

Nicaragua and American Intervention

By J. M. MONCADA

Leader of the Liberal Army

SINCE coming to the United States I have been many times asked to explain what is our point of view in Nicaragua toward the presence of your American marines. In most cases the question has been accompanied by others concerning the general situation in Nicaragua both before and since my meeting with General Stimson.

Generally, I am asked, are we Liberals in Nicaragua in favor of having the United States supervise the election of 1928? Specifically, I am asked if at the time of my conference with Colonel Stimson, when the civil war was at its height, if I had won, could I have brought peace and prosperity to Nicaragua without the help of the United States? Could any Nicaraguan?

To answer such questions fully requires a brief review of the entire Nicaraguan situation.

Let me say this, as a preliminary:

We Liberals want the United States marines in Nicaragua. We believe that the marine officers such as now command our constabulary can best supervise the free elections necessary to put a representative Government in office. Further, we believe that the United States owes it to Nicaragua to keep her marines there until such elections have taken place. It is her duty and obligation.

NAPOLEON III used to say that Nicaragua occupies a position similar to that of Constantinople. Though poor in the number of its inhabitants—800,000—Nicaragua is rich in natural resources, in the variety of its soils and climates, and its splendid position. Both the Atlantic and the Pacific wash its shores. The facilities it offers for a canal route through its territory have been well known since the time of the Conquest.

For these reasons Nicaragua has always been coveted by certain powerful nations, and the United States has stood guard against the colonizing aspirations of the Old World, making clear its specific guardianship, first, in the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty—signed in 1850 by England and the United States—wherein are defined the obligations of each contract-

EVENTS leading up to the present intervention in Nicaragua are not perhaps known to Americans generally. On page 459 we recount those events briefly and state the criticising of our Government which they occasioned. General Moncada, the author of this article, is, by virtue of his long experience as a Nicaraguan patriot—having fought against Liberal as well as Conservative tyranny—in a position to know the facts.

ing party with respect to the Nicaragua Canal or any other canal which might be opened through the isthmus of Central America; and, second, in the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, which broadened the rights of the North American Republic, clearing her way toward the construction of the Canal and the guardianship of the Caribbean. By building the Panama Canal the United States averted the danger of having one of Europe's feet planted on the New World.

For Nicaraguans two questions present themselves: Is it to the best interests of Central America that the United States or one of the powerful nations of Europe shall contribute to its development and progress? Is it to the best interests of Central Americans to receive a monarchical education, as they did when Spain ruled them as colonies, or a republican education, such as the United States can give them?

The answer is obvious. Liberty flows in republican soil. The Monroe Doctrine guarantees the existence of American nations, whether English-speaking or Spanish-speaking.

Some would maintain that Cuba, for example, is not a truly independent republic, because of the influence exercised by the United States. But did Cuba elect its Chief Executive under Spain? Did she elect her Congress or have her own Supreme Court? And as to Nicaragua, we should never have recovered from England the Mosquito Coast, so precious to our sovereignty, without the aid of the United States.

Geographical causes, reinforced by duties and rights that cannot be repu-

diated, have made the United States and its sister republics in the south a single body. In the near future these nations of the New World will be governed by an international law distinct from that which operates between Europe and America—or, better still, a different law from the old one, which modern science, in disregard of frontiers, is rendering obsolete.

NICARAGUA can progress only through labor, industry, and commerce, through education, roads, and railroads. She must link her two coasts and draw nearer to the Atlantic, to the civilizations of Europe and the United States. She must live in peace and learn to govern herself under republican institutions. Continuous strife impoverishes her, dishonors her.

It would be indeed worthy of the world's praise if Nicaragua could do all that unaided; but she is more than a hundred years old as an independent nation, and a true republic is yet to flower on her soil. Whether Conservatives or Liberals have been in power, there have been no fair or free elections for one hundred years, except during the period of Carazo and Dionisio de Herrera, which are memorable to all Nicaraguans. The party in power always has perpetuated itself. A terrible state of anarchy reigned from 1821, the year of independence, to 1857. From 1857 to 1893 there was a measure of peace. But in 1893, when the Government fell into the hands of José Santos Zelaya, there was again continuous guerrilla warfare. In fact, during his tyrannical régime of seventeen years the Chamorro family warred on him continuously. And when Zelaya was forced out of Managua by the celebrated Knox note, the victors fought among themselves for the spoils, and a still bloodier civil war ensued.

Then American marines landed in Nicaragua to guarantee foreign interests. The marines maintained peace without interfering with the internal politics of the country. But meanwhile, as the Government in office habitually controls the result of elections unless a revolution intervenes, the existing Conservative

Government was continued in power. There was no genuine progress possible toward a really republican government. For this reason commissions of the Liberal Party went to Washington to enlist the moral support of the United States in favor of electoral liberty for Nicaragua. As a result, the Dodds Law came into being and served us during the elections of Solorzano and Sacasa. In general, this law was and is good; but the best law in the world is futile when those intrusted with its enforcement are the first to violate it.

To President Martinez, President Diego Manuel Chamorro's immediate successor, the Department of State proposed the supervision of the election by American marines. This was excellent. Upon the inauguration of the President, however, elected in 1924, the marines were withdrawn. Solorzano, the new President, was a weak man devoid of ability and at bottom a Conservative. He distrusted Liberalism, and therefore kept war materials away from the Liberals. Such war materials, however, being in the hands of the followers of Emiliano Chamorro, who in 1925 was plotting to overthrow the administration of President Solorzano, Chamorro was able to use violence and enter the fortress of Tiscapa. There followed the persecution of Vice-President Sacasa, violence at Leon, export of cattle to Guatemala, Salvador, and Costa Rica—the cattle having been taken as a tax from the *haciendas* of liberals. All these things were done under the responsibility of Chamorro and of Lieutenant Humberto Pasos Diaz, nephew of the present President. Finally, President Solorzano was forced to resign. Chamorro assumed power and the duly elected judges were driven from the Supreme Court, and thus the judicial power as well as legislative and executive power was destroyed, and the bloody road was opened once more to civil war.

Civil war did result. During that painful period all forces, even natural forces, seemed arrayed against Nicaraguan liberalism.

We fell and we rose on the march through the wild hills, clutching at trees and bushes to keep our footing, thrown down precipices into infected marshes, into rivers, with our horses and equipment. We arrived at Teustepe, and then at Tipitapa. Here we found the personal representative of President Coolidge, General Stimson, bearing peace proposals, asking for a cessation of the war.

His words were simple, but solemn and decisive:

In the name of the United States I exhort you that this war may cease and not another drop of blood be spilt in Nicaragua; on its part, the Washington Government accepts President



General Moncada

Diaz's proposal for the supervision of the election of the chief authorities in 1928, which shall be free and fair, so that all Nicaraguan citizens may express their will at the polls. My Government considers that the very honor of the United States is involved in this. In recognizing Diaz my Government has acted in good faith, under a sincere interpretation of the laws of Nicaragua, and wishes the present Chief Executive to continue in the discharge of his functions while the electoral law is reformed and a true non-partisan national guard is created. With that guard and the marines a free and just election will be carried out."

The meaning of these words stirred me profoundly. I answered:

I am here as a simple soldier, and it is my duty to consult with the other chiefs of the army and with the delegates of Dr. Sacasa, who are also in Tipitapa. I ask of you a period of eight days to give an answer. During that time I will return to the army to do what I can to convince it, or to return to war if its opinion should be contrary to mine.

In these conversations the delegates of Dr. Sacasa and MM. Arguello Espinosa and Cordero Reyes intervened. They protested, saying immediately that they

had left to myself and the army the whole responsibility of the problem. I accepted it.

I held in the highest esteem this valiant and self-sacrificing army, always generous and well disciplined although lacking wages and food. I meditated profoundly; and when I spoke at Boaco to the assembled generals and to the army itself, which formed in the plaza, I did what was possible to convince them that it was necessary to yield, to have confidence in the word of the personal representative of President Coolidge, which was equivalent to the word of the American Government itself and would be backed by the American people as something pertaining to the National honor. I also told them that, in spite of this sincere opinion, I was ready to accompany them if the majority should resolve to resist. They all approved of my position. With the signatures of all the generals, the resolution was transmitted to General Stimson, who saluted the army when it disarmed at Tipitapa and wrote the promise that every one knows in the United States.

I HAVE been asked since if at the time of my conference with General Stimson could I, if I had won, have brought peace and prosperity to Nicaragua without the help of the United States?

Could any Nicaraguan?

Actually, it is not possible for me to answer that question. Having been victorious in the field of battle—and I think I had already defeated the forces of President Diaz—it would have been my duty as a loyal soldier to place the army at the disposal of the citizen recognized by us Liberals as the legitimate President. It would be his duty to take over the task of restoring constitutional order, the other laws of the land, and of establishing the peace.

I am perfectly convinced, however, that Sacasa or any other statesman will always need the help of the United States to establish a good Government. When General Stimson told me at Tipitapa that the President of the United States was willing to assist in the supervision of our election in 1928, I felt, and still feel, that this would open to Nicaragua the only way by which such good Government and a lasting peace could be established. I told General Stimson frankly that peace had so far only been attained through tyranny in Nicaragua. Tyranny brings with it no good and depraves the public conscience. To gain power over the dead bodies of our fellow-

citizens is only worthy of men who are superfluous in modern civilization.

Certainly, Nicaraguan Liberals everywhere have approved unanimously the arrangements of Tipitapa and are grateful for the efforts of General Stimson toward peace. At first there was surprise and hesitation; but sober thought brought faith in the promises of the personal representative of President Coolidge, considering that they involve the honor of the whole Nation founded by George Washington.

We prefer officers of the American Navy to supervise the Nicaraguan elections, because they are educated in the tenets of honor and probity. They are more representative of their country than civilians would be. Through more than a year's contact with them I have found them to yield to none in discipline and respect for public liberties and in the discharge of their duty.

By the present law, called the Dodds Law, there are five hundred and thirty electoral polling-places, of which more than half are in the rural districts, where their supervision is difficult.

The worth of the election in Nicaragua depends now on the manner in which the arrangements of Tipitapa are carried out. If they are carried out honestly, as I believe they will be, due to President Coolidge's word, the elections will be made with entire equity.

In general, Nicaragua stands in need of republican education. This end can be achieved in a period of twelve or more years under the supervision of the American Government. The passing of every four-year period will see this need diminished, for the National Guard will be organized under the direction of American officers and trained to respect the law and the national institutions; the National Congress will be composed of better men, because they will have been freely elected by the people; the judicial power will be composed of honorable magistrates, austere and patriotic in their actions. We want the independence and sovereignty of our country, and the more we want it, the better government we will build, granted we may live under the ægis of peace and labor. The watchful eye of the United States can be no better employed than in this noble cause. The very Monroe Doctrine compels the United States in that direction, for that Doctrine postulates for the New World the fullest realization of republicanism and democracy. Because we have had no peace, because our national income diminishes or is used up

by war, and the fields lie uncultivated, our great duty is to do away with war. Any sacrifice is small to achieve this objective.

The voice of peace that sounded in our ears was so tremendous that it was impossible not to yield. It is to the good



General Stimson

and the just that I believe the Washington Government this time, in the case of Nicaragua, is laboring. It was unjust, no doubt, to stop us on the road to victory; but peace is as great as victory, and liberty is as great as peace.

Our country needs a profound peace. If bad government continues to prevail in Nicaragua, if Liberals and Conservatives persist in warring for power, obeying personal ambitions, no nation will be found to extend a friendly hand to us or to treat with us.

Capital is a great necessity in Nicaragua for the development of the country's progress. We have neither railroads nor highways. We are out of communication with the civilized world. The construction of the railway to the Atlantic coast is very urgent, to bring us nearer to the United States and to Europe. We need more American capital, and it is our first duty to seek it here, for we are obliged to do it by the close relationship that binds together the countries of America for their mutual defense.

The interest of the United States in the affairs of the Caribbean Sea is a vital interest. If it renounce the vigilance of that sea and its bordering countries, it places its very life in jeopardy, or at least exposes itself to terrible responsibilities and wars. This interest of

the United States is equally beneficial to our countries, for they are thus defended from all aggression of Powers foreign to the continent. In this all the countries of America share a common interest and a common destiny.

OPINION, I am told, is divided in the United States as to the policy that has been followed by the Department of State. We Nicaraguans think that we have acquired an explicit right, and that the United States has bound itself to an explicit duty. We Liberals fought to place our country once more under the full authority of the Constitution. In exchange for peace and free elections, we Constitutionals agreed to disarm, and we who signed the agreement have lived up to our duty. If a few armed bands remain active in the north of Nicaragua, that is a natural consequence of our civil wars. After these promises, it must be established in full justice that if the Monroe Doctrine is to be abrogated, that must not be done before the United States has discharged its duty as to the 1928 elections in Nicaragua, which should be rendered impartial by its influence. Let every Nicaraguan citizen, without distinction of color or political creed, vote freely, and let power pass into the hands of the representatives of a true national majority. When it comes, that day will witness the birth of true democracy in Nicaragua, the first day of genuine republican life—an occasion of rejoicing for all sincere patriots.

Those that accuse the State Department of supporting President Diaz in obedience to the pressure of bankers and for mean reasons of internal and foreign policies fail in logic when they attack the agreements of Tipitapa and the supervision of the next election by the marines. They know that, upon the premature withdrawal of the marines, power would remain with Diaz or Chamorro, and Constitutionals would lose all hope of liberty and democracy. This would be a tremendous injustice.

There is talk to the effect that a move will be made at the next Pan-American Congress against interference by the United States in the affairs of Nicaragua and other Caribbean countries. If it is accepted by the Washington Government, we Nicaraguans will demand that it be put into effect after January, 1929—that is, after North American mediation has effected an entirely fair election in Nicaragua. I may add that my opinion on the Monroe Doctrine and the

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The Disappearing Cowboy

By DUNCAN AIKMAN

THE first frosty morning of the fall I loitered by the stove in a crossroads service station in the New Mexico highlands which, for the convenience of tourists and neighboring ranchers, also was attempting to function as quick-lunch counter, soft-drink stand, staple-groceries market, and elementary dry-goods emporium. Outside a burly Mexican mechanic tinkered gingerly with some spark-plug trouble. Inside a flamboyantly Nordic youth of eighteen summers moved with leisurely importance about his duties as head waiter, hot dog chef, lingerie connoisseur, and proprietor's deputy.

With his corn-colored hair, brick-red sunburn, and spread-eagle freckles crowning a flannel shirt of gorgeous plaid and a flapping waistcoat drab from harsh service, he might appropriately have stepped out of a Frederick Remington canvas intoning,

Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie.

His smallish blue eyes had the far-away fixation of the ranges, his expression was so set in the cow country's severe whimsicality that one instinctively awaited from him some outburst of humorous philosophy. His drawl, when he took my order for coffee, was the perfection of hesitant, country-bred politeness. His khaki pants and store Oxfords were slight anachronisms, but an impressive Stetson hanging from a nail on the refrigerator made partial atonement.

So as a few acquaintances of his own age in equally impressive Stetsons dropped in on various errands it was quite in the picture that he should greet each one with—

"Howdy, cowboy. What'll you have?"

Then almost instantly the film clicked and the actors stepped out of character. Instead of spurs and riatas, the young gentlemen would have "cokes," chocolate milk-shakes, store cigarettes, phonograph records, a spare Ford part or two, or breakfast foods and bakery pies for mother's ranch pantry. One would have nothing at all, but abstracted from the magazine rack a fly-specked copy of "True Confessions" and pored over it with a cow country imitation of a scholar's stoop. Another whistled dolefully, but the tune was about a "red-red-robin" instead of a "lone prairie."

They fell into gossip as the store re-

verted to its social functions; but not the gossip of cow prices, round-up vicissitudes, or the meanness of their respective broncs. They deplored the unreasonable credit requirements in the region's second-hand Ford markets. They discussed dating arrangements for a coming dance at the county woman's club. They debated how long the crabbedness of the new commercial course teacher in the county seat high school, twelve miles away, should be endured.

They broke up at last—one to climb into his bakery truck and continue his deliveries, five to drive off home in motor coupés and on motorcycles, and one to mount his cayuse.

"So long, cowboy," said the proprietor's corn-haired deputy seven times.

Later, when I had paid the mechanic for his experiments and was releasing the brake, the corn-haired boy signaled me from the doorway.

"Say, mister," he questioned, "you from El Paso?"

I did not deny it.

"'Cause if you are, do you know of any store jobs a feller could git down there? I've had lots-a experience."

I advised him somewhat vaguely to write to the Chamber of Commerce.

"Thanks, cowboy," he grinned, expansively. "So long!"

Half the day I motored over range country sweet with drying grass and frosty odors, but sadly cowless. In mid-afternoon I encountered a veteran ranch friend mending a fence at a far corner of his 50,000 acres, and told him of my morning's entertainment.

"Yep," he commented, sententiously. "The word cowboy around here is getting pretty close to a figure of speech."

THIS accurately describes the situation for three reasons:

Few, if any, cowboys are doing their work under the social conditions which made the old-time cowboy a figure of piquant, often picaresque, individuality.

Fewer still are doing their work by old-fashioned methods which gave the color of daring and romance to the traditions of the job and to many of its most routine operations.

Finally, comparatively few young men of the old cattleman stock in the West are content to do cowboy's work at all.

The old-time cowboy, for instance,

plunged off, usually as a well-grown adolescent or a mature man, into a wilderness that was also a man's world. Or, if he happened to be born a rancher's son fifty years ago, he grew up in such a world, shut away from all other sophistications and traditions, often barely literate.

Three or four, at most half a dozen, times a year he saw some straggling cow country trading post with its general store, post office, and three saloons. Once a year, at the end of the trail drives, he saw this magnificence magnified a hundred times in some shipping point of gaudy delights like Abilene, Kansas, or pre-Rotarian Fort Worth.

For women he saw the rancher's overworked wife, if the rancher had a wife; more rarely, the rancher's grown-up daughters or visiting feminine relatives; perhaps a district school-teacher or two; and such women as there might be in one or two respectable cow town families. More casually and to less subjective result he saw occasionally the floating *hetæra* of cow village night life.

For other contacts the ranch house or a "queer" buddie in the bunk-house might have a book or two, but the true cowboy probably did not read them. Perhaps a stray copy of a city newspaper came into his hands occasionally, but when it did his running knowledge of events was so slight that he could hardly understand what its news was all about. At most he followed with some regularity some distant county weekly serving as best it could the parochial curiosity of a district several hundred miles square.

It was an aloofness tempered with sociability, for both in the bunk-house and at work the cowboy had plenty of companionship with his own kind, and there was more going and coming between ranches than seems possible in an age when paved roads and faultless carbureters are necessary to rural travel. But it was an aloofness, nevertheless, which almost perfectly shielded the cowboy from the standardizing pressure of the mannerisms, the diversions, and the traditions of other social groups.

Men of intelligence and character so isolated inevitably developed a highly individual introspective philosophy, distinctive codes of morals and group loyalties, "quaint" tricks of speech, mannerisms, sports, and even folk-lore and folk