominance over all rail lines out of Saltillo with those controlled by Urbina to the South, and add the State of Nuevo León to their control areas. After those movements were complete, they could mount a major offensive southward to aid Urbina who was having difficulties with his advance on Tampico. On March 5, General Manuel Chao advanced to a point 25 miles east of the city but encountered strong defenses at Ebano and was

stopped. If the strategy decided on in Monterrey worked, Angeles would soon be able to lead three brigades from the northeast to strike at Tampico, making the defense forces fight on two fronts. (18)

On March 10, Obregón completely abandoned Mexico City to Zapata's troops and continued his move northward. That movement bothered Villa but he adhered to Northeast campaign plans, and within ten days victory seemed certain. Generals Maximo García and Severino Cenicerros defeated González at Cadereyta, 15 miles southeast of Monterrey, pushing him farther south; and, the same day, Angeles led an attack on Herrera's army at San Francisco de Apodaca, 12 miles east of the city. After his defeat at Sabinas, Herrera had crossed the Nuevo Laredo rail line and circled around Monterrey to strike from another direction. After the defeat by Angeles, Herrera again circled the city and was at Topo Chico two days later when Angeles again defeated his army. (19)

By March 22, Luis Gutiérrez was hiding in the mountains south of Monterrey, Villarreal had retreated to Matamoros, and Herrera sought safety to the north. The first stage of the campaign was complete. They defeated the harrassing armies that had kept Angeles' forces pinned down around Monterrey and freed their troops to extend their area of control and advance south toward Tampico. Urbina began his attacks on Ebano with a strong force of 15,000 soldiers but

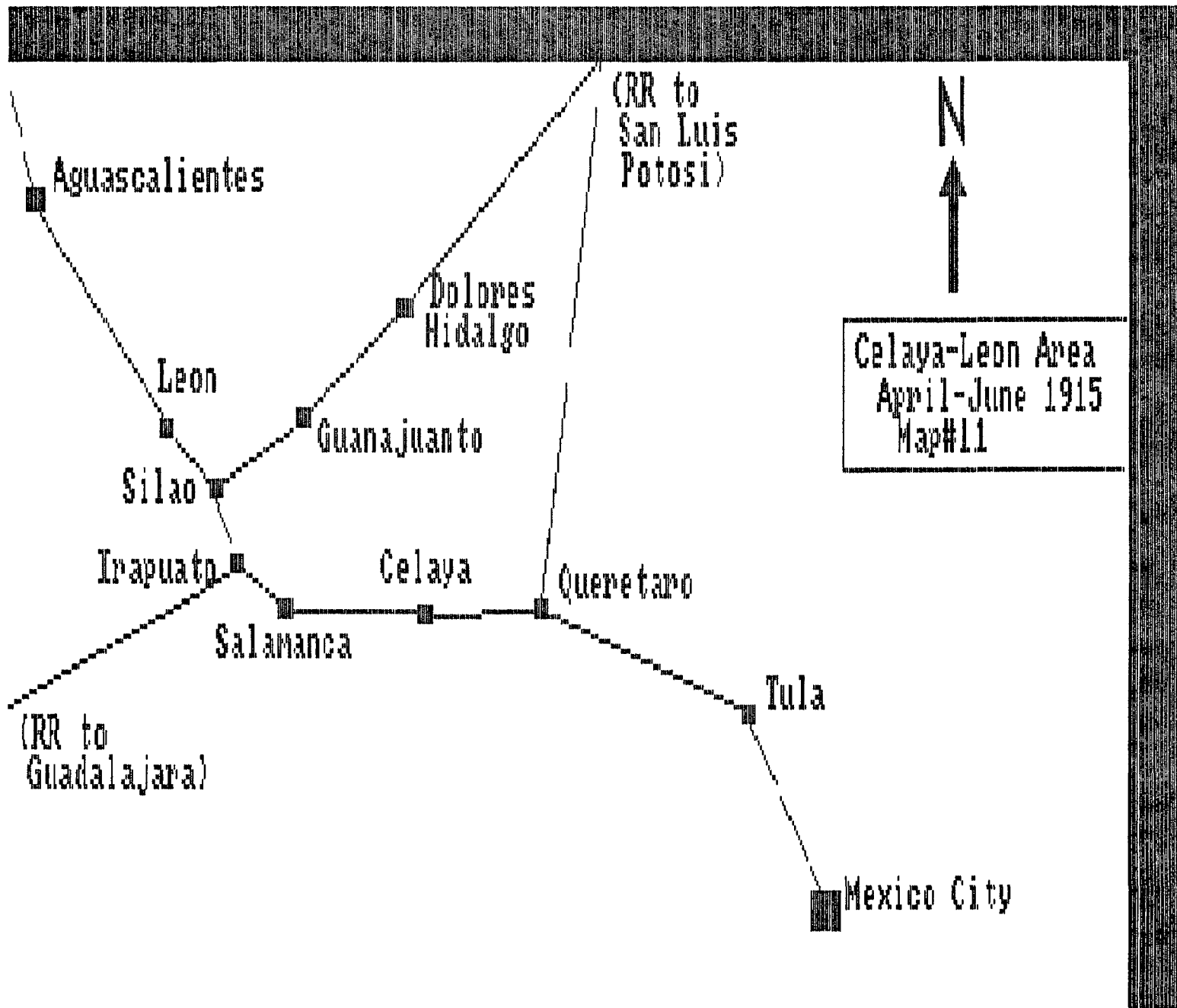
they encountered the strongest network of defenses constructed in Mexico. With González's army protecting them from the North, the carrancista defenders of Tampico were aware that only one route was left open to attack, the one eastward from San Luis Potosí. In the months since the port city was captured from the federals, they built a network of defenses in the Ebano area to hold the attacking army at a distance. The network included trenches, heavy concentrations of barbed wire, extensive use of machine guns to protect the trenches and floodlights to prevent surprise night attacks. (20)

After receiving reports that Urbina's advance was stopped at Ebano, Villa was informed that Fierro was losing all the area in the West which had been won the month before. In a three day battle at Tuxpan, the carrancistas forced the western army back into Guadalajara and then drove them out of the city on the 23rd after a terrible defeat. Added to those disappointments Villa learned that Obregón was closing on Querétaro. Although the army in the Northeast was victorious, the failure of his other two armies to take and hold their objectives made Villa feel more insecure about Obregón's movements in the center. He spread his forces too thin in a grand design to capture all the area north of Mexico City and Veracruz. In that area of approximately 600,000 square miles the carrancista forces were concentrated in the east and west coastal areas. To

accomplish his grand design of conquest, Villa had divided his Conventionist army and was losing the battles, except in the Northeast. (21)

At Monterrey, he decided it was time to assemble a fourth army in the center to stop Obregón's advance. Angeles told him not to worry about Obregon because he did not believe the carrancista army strong enough to pose a threat at that time. To support that belief, Angeles pointed out that Obregón had abandoned the capital after a short siege by the zapatistas who were not a well organized and efficient army. He believed Obregón's purpose in moving north was to draw troops away from the Northeast, thus taking pressure off González's army; and if that was true, González was vulnerable. Based on those assumptions the most logical steps were to harrass and delay Obregón while continuing their conquest of the northeastern area. (22)

Villa disagreed, believing that Obregón was capable of swiftly building his army as he moved northward; and the larger his army grew the harder it would be to defeat later. Angeles must have recalled the principle of time and space in Napoleon's elements of warfare when he assured Villa that Obregón could be defeated, regardless of which way he moved. Obregón had taken two weeks to travel from Mexico City to Querétaro, a distance of 140 miles. If he turned toward San Luis Potosí to attack Urbina's rear, it would take him two weeks to arrive there, and they could



swing down from the northeast to attack his rear. On the other hand, if Obregón continued up the center it would take him a couple of weeks to reach Aguascalientes where forces from Chihuahua could engage him. And, if he was to advance toward Guadalajara to trap Fierro's retreating forces, it would take him over two weeks and he could be isolated in that area. He urged Villa to listen to the advise and promised to lead the forces in a concentrated assault on Obregón when the time came. He ended the discussion with a plea that would later haunt Villa. Angeles said, "Don't fall into his trap, don't move south."

(23)

Villa disregarded the advice and began preparations for the move southward. He ordered General Agustín Estrada to move back from Querétaro and hold Celaya, and started the troop movement from Chihuahua and Torreón. On March 28, while Villa was sending orders for his concentration of troops, Angeles struck south out of Monterrey. The move may have been a last effort to show Villa they could quickly take control of the Northeast, allowing them time to consolidate forces against Obregón. He led his army 65 miles south and attacked the combined forces of Pablo González, Francisco Cosío Robelo, and Luis Caballero at Montemorelos. (24)

After routing the carrancista force, Angeles returned to Monterrey where an incident occurred that would affect the

war and Mexican history. The horse Angeles was riding fell on his foot and seriously damaged it. That injury prevented him from being present at Celaya where he may have been able to stop the attacks or at least take some measures to reduce the losses. When Villa telegraphed Angeles from Torreón telling him to prepare to move south, Angeles notified him of the accident and regreted that he could not directly participate. He again tried to dissuade Villa from advancing against Obregón, arguing that the units Villa had collected in the area of Irapuato were not a cohesive force. He stressed the points that there were not enough soldiers to overwhelm the carrancista army and a serious shortage of ammunition existed. Villa disagreed concerning the army he was organizing and confidently replied that his soldiers could take ammunition from the dead carrancistas on the battlefield. (25)

Villa met Angeles at the train station in Torreón and they again disagreed on the campaign. With a sad smile, Angeles urged Villa not to rush to the attack of Obregón but draw him farther north and west away from his base of operations and supply. Villa interrupted with an abrupt statement, "No, General, it will not wait for me;...", as if he believed fate dictated that he advance and attack.(26) He then added, "I go to launch many cannonades first, next I will place the infantry and after that the cavalry. What do you think?" (27)

Angeles must have seen the determination in Villa's eyes, because he grinned and replied, "There is no remedy."⁽²⁸⁾ He knew that Villa would attack as soon as possible, regardless of what he said, and believed the battle would mean the end of the Division of the North. That premonition was based on information that Obregón was constantly receiving supplies and reinforcements as he slowly advanced. Villa knew those facts and Angeles relayed it to President Roque González Garza on April 2nd. González Garza, who was in Cuernavaca, ordered General Zapata to attack Obregón's forces at Querétaro to cut his line of supply and communication with Veracruz. ⁽²⁹⁾

From Torreón, Angeles managed to supply and arrange for transportation of troops to Villa in the south. Most of his Army of the Northeast accompanied Villa to Salamanca, leaving only three brigades to hold back González's army. José Herón González, who was promoted to general after Servín's death at Ramos Arizpe, commanded an infantry brigade; and Colonels José María Jurado and Gustavo Duron González commanded Villa's artillery batteries. On April 4, Obregon captured the town of Celaya and advanced north but Villa stopped him at Salamanca and pushed his forces back to Celaya. The next day Villa began his attacks against the the trenches and barbed wire of Celaya, and for two days his army struck at the defenses but were unable to break through. With the enemy unwilling to come out and fight,

the villistas were unable to resupply their ammunition from dead carrancistas as Villa had told Angeles would happen.

(30)

The battle line extended for five miles as the villistas attempted to circle and capture Celaya. They intensively bombarded the defenses of Celaya but it was ineffective because of the poor quality of shells that were manufactured in Chihuahua. Unable to obtain better shells the artillery could not effectively cover the assaulting troops, and that lack of firepower left the infantry and cavalry exposed to rifle, machine gun and artillery fire which decimated their ranks. For two days assault followed assault until the cavalry was almost destroyed and the rest of the troops exhausted. By April 6, Villa's army was low on ammunition, energy, and the motivation to continue. At that point, a carrancista cavalry force flanked them from the South and routed the army. (31)

Pulling his main force back to Irapuato, Villa wired Angeles in Torreón to send more troops, artillery, and ammunition. After the defeat in front of Celaya, Villa questioned his reluctance to accept Angeles' advice. In those dark hours of defeat he regretted not listening to Angeles in December 1914 when he urged the destruction of Carranza and Obregón at Veracruz. He recalled his refusal to accept Angeles' suggestion to end the pursuit of Diéguez and Murguía in Jalisco and concentrate in the Northeast. He

even doubted the wisdom of rejecting Angeles' appeals to concentrate his armies instead of moving south against Obregón. It must have been a moment of truth for Francisco Villa because he had not personally experienced defeat since the failure to capture Chihuahua City in November 1913, and had come to believe himself invincible. But the reflection of past mistakes did not cause him to waver from his determination to destroy Obregón's army. (32)

On April 12, 2,500 reinforcements and more artillery arrived from Angeles in Torreón. Along with the troops and guns, he sent more ammunition and artillery shells but most of those shells were also of poor quality because he could not buy the better quality foreign shell. Meanwhile, Obregón also received supplies, ammunition and troops because Zapata had not obeyed the order of President González Garza to cut carrancista supply lines. At 8:00 p.m. on the 13th, Villa again struck at Celaya. Four batteries of artillery supported the center and flanks as they advanced across open ground. The attacks lasted for two days but with the continued use of bad shells, raw recruits and a continuing shortage of ammunition, Villa was unable to breach the defenses. (33)

After fighting continuously for eight hours on the 15th, General Cesareo Castro led 6,000 carrancista cavalry troops against Villa's left flank. The surprise attack turned the villista army and caused a general rout. Villa left

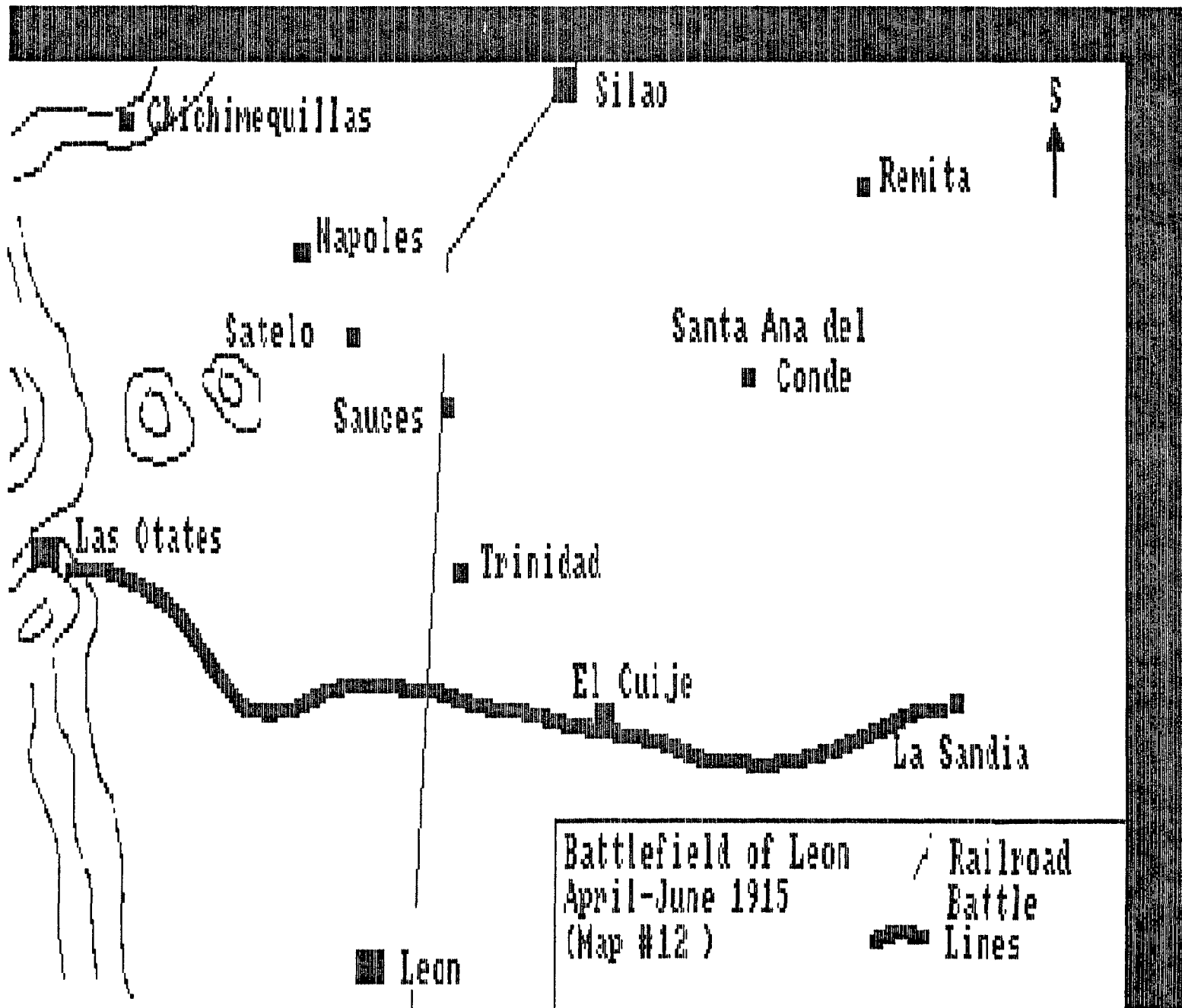
thousands of dead soldiers, 30 cannons and hundreds of prisoners at Celaya as he retreated to Irapuato. While his beaten army rushed north toward Aguascalientes, the forces left in the Northeast were victorious. General Maclovio Herrera, their most determined foe, was accidentally killed by his own men during a battle on April 17 near Nuevo Laredo. About the same time, two brigades succeeded in capturing Ciudad Victoria from Luis Caballero; but the victories were to be sacrificed for Villa's stubbornness to defeat Obregón. (34)

By April 19, Villa had 15,000 soldiers and 14 trains in Aguascalientes. He immediately telegraphed Angeles to come from Torreón with more men and artillery, and dispatched orders to draw troops from other areas. Fierro joined him with his forces from Jalisco and in a few days troops arrived from the Northeast. The shift in forces from other areas freed carrancista units to join Obregón. By April 20, Diéguez and Murguía reinforced Obregón's army with 11,000 men from Guadalajara and on the same day Angeles arrived in Aguascalientes with 2,000 reinforcements for Villa. When he saw the devastated army that had lost 6,000 men and 30 cannons, Angeles knew the needs would be great to reform for another battle. (35)

In a meeting with Villa, Angeles stated that the army was not only defeated but demoralized and fatigued. It needed a long rest to prepare for another major assault. He

drew Villa's attention to the fact that Obregón was consolidating the carrancista armies as he moved north toward Irapuato. Not only did he have Murguía and Diéguez from the west but General Benjamín Hill was arriving from Sonora, and there were more coming from the east through Tula. He suggested they begin a general withdrawal northward, destroying the railroad behind them. They could retreat into Chihuahua or Sonora and rebuild the army. While they were rebuilding, the armies under Obregón would scatter to occupy different areas. Then, with a refreshed and rebuilt army, they could defeat each of those armies with their whole force. (36)

Villa refused to consider a withdrawal, wanting to attack Obregón as soon as the army was ready. He then offered the command of the Division to Angeles but insisted that the only way to win was to assault. Angeles considered the proposition and went to reconnoiter the area where the army was positioned. He found the troops dispersed over a 99 mile area between Aguascalientes and Silao with no natural formations to aid in defense. Besides being spread thinly in the area, neither the right nor left flanks were protected against the same maneuver that had defeated Villa twice at Celaya. As he analyzed the terrain for military use, he also looked at the troops. The army was merely a collection of tired, defeated soldiers, not a campaign army. There were few artillery pieces for support or



defense and he saw great gaps in the ranks caused by the repeated charges at Celaya. The most noticeable absence was Los Dorados, Villa's cavalry escort. After forty charges against the trenches, barbed wire and machine guns at Celaya, they were only a faint shadow of their former greatness. (37)

What Angeles saw was not the Division of the North he had known, with the prancing brigades of cavalry, proud regiments of infantry, and sparkling artillery pieces. It was no longer the victorious Division of the North that had swept the great federal army from the Laguna District and stormed the hills of Zacatecas. It was a mass of men bloodied and tired from long days and nights of suicidal attacks. It was a defeated and exhausted army. (38)

He returned to Aguascalientes where he found Villa conferring with some of his generals about General Dioniso Triana. Once the conference was over, Angeles told Villa of his observations concerning the positions and defense capabilities, and refused the offer of command. Villa had refused to heed his advice in Monterrey and Torreón about the campaign, and had taken the best military organization in Mexico and flung it against an impregnable position, reducing it to what Angeles had seen that day. He was not going to take command of that mob and try to turn it into a fighting army while defending against a continuously resupplied and reinforced army. (39)

Angeles discovered that General Triana was relieved of command because he received messages from his uncle, Martín, who was serving with Obregón. Villa and some of his generals suspected Triana's loyalty and believed he may be a traitor. Based on those suspicions, Villa had Triana disarmed and placed under arrest. Angeles went to speak with Triana because he had recruited the man into his Northeast army and trusted him. Triana knew that Villa was going to execute him, even though the sentence had not been ordered, and was confused about the reasons. He appealed to Angeles' sense of honor by asking that he be allowed to die in combat rather than before a firing squad. After learning that some people blamed Triana for the defeat at Celaya by communicating with his uncle, Angeles spoke to Villa on the prisoner's behalf and believed the situation resolved without a firing squad. But while he was examining the army's positions around León, Triana was taken out and shot on orders of General Villa. (40)

On April 26, Obregón's forces advanced north past Silao, striking on the left and right, and pushing toward the towns of Satelo, Nápoles and La Sandia. He was moving out of his defensive positions and making himself vulnerable. Villa's army waited until his units were extended and then struck with fury, defeating all three points of the advance. Immediately after the victories, Angeles again made the 650 mile round trip to Torreón to collect more

reinforcements and artillery and by the 29th was back in Aguascalientes with four trains loaded with troops and guns. Upon his return, he had another conference with Villa concerning strategy. (41)

He told Villa that Obregón was following a pattern. The carrancista general was cautiously moving north with the intention of repeating the events at Celaya. He moved slowly hoping that Villa would mount a full attack. At that point he would be able to consolidate his forces in defenses and let the army beat itself to death. The technique was a delayed offense which Angeles must have recalled from the principles of warfare. He suggested that the best strategy would be to reverse the conditions and put Obregón on the offensive. If they withdrew the army from León and fortified themselves at Aguascalientes, Obregón would be forced to attack, thus weakening his army and making them susceptible to defeat. By luring Obregón to attack Aguascalientes they could move troops down from Dolores Hidalgo and attack his rear. (42)

Villa seemed to agree with the plan and told him to make sketches of the best area for defense; but when Angeles returned with the drawings and proposals for a strong defense, Villa had changed his mind. He stated his reasoning which was the main core of his philosophy and the cause of his defeat. ". . . I am a man who came into the world to attack, and if I am defeated by attacking today, I will

win by attacking tomorrow." (43) He then followed the statement with plans to attack Obregón at Silao. Seeing that Villa was determined to assault instead of drawing the enemy to him, Angeles knew he could not convince Villa otherwise so went to León to make preparations. (44)

In the weeks that followed, Angeles rearranged the battle line and prepared for what he believed would be the final defeat of the army. He pulled the infantry back into a long irrigation ditch that ran west from the Las Otates hills, across the railroad tracks connecting Silao with Leon, and past the village of El Cúije. The hills served as both protection for their left flank and an advantageous artillery position. Angeles placed his guns on the slopes of the hills and below them on the road to effectively cover the attacks. (45)

Angeles foresaw the possibility that Villa's planned flank attack could force the carrancistas to launch a desperate attack on his line of defense. With no reserves to reinforce the line, he realized that such an attack concentrated on any one part could collapse the entire line and cause disaster. With that possibility in mind, Angeles arranged for trains to be stationed where the infantry could quickly board and escape northward. While he was taking precautions against the slaughter of his soldiers, Villa prepared to lead another great cavalry assault. (46)

While Villa was planning his cavalry charge, he lost

control of the last stronghold in the Northeast. By May 21st, General Raúl Madero abandoned Monterrey and pulled his troops back to Torreón, leaving the Northeast to the carrancistas. Meanwhile, the Convention delegates in Cuernavaca squabbled over regional differences, and by the 22nd were divided into groups of northerners supporting Villa and southerners supporting Zapata. Thus, the government that the soldiers were dying for was splitting into factions and unable to agree on the exact direction of the war. (47)

On May 22, as the Convention delegates bickered, Angeles and Villa led attacks against Obregón's army. The carrancistas had slowly moved forward until the vanguard was near the town of Trinidad, only eight miles from León. While Villa maneuvered his cavalry into position on Obregón's flank, Angeles ordered his troops out of the trenches for an assault on Trinidad. The infantry attack was launched with the support of artillery to divert the enemy's attention and draw his forces toward the front, while Villa hit from the flank. After sixteen hours of attacking, pulling back and attacking again, Angeles received a message that Villa had captured Silao. (48)

The capture of Silao forced Obregón to withdraw but proved an expensive prize that could not be held, and Obregon soon reoccupied it. Angeles knew they could not continue to sacrifice so many soldiers on the line for a

shallow victory, but he was helpless in the face of Villa's rigid determination to be victorious over his arch enemy, Álvaro Obregón. A week later they made another coordinated attack with the same objective. Villa led his cavalry around the Las Otates hills and came out near the town of Chichimequillas. Angeles led his infantry from the trenches in a frontal assault on Trinidad as Villa's cavalry charged at Silao. Obregón's troops were routed in the furious assault and withdrew southward. It appeared to be a victory, but Obregón turned it around. (49)

Instead of continuing to flee from Villa and Angeles' troops, the carrancistas went directly to defensive positions they had prepared since the last attack. The positions on La Loza and Colorada slopes were cut with trenches, and the approaches were covered by machine guns placed every 10 to 20 feet. Repeated attacks on the fortified trenches by Villa and Angeles' soldiers could not overwhelm the enemy, and the troops were cut down by the concentrated machine gun fire and forced to retreat back to their trenches near León. As Villa led his bloodied cavalry away from the defenses, the words of Angeles must have echoed in his ears: "Obregón is coming here to entrench himself and make us take the offensive, as he did at Celaya." (50) But Angeles could not have been pleased to be right because, in one day of fighting, they lost 800 dead and 2,200 wounded in a futile battle. Although Villa may

have reflected on Angeles' advice as he had before, it did not stop his fanatic determination to continue his attacks.

(51)

On June 1, Villa again led a cavalry assault southward which cost his army the loss of 1,500 men. By the next day the carrancistas had moved farther north returning to the area of Trinidad, and Villa again struck with his cavalry; but that time in the rear of Obregón's army. While he was maneuvering in Obregón's rear; Angeles attacked with 35,000 men and surrounded the enemy. Seeing a weakness in the southwest, Angeles urged Villa to send a force to attack Santa Ana del Conde that would cut the approach of more of Obregón's forces, but Villa would not listen. Obregón had accomplished his objective: he was again surrounded, as he had been at Celaya, and Villa was desperately assaulting his positions. Then he used the same tactic that had twice been successful at Celaya. He launched a flank attack at an unexpected time against an exhausted army. The killing blow came on the right flank where Angeles had urged a movement to strengthen that side and completely routed Villa's army.

(52)

On June 6, 1915, the Division of the North was completely defeated. Fleeing northward to Aguascalientes, it left behind all the trains and artillery, thousands of dead and wounded, and the greatness of the Division and Villa. Three days after the terrible defeat at Trinidad,

the Convention replaced President Roque González Garza and arranged a truce with Carranza. The disintegration of Villa's army continued as it fled north, and two men who had joined their talents with Mexico's greatest army parted. Villa fought on as a leader of guerrillas, outmaneuvered the United States Army in 1916, and was still resisting Carranza's government when he again joined with Felipe Angeles in 1918. (53)

Angeles went to Boston and New York within three weeks after the defeat at Leon, not as a defeated general but as Villa's representative. He assisted in an attempt to form a coalition government in Mexico; but when those efforts failed in October 1915 and the United States recognized Carranza's government, he settled in Texas with his family. By early 1916 he established a vineyard near the Mexican border but that enterprise soon failed. Resisting defeat in civilian pursuits as he had in military enterprises, Angeles entered the dairy business in the same vicinity, but it also failed. Following those failures in business ventures Angeles turned his attention to the conditions in Mexico. (54)

In 1917 Angeles joined with fellow political exiles to establish the Mexican Liberal Alliance in New York City to consolidate various factions opposing to President Carranza and the new Constitution of 1917. Among his associates in the organization were General Antonio I. Villarreal who had

been Angeles' adversary a couple of years before; Miguel Díaz Lombardo who had served as Villa's agent in the United States; José María Maytorena who was forced to flee from Sonora after Carranza's victory; and Federico González Garza. Under the banner of the Alliance and as its Provisional President, Angeles crossed the border in December 1918 to start a new revolution. He joined Francisco Villa and his forces in Chihuahua where they proclaimed a plan for the establishment of a new government and began military operations. (55)

In June 1919 Villa commanded the army in an assault on Ciudad Juárez but the victory was interrupted and frustrated. United States military forces charged across the border from El Paso, attacked Villa's army, and routed the revolutionary forces. Angeles retreated southward with his staff and was captured by Mexican federal forces on November 15 near Parral. From there he was taken to Chihuahua City where he was tried in the Theater of Heroes for rebellion against the government. After two days of damaging testimony, eloquent speeches, and futile appeals Angeles was sentenced to death. On the morning of November 26, 1919, Felipe Angeles was escorted from his cell and taken to a military barracks where he was shot to death by a firing squad. (56)

Villa continued to fight until the summer of 1920 when he retired to a ranch in the State of Durango. He met his

end in a hail of bullets in Parral, Chihuahua in 1923 when he was ambushed, or again flanked, by men who were determined to prevent him from participating in another revolution. (57)

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER VI

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CONCLUSION

History will not say a single word concerning me, because I do not deserve it; I am insignificant dust which the wind will sweep away tomorrow.....

Contrary to the above quote from a speech made by Felipe Angeles at Parral, Chihuahua on April 22, 1919, he was a significant part of history. Angeles was not merely a participant in the Mexican Revolution but a universally unique person with superior abilities.

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 unleashed the greatest force in Mexican history, the cumulative anger of the people. After years of repression and governmental domination that anger contained destructive powers beyond the comprehension of the leaders of that movement. To justify armed insurrection against the federal government, the leaders convinced the people that the noble purposes of the Revolution merited extreme measures which involved violent behavior. Once social constraints were removed and violence condoned to obtain improvements, reinstatement of those restraints became progressively impossible.

Once it was realized that violence produced swift change, it became acceptable behavior. Those violent times created an impulsive atmosphere ruled by unstable emotional action and allowed the release of old grudges and hatreds.

Within that storm of hatred and disorder was one element that acted as a stabilizing force. That counterbalance was a small number of intellectuals distributed throughout the various factions. Unlike the majority of people participating in the Revolution, those men attempted to counteract the emotional and illogical decisions and intentions of leaders with the use of reason. Men such as Luis Cabrera, Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, Miguel Díaz Lombardo, José Vasconcelos, and Federico González Garza were among that small elite group who continued in their attempts to direct the movement away from impulsive behavior toward more logical and reasonable planning. Among that group of intellectuals was Felipe Angeles.

By the time Felipe Angeles became an active and decisive participant in January 1912 the sequence of emotionally chaotic events were already in motion. He immediately became a strong supporter of President Francisco I. Madero who had led the Revolution, and like Madero believed in less than revolutionary adoption of reforms. Madero's policies coincided with Angeles' belief in moderation and the stabilizing effect of institutions on an uneducated society. When the treacherous acts of Huerta were revealed in the victory of the Barracks Revolt in February 1913, Angeles suffered imprisonment for adherence to his principles. That willingness to endure severe consequences while stubbornly adhering to principles was one of his

character traits that contradicted his profession as a soldier.

Once he became a victim of the continuing swell of popular violence and was exiled, Angeles realized he could not effectively help reestablish a moderate and legitimate government in his country while in France. Although he did not personally subscribe to the idea of revolution because of its unstable and unpredictable nature, Angeles accepted the distasteful necessity to use violence against violence to restore peaceful stability. The stability he desired was not the kind administered by President Porfirio Díaz through force, but he hoped the stability would foster a democratic process through which Mexico could progress and realize social equality.

He joined the Constitutionalist forces in Sonora as a commissioned military advisor to assist in the improvement of military operations against Huerta. That position was possible because of his long military career with the federal army, extensive education in the art of military warfare, and the respected position he held as Director of the Military College at Chapultepec. Although he worked for the revolution, Angeles refused to be incorporated into the revolutionary forces because he detested the practice of labeling people.

Angeles believed that labels restricted a person's abilities by focusing on a single aspect of that person,

and rejected being narrowly identified and labeled even to his death in 1919. In various periods of his life Angeles was labeled a soldier, teacher, mathematician, artilleryman, and revolutionary. His dislike for those labels resulted from people's inclination to assume each was the only skill he possessed, and Angeles was much more. He was not only a soldier but an administrator, teacher, scientist, technician, mathematician, artilleryman, organizer, diplomat, strategist, tactician, advisor, leader, humanitarian, and intellectual.

Among the labels that Angeles rejected the most incorrect was that of "Revolutionary" because he never subscribed to revolutionary philosophy. He saw a distinct difference between assisting in the attainment of the goals espoused by the movement and believing in revolution as a form of social change. The purpose of the revolution of 1913 was declared to be the reestablishment of a moderate and legitimate form of government not the creation of a new type of control structure. Thus, he did not view the revolution as a magnificent and noble movement above the ultimate purpose for its existence, nor did he believe that a man's patriotism had to be based on strict and emotional adherence to the revolutionary movement.

When he joined the revolutionary force in Sonora, Angeles quickly learned that many of the revolutionary leaders had limited, subjective views of the purpose of the

revolution. That attitude resulted from most of the major leaders being regional caudillos (strong men) whose vision was limited to matters affecting their personal power and the area they controlled. The two persons Angeles mainly dealt with during the Revolution were both regional leaders with provincial viewpoints.

Carranza was not a national leader but a regional caudillo from Coahuila. When forced out of his native State in 1913, he elected to go to Sonora where he acted like an insecure caudillo compelled to appease the persons in power because he had entered the area of another caudillo. When he named Angeles Minister of War, Carranza committed a transgression against the local power structure headed by Álvaro Obregón and Ignacio Pesqueira. He demoted Angeles to a position that would not threaten the local power base and assure his continuing support by those men until he could return to Coahuila.

Francisco Villa was as much a local strong man as Carranza except he administered his power differently. While Carranza wielded his power through political favors and compromises, Villa managed his through the force of personality. The two main ingredients of that force were fear and hero worship. The element of fear used to maintain control came from his background as a bandit which necessitated the intimidation of people and preservation of a rugged and harsh image. He encouraged hero worship

through daring deeds and statements of reckless disregard for his own safety. The admiration gained Villa a faithful following and satisfied his enormous desire for praise; but it was the hero worship that eventually destroyed him because he began to believe in his own invincibility.

Angeles was not a caudillo who maintained power over any certain area. Instead, he possessed a strictly personal power which was based on his reputation and skills of logical reasoning. Because he could not offer political favors or the patronage of a host of loyal followers, Angeles was literally unarmed in a power conflict. When he joined the Division of the North on temporary assignment to escape the continuing power struggles in Sonora, he did not escape the problems of dealing with a regional caudillo. Among his various duties in the Division was the continuing effort to control Villa's emotional outbursts and irrational decisions. Even though no one could dictate to Villa, Angeles could often give direction to his energy and ambitions. That direction was often successful and usually correct, and at least Villa considered Angeles' blunt and honest advice concerning alternative courses of action and their consequences.

From the time Angeles began his association with the Division of the North there were reciprocal influences. His contributions to the organization and operation of the Division were greatly responsible for subsequent victories

and the increase of its fame. Meanwhile, Angeles discovered a large element in the Division that agreed with his high regard for the late President Madero and enjoyed the absence of malicious denunciations he experienced in Sonora. The absence of that disruptive atmosphere was due to the lack of competition for Villa's power base, not the perfection of Villa. Serving with people who agreed with his aspirations for the revolution and men who had faith in his military judgment created a bond between Angeles and the Division.

When the confrontation between Villa and Carranza occurred in June 1914, Angeles saw the existence, strength, and independence of the Division as a necessity for the defeat of Huerta and success of the revolution. The Division was the federal army's most powerful and formidable foe, and that strength resulted from the independence of movement and lack of manipulation by Carranza. If the Division yielded to that influence and subsequently lost the independence, its strength would be radically decreased, thus increasing the enemy's strength.

After examining the alternatives, Angeles concluded that the act of disobedience was necessary for the good of the country and to hasten the end of the revolution. He realized the consequences of that act and suffered the effects but still believed he made the right choice. After the tremendous victory at Zacatecas and Villa broke

relations with Carranza circumstances drastically changed. Villa became Commander of the Conventionist Army and rejected Angeles' advice, although he continued in his attempts to direct Villa on the correct course through reasonable argument, and often did so with uncharacteristic bluntness.

Although Angeles admired Villa for his resolve and dedication, he knew Villa was not qualified to command a military unit as large and intricate as the Division of the North. Villa detested the petty details of organization and planning, preferring to personally lead soldiers in the attack and leave the details to others. Along with his dislike for details, Villa also possessed many traits of an incompetent general. He often operated on extreme impulsiveness, was superstitious, required or expected complete submission to his orders and wishes, presented an authoritarian image of toughness and power, and had a tendency to blame others for his mistakes or failings; but those were not the ultimate cause of his failure as a general.

Villa kept qualified men at his side to counterbalance those failings but no one could counter the results of hero worship. People believed Villa to be invincible and they had a tendency to tolerate a lot from such a man. That tolerance was transformed into blind obedience of an invincible hero which blunted their ability to reason for

themselves, and that transformation created the disasters at Celaya and León. Because the men blindly believed Villa unbeatable and that he would lead them to victory, they threw themselves against the enemy in suicidal attacks which destroyed the Division of the North.

While Villa continued to act impulsively and seemingly without direction from December 1914 to March 1915, Angeles did not stop in his attempts to force him to see the strategical situation. Villa sketched out a grandiose plan to conquer the country for the Conventionist government and failed to make needed changes to those plans as the situation changed. It appeared that he chose an objective and would not waver in his attempt to capture it. That was true with the cities of Guadalajara, Tampico, and Celaya. Angeles recognized that inflexibility at the train station at Torreón and surrendered to Villa's stubbornness, although he knew what the results were going to be.

Angeles was himself far from being a perfect man, in fact he was a contradiction. He was a general who had the ability to formulate battle plans that were both simple and magnificent. He could analyze a situation, examine terrain, determine lines of positions and advance, and arrange the army in such a manner to assure complete victory. Yet, he detested the killing involved in the battles. That contrast in his abilities and thoughts exemplified the contradiction of his being a military intellectual. A soldier cannot

afford to philosophize about war because if he questions the nature of battle, he will question his duty. If a soldier considers the enemy a human being rather than a thing to kill, he doubts his right to kill. Angeles experienced that internal conflict because as a professional soldier his duty was to defeat or destroy the enemy, yet he questioned not only the death of soldiers but the entire basis of the war.

Angeles was absent when the Division of the North was destroyed at Celaya in April 1915, but when he viewed the results near Aguascalientes and discovered that Villa was still determined to attack, he knew it was over. By the time Angeles left Mexico in June 1915, he was not only tired of the useless bloodshed but was also losing his hope for democracy in his country. At his trial in Chihuahua City in November 1919, General Angeles was deprived of the justice which he had fought long to preserve in Mexico. He lived by a high set of principles and adhered to his beliefs as few other men could, and died with the dignity and purity of soul that he aspired to maintain through the worst of times in Mexican history.

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