

Indians in American-Mexican Relations Before the War of 1846

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I

INTRODUCTION

INDIAN RAIDS multiplied Mexico's problems, in the generation before her war with the United States, to a degree not generally realized today. They upset her agricultural, commercial, mineral, and ranch life over hundreds of thousands of square miles. Consequently, the country's capacity for defense declined at a time when centralism, clericalism, militarism, and American imperialism were debilitating the nation. The chief offending mountain tribes were Apache, Navajo, and Ute; and the most troublesome plains Indians were Comanche and Kiowa.

Developments on both sides of the Rio Grande in the middle 1830's encouraged these natives to make their incursions. Notable were the trade and amity treaties which United States and Texas commissioners celebrated with Comanches and Kiowas. These agreements raised the market for Mexican livestock, plunder, and captives,—a market already strong in Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and Missouri, and at Bent's Fort, Santa Fe, and Taos. Americans who entered Arizona and New Mexico joined Mexicans in buying similar staples from Apache raiders and in moving them into the same broad channels of western commerce. Mexico's swing to dictatorship in 1835 produced another encouragement for Indian raids,—namely, the government's policy of disarming the people except for bows, arrows, knives, lances, lariats,¹ and a few old guns. Persistent squabbling between civil and military authorities also added to the domestic weakness. A third stimulant, particularly to revenge raids, was the resolve of border states to hire professional scalp hunters to scalp hostile natives.

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¹ *La Luna*, periódico del gobierno de Chihuahua, marzo 2 y 30 de 1841; *El Registro Oficial*, periódico del gobierno del departamento de Durango, octubre 9 de 1845. Most of the information for this article comes from reports of district officers, governors' decrees, and editorials reflecting official policies.

II

INDIAN PLUNDER TRAILS

These savage invasions of the Mexican settlements had gone on over the same routes for a century or more; the new aspect about them was their intensification. Never before had the Mexican nation faced war with the marauders and with a major foreign power simultaneously. Whenever the wild tribes sensed a crisis between Mexico and the Anglo-American republics, they stepped up their raiding. Comparing the raids of mountain and plains tribes, the editor of the Chihuahuan gazette noted that the Comanche and Kiowa nomads were "much more numerous and more warlike than the Apaches."² General Alejo García Conde who had to contend with both groups observed significantly that the plains Indians also came "better armed."³

Plains warriors loped their ponies southward "in great masses,"⁴ and crossed the present international boundary at three places (compared to eight Apache crossings). The Great Comanche War Trail was one of the longest unilateral commercial lines in North America. Beginning around the Arkansas River, it traversed West Texas and forked several times before reaching the Río Grande at three fords. Two of the three trunks finally passed over the Tropic of Cancer at widely separated points. The western branch entered Mexico near present Lajitas, Texas, and bore southwestward to the Río Conchos. Following the Conchos and the Río Florido through good farm and ranch country⁵ into Durango, this trail passed over the Río del Oro and went up Ramos Valley, where the raiders took hundreds of captives and thousands of head of livestock through the years. Running west of Victoria de Durango,⁶ it pushed across the Tropic of Cancer and deep into Zacatecas before branching out among mountain villages and ranches.

The middle trunk crossed the Río Grande at "the grand pass of the Indians called Chizos,"⁷ where the Chihuahua-Coahuilan boundary touches the river, about forty miles downstream from Lajitas. It followed roughly the boundary of these states into the Bolsón de

² *El Faro*, periódico del gobierno del estado libre de Chihuahua, abril 3 de 1849.

³ *El Registro Oficial*, marzo 2 de 1845.

⁴ *El Faro*, abril 3 de 1849.

⁵ Francisco R. Almada, *Diccionario de historia, geografía y biografía chihuahuense* (Ciudad Chihuahua: Talleres Gráficos del Gobierno del Estado, 1927), p. 103. (Cited hereafter as Almada, *Diccionario . . . chihuahuense*).

⁶ *El Registro Oficial*, marzo 14 y septiembre 5 de 1844.

⁷ Vicente E. Manero, *Documentos interesantes sobre colonización: los ha reunido, puesto en orden cronológico y los publica* (México, D. F.: Imprenta de la v.é. hijos de Murguía, 1878), p. 30.

Mapimí, swept over eastern Durango, and cut through Zacatecas and San Luis Potosí into the coastal department of Tamaulipas and possibly touched Querétaro.⁸ The eastern trunk reached Coahuila by way of France Pass on the Rio Grande at the northwestern corner of Maverick County, Texas. It extended into Nuevo León and Tamaulipas. By laterals from the main lines, Comanches could touch all of Mexico from a line west of the Conchos to the Gulf of Mexico and into the Tropics. From the Conchos westward to the Pacific was an Apache preserve. The valleys of this river and its tributaries formed a twilight zone in which the raiding of mountain and plains Indians overlapped, and the blood flowed if they met.

Apaches called the Mexican settlements their "ranches," which they reached by distinct plunder trails also.⁹ But in the thirties, Comanche interlopers were converting the easternmost Apache trails into their own western and central trunks. By these routes Lipan Apaches from mountains in the Big Bend had raided the settlements around the Bolsón de Mapimí, which covered eastern Chihuahua, northern Durango, and western Coahuila. Names of Mescalero bands replaced "Lipans" in Mexican records as Apache representatives in the Big Bend and along the raiders' trails in the Bolsón during the thirties; and before the forties "Mescaleros" had become secondary to "Comanches" on these same routes. The Mescaleros lived in the Big Bend mountains and in sierras extending northwestward to Sierra Blanca, located in New Mexico northeast of present El Paso, Texas. The more northerly Mescalero bands operated on still another plunder road, which crossed the Rio Grande at El Morrión Pass near Dolores, roughly halfway between Lajitas and El Paso. Mescalero raiders entering Chihuahua by this trail made for a sierra rendezvous between Gallegos and Agua Nueva on the El Paso del Norte-Chihuahua City Road, which put them about fifty miles north of the capital. From their rendezvous they could move down a broad valley upon large ranches like Encinillas and El Torreón. Towns and mines as Aldama, Santa Eulalia, San Diego on the Chuvíscar, and Santa

⁸ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 14 de 1843; *La Luna*, febrero 2 y 9 de 1841; Carlos María de Bustamante, *El gabinete mexicano durante el segundo de la administración del exmo. Señor presidente d. Anastasio de Bustamante* (México, D. F., 1942), II, 235f, 242.

⁹ The Apache routes were essentially the same in the nineteenth century as those which Nicolás de la Fora described after his inspection of the northern frontier of New Spain in the 1760's with the Marqués de Rubí. See his *Relación del viaje que hizo a los presidios internos situados en la frontera de la americana septentrional perteneciente al rey de España*, con un liminar bibliográfico y acotaciones por Vito Alessio Robles (México, D. F.: Editorial Pedro Robredo, 1939), pp. 72 ff, 80ff, 107ff.

Clara and Julimes on the Conchos fell in their path. On the road from Chihuahua City out to Santa Eulalia they waylaid, robbed, kidnapped, and killed many people. Ironically, the rich Santa Eulalia silver mine disgorged metal which had gone to pay professional scalp hunters and to build the splendid cathedral in the capital city, where Indian "pelts" went on display as somber reminders to the enemies of church and state.

Above the Mescaleros' crossing, Natagés Apaches put themselves over the Rio Grande on a fourth plunder trail below El Paso del Norte at San Elizario. Traversing the Llano de los Castillos, they could reach a rendezvous with the Mimbrenos (who re-united with their Warm Springs kinsmen to form one tribe in 1837) at El Ojo del Apaches. This rendezvous spot was in a marshy region fifteen miles west of Fort Carrizal. The Mimbrenos raiding road came down the Mimbres Valley out of New Mexico into the lagoon country of northern Chihuahua, where raiders found droves of mustangs and some domestic ranch stock. In the forties, they learned also to expect professional scalpers on the prowl around the lagoons. From El Ojo del Apaches, Mimbrenos and Natagés warriors moved southward, sometimes meeting Mogollonero and associated Apaches and even Mescaleros at El Chile Cerro five miles west of El Carmen.¹⁰ The Mogolloneros, known collectively with the Mimbrenos, Chiricahuas, and Tontos as Gileños,¹¹ arrived at this place over a branch of a fifth trail, which was also the longest and most far-flung of the Apache war trails. It came from the Mogollon Mountains of western New Mexico and utilized parts of the Copper Road, which ran down from Santa Rita to Chihuahua City. Mogolloneros followed the Copper Road into present Mexico before breaking off to the left in northern Chihuahua. Rejoining it northeast of Galeana, the raiders would finally come to El Chile Cerro.

Spreading out below El Chile Cerro before the raiding bands of these four Apache tribes lay a broad farming, ranching, and mining country. These parties might assail it individually or collectively. When they went straight southward from their common rendezvous, they followed roughly the 107th meridian and the Río Santa Clara Valley and found big ranches like San Lorenzo, Santa Clara, and La Quemada in their path. Still farther on, ideal raiding country around two lagoons west of Chihuahua City named Don Antonio del Castillo

¹⁰ El Carmen was a ranch seat on the Carmen River. It bears the name of Ricardo Flores Magón today in honor of Chihuahua's famous socialist revolutionary leader.

¹¹ Frederick Webb Hodge (ed.), *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* (New York: Pageant Books, Inc., 1959), p. 492.

and Bustillo invited them. If Apaches travelled eastward from their big rendezvous, they might cross the Carmen River and reach the El Paso-Chihuahua City Road for a descent upon the country around the capital. The identity of these regions with the names of certain stormy characters supports the law of the survival of the fittest. Among the hardiest of these persons were certain Apache chiefs and scalp hunters like Captain Santiago Kirker, Captain John Joel Glanton, Major Michael H. Chevallié, Major J. S. Gillett, Colonel Joaquín Terrazas, and Captain Juan de Mata Órtiz. Three of these chiefs were Gómez, Costelles,¹² and Victorio,¹³ remembered for their cruelty and for allegations that they had been Mexican children in this area where they led their fierce warriors.

As Apache raiders the Mogolloneros held a primacy in distance travelled for booty. Their war trail had two more main branches besides the one already described. When coming southward, if Mogollonero warriors veered westward from the Copper Road near Lake Playas or Áimas Peak in present Hidalgo County, New Mexico, they entered Sonora by one of these branches and plundered this department from its Sierra Madre slopes westward toward the Pacific. Farther down the Copper Road nearer Fort Janos, their third route also branched off to the right. It wound southward through the Sierra Madre near the Continental Divide to the Papigochic and Tomóchic Rivers. This put Mogolloneros and other Gileños several hundred miles west of Chihuahua City and allowed them to strike Sonora, or to fall upon Mexican and Tarahumara¹⁴ villages along these tributaries of the Yaqui River. Settling in temporary mountain camps, they found the best orchards, farms, pastures, and silver mines in Chihuahua. Small bands could hit along the Silver Road, which ran from the rich Jesús María (present Ocampo) silver mines¹⁵ into Chihuahua City, killing muleteers and plundering burro trains

¹² John C. Reid, *Reid's Tramp or a Journal of the Incidents of Ten Months Travel . . .* (Austin: The Steck Company, 1935), p. 175.

¹³ José Fuentes Mares, . . . *Y México se refugio en el desierto* (México, D. F.: Editorial Jus, S. A., 1954), p. 148; José Carlos Chávez, "Extinción de los Apaches," I, núm. 10 (marzo de 1939), 340; Manuel Romero, "'Victor' el Apache que creo mi madre era hija del gran jefe de los Apaches 'Victorio'," VI, núm. 8 (enero y febrero de 1951), 509ff, en *Boletín de la sociedad chihuahuense de estudios históricos*. (Hereafter this bulletin will be cited as *Boletín*).

¹⁴ Moisés T. de la Peña, "Ensayo económico y social del pueblo tarahumar," *Boletín*, V, núm. 1 (abril de 1946), 426-436; Julius Fröbel, *Aus Amerika* (Leipzig: J. J. Weber, 1858), II, 255ff, 259ff; Wendell C. Bennett and Robert M. Zingg, *The Tarahumara: an Indian Tribe of Northern Mexico* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1935), pp. 23, 335-341.

¹⁵ Silvestre Terrazas, "Mineral . . . que produce más de 80 millones . . . en oro," *Boletín*, II, núm. 6 (noviembre de 1939), 200ff; Fröbel, II, 256ff.

which carried bars of silver to the mint. Pack mule caravans bearing merchandise from Pacific ports¹⁶ and armed travelers ventured along at their mercy. Besides raiding ranches on both sides of the Silver Road, Apaches fanned out southward and southeastward to the middle and upper Conchos and its tributaries in the twilight zone and even reached into Durango.¹⁷ For generations, dispatches recounting Mogollonero and other Gileño atrocities poured into the governor's office from half of the department. They show why Chihuahua reverted to Spain's colonial policy of buying Indian scalps. One also sees in them the reason that western Chihuahua became a scalp hunter's paradise and produced America's most strenuous hair-seekers.¹⁸ It is not surprising that this region and eastern Sonora, where Gileños, especially Chiricahuas, shared the field with Coyoterros, sent more human scalps to market than any other area on the continent in the nineteenth century.

The Chiricahuas, who lived in the mountains east of the Santa Cruz River and south of the Verde River, used the easternmost of the two remaining Apache plunder trails. This tribe, famous for Cochise and Geronimo in the seventies and eighties, produced the fiercest Apache raiders, although I have not encountered a single mention of the term "Chiricahua" to identify an Apache tribe or band in any Spanish language source contemporary with the period discussed in this article, *i.e.*, the thirties and forties. A possible explanation for this is that Mexican reports of these decades covered them with the term "Gileños" or "Coyoterros," with whom they associated in raids and in making treaties with the authorities. Coming southward, the Chiricahua trail crossed the Gila River, reached San Simón Creek, then dropped through an old Spanish ranch in the Sierra de San Bernardino before crossing the present international boundary and reaching the sierra slopes on both sides of the Chihuahua-Sonoran line.

The final Apache plunder trail was the Coyoterros' "great stealing

¹⁶ Francisco R. Almada, "Los Apaches," *Boletín*, II, núm. 1 (junio de 1939), 10, y *La rebelión de Tomóchic* (Ciudad Chihuahua: Sociedad Chihuahuense de Estudios Históricos, 1938), 7; James Hobbs, *Wild Life in the Far West: Personal Adventures of a Border Mountain Man* (Hartford: Wiley, Waterman & Eaton, 1872), 83ff.

¹⁷ José Carlos Chávez, "Clamor de los Papigochic del siglo XVIII por los constantes ataques de los Apaches," *Boletín*, I, núm. 12 (mayo de 1939), 399-405; *La Luna*, febrero 9 de 1841.

¹⁸ Native sons distinguished as scalp hunters were Colonel Joaquín Terrazas, Jesús José Casavantes, Heremengildo Quintana, Captain Mauricio Corredor, Captain Juan de Mata Ortiz and José María Zuloaga. Kirker, Glanton, Chevallié, and Marcus L. Webster were adopted sons who made their reputations scalping Apaches, mainly Gileños.

road,"¹⁹ which passed over the Gila above present San Carlos Lake from the Pinal and White Mountains of Arizona. Chiseled "many yards wide,"²⁰ it ran along the dry bed of Arivaipa Creek, then southward up San Pedro Valley. Cutting by present Bisbee, it penetrated Sonora and passed by Fort Fronteras, which pretended to protect a region known for its livestock herds. Branch routes brought mines and ranches within Apache reach about Magdalena on Los Alisos River in the west, up and down the Narcozari in the east, and around Sonora's alternate capitals (Arizpe, Hermosillo, and Ures) in the south. After killing men, kidnapping their families, and stealing livestock, the Coyotereros returned northward, leaving crippled animals and carcasses scattered along their war trails. Besides indicating the directions of Comanche and Apache invasion routes, the source material on these mountain and plains Indians also brings out the differences in their styles of warfare in the Mexican country.

III

INDIAN STRATEGY

The nomads from the "Great American Desert" appropriated the best horses that Mexican cavaliers raised and rode them arrogantly through the land like lords of the world. If soldiers ventured after them, they went afoot or on poor ponies or burros and followed at safe distances.²¹ Plains raiders rendezvoused in the Bolsón de Mapimí, a wild plateau land pocket with deep sierras, occasional springs, a mild climate, and a hazy blue atmosphere which made it a Comanche vacation land. Here the invaders escaped from South Plains winter cold and summer heat and found a resort where they could combine business and sport. Sometimes warriors brought their families and lived here from a few weeks to seven or eight months out of a year. Reaching out in bands of half a dozen to three or four hundred, they gathered in women, children, plunder, horses, and mules from neighboring departments for long drives uptrail to northern markets.²² From a century of experience, Comanches and

¹⁹ Journal of Capt. Abraham R. Johnston, in William Hemsley Emory, *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance, from Fort Leavenworth, in Missouri, to San Diego, in California, Including Part of the Arkansas, Del Norte, and Gila Rivers* (Washington, 1848), 30th Congress, 1 sess., House. Ex. Doc. 41, 586.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ A common complaint of officers sent to chase Indians was the condition of their horses. *E. g.*, see *El Registro Oficial*, febrero 2 de 1845, y junio 14 de 1846.

²² *El Registro Oficial*, febrero 19, diciembre 14 de 1843, septiembre 26 de 1844, marzo 2, octubre 12, 16, 19, y 23, noviembre 6 y 9 de 1845; Almada, *Diccionario . . . chihuahuense*, p. 90; *La Patria*, periódico oficial del supremo gobierno del estado de Coahuila, enero 4, junio 7, diciembre 13 de 1851; *El Faro*, abril 3 de 1849.

Kiowas knew where to expect pack trains and travelers. They had located the big ranches, silver camps, and farm settlements in seven departments. Certain ranches which they raided annually possessed more than 100,000 head of livestock each. Of enormous size and falling in this class were La Zarca in northern Durango, famous for its horses, the Hacienda de Menores in central Durango, known for its mares and cattle, and Encinillas north of Chihuahua City, where black cattle, sheep, goats, and mules dotted many thousands of acres. Horses were the prime interest of "the lords of the South Plains," but the considerable number of Mexican women and children mentioned in the journals of southwestern explorers, traders, and travelers indicates that the Comanche and Kiowa brokers also supplied a strong market for captives. (In 1848, Colonel William Gilpin estimated the number of Mexican prisoners held by the Comanches at 600 and by the Apaches at 800,²³ and in 1853, Robert S. Neighbors, a Texas Indian agent, reported that the Comanches had near 300 captives, "principally Mexicans").²⁴ For a decade columns in gazettes of north Mexican states overflowed with pitiful tales about Indians sweeping away unfortunate persons and confirm what one historian of the Comanches (Rupert N. Richardson) has described as "the most horrendous holocaust ever enacted against a civilized people in the Western World."²⁵ In exchange for their staples of trade, they received from the civilized people cloth, paints, rifles, powder, lead, knives, guns, and iron from which to make arrow and lance points. Eastern tribes moved by the United States government to the Indian Territory sold many of their government-issued rifles to Comanches for five dollars each.²⁶ Mexican authorities complained about American traffic with these Indians and also saw the Yankee image behind Apache raids.

Like Scotch Highlanders, the mountain Indians lived on the people and the herds below them, but followed a system of warfare against the Mexicans different from that of the plains Indians. One Chihuahuan editor lamented that instead of coming Comanche-style like a pack of lions the "venomous serpents" from the sierras wormed their way around boulders like rattlesnakes and hid behind trees beside trails

²³ U. S. House Ex. Docs., vol. I, num. 1, 30th Congress, 2 sess., (1848-1849), 139.

²⁴ Rupert N. Richardson, *The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1933), p. 206. The number of Spanish names and words used in western Oklahoma today as an outgrowth of Comanche traffic in Mexican captives is considerable.

²⁵ See *West Texas Historical Association Year Book*, XXXV (1959), 3n.

²⁶ *Arkansas State Gazette*, May 4, 1840.

where the Mexicans must tread.²⁷ However, Apaches declared boldly that they tolerated Mexican settlements only because they raised livestock for them to take. Regardless of the direction that the hated mountain people went, advancing or retreating, they operated from one sierra to another. At camouflaging beside a road or concealing themselves behind boulders and striking down Mexicans²⁸ with arrows and lances smeared in rattlesnake venom,²⁹ they had no superiors. Their warriors slew woodcutters in forests, shot down shepherds, and cut field workers to pieces. They left travelers bristling with arrows on the roads, and settlers slumped in the doorways of their straw and stick huts, and washer women dying along the stream banks. But most pathetic were the stories of the females and little boys whom they carried into captivity.³⁰ Rio Grande gentry and lower-class American and Mexican traders sometimes bought these women prisoners in common with captive Navajo and Ute maidens. Certain heartless Mexicans travelled with Apache and Comanche bands and grabbed children of their own nation here and there.

This suffering spurred neither national nor state authorities into enough activity to protect the people. Instead, officers of state might even reprimand the settlers for striking back at Indians in unauthorized posses or expeditions.³¹ Jealous military lords forced cancellation of contracts between civilian governors and professional scalp hunters. Government on no level had done much to restore the defenses which had disappeared with the War for Independence, when President Anastasio Bustamante made Colonel José Joaquín Calvo Commanding General and Inspector of Chihuahua and New Mexico on May 5, 1831.

IV

THE SCALP MARKET

Calvo declared war against the Apaches on October 16. This able, Cuban-born creole promised special pay to volunteers.³² But these

²⁷ *La Luna*, marzo 2 de 1841.

²⁸ Francisco R. Almada, "sucesos y recuerdos de la independencia en Chihuahua," V, núm. 5, (junio y julio de 1944), 185f, y Alberto Terrazas Valdez, "El salvajismo Apache en Chihuahua," VII, núm. 1, (enero y febrero de 1950), 372ff, en *Boletín*.

²⁹ Ignacio Emilio Elías, "El terrible veneno táctica guerrera de los indios apaches," *Boletín*, VII, núm. 2, (marzo y abril de 1950), 392.

³⁰ Emilio Lamberg, "Vida y costumbres de los indios salvajes que habitan el estado de Chihuahua a mediados del siglo XIX," *Boletín*, VI, núm. 9, (agosto de 1949), 275.

³¹ Fröbel, p. 215.

³² Francisco R. Almada, "La comandancia general de provincias internas," I,

measures and the treaties which he signed with twenty-nine chiefs at Santa Rita and with "Generals" Juan José Compá, Fuerte, and Aquien failed to bring relief. Neglect in defining adequately the "Generals'" powers over the three tribal "reservations" agreed upon in one of the treaties and in providing rations regularly led to frequent Apache outbreaks from 1833 through 1835. Efforts of Governor Isidro Madero of Chihuahua and of Colonel Simón Elías González to persuade the citizens to arm themselves for self-defense³³ achieved little. A treaty that Captain José María Ronquillo and Political Chief Alejandro Ramírez of El Paso del Norte signed with seven Comanche chiefs in 1834 was designed to play mountain and plains Indians against each other, but it proved no more beneficial to the Mexicans. Hoping to enable Calvo to deal with the Indian menace more effectively, the state council of Chihuahua added the governor's powers to his office on September 18, 1834.³⁴ On December 19 Calvo instituted the death penalty for soldiers who turned their backs upon the Indians in war.³⁵ In spite of all these steps, Apaches had laid waste areas in Chihuahua as far apart as El Paso del Norte, Galeana, Aldama, and Hidalgo del Parral by the mid-thirties.³⁶ Coyoteritos and Mimbrenos joined rebellious Yaquis, Ópatas, and Seris and harassed Sonora as far southward as Hermosillo and Arizpe.³⁷ Apache impunity, plus the American treaties and new markets, brought 600 to 700 Comanches and Kiowas into Chihuahua in May, 1835,³⁸ and 800 before year's end,³⁹ according to allegations.

Rumors that these plains Indians would join the Apaches alarmed officialdom. In June Calvo rushed up to Presidio del Norte (present Ojinaga) with an army, but because of rebellion in Texas and Presi-

núm. 2, (junio de 1938), 40, y "Gobernadores del estado: X.—Gral. José Joaquín Calvo," II, núms. 8 y 9, (enero y febrero de 1940), 299, en *Boletín*.

³³ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Calvo," *loc. cit.*, 299, y "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, 9, y *Diccionario de historia, geografía y biografía sonorenses* (Ciudad Chihuahua, 1952), p. 73. (This book will be cited as Almada, *Diccionario . . . sonorenses* hereafter).

³⁴ Enrique González Flores, *Chihuahua de la independencia a la revolución* (México, D. D.: Ediciones Botas, Imp. Manuel León Sánchez, S. C. L., 1949), 56f; Chávez, "Extinción de los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 336; Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Calvo," *loc. cit.*, p. 325.

³⁵ Fuentes Mares, p. 137.

³⁶ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 9; H. H. Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas* (San Francisco: The History Publishing Co., 1889), II, 598.

³⁷ Frank C. Lockwood, *The Apache Indians* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938), 33f.

³⁸ Bancroft, II, 599.

³⁹ *Revista Oficial*, periódico del gobierno del departamento de Chihuahua, II, núm. 42, octubre 15 de 1844.

dent Santa Anna's order to withdraw,⁴⁰ his abortive campaign only invited more raids. At Yepomera in the Papigochic Valley, Apaches killed forty-two persons.⁴¹

Two official decrees followed in the fall of 1835, which influenced Mexican-Indian relations for a long time. One on September 7 put Sonora's governor in the market for Apache scalps, and by the other on October 20 Santa Anna's dictum set aside the federalist constitution of 1824. The governor could pay 100 pesos for the crown of a warrior fourteen years or older and allow a scalp hunter to keep the plunder and livestock which he took from the hostiles.⁴² As Sonora moved to the offensive, Calvo tried ineffectually to strengthen his defenses in Chihuahua⁴³ against Apaches and Comanches. The South Plains warriors arrived early in 1836 to take advantage of Mexico's involvement in the Texas Revolution. They left trails marked by tears and scalplings through Coahuila and parts of Chihuahua and Texas.⁴⁴ Calvo sent companies of newly created Defenders of the State to reinforce Carrizal, Janos, and Casas Grandes against Apaches and brought into being a rural police system and a Council of Auxiliaries. The council should supply and supervise ranger-type forces on the frontier during the "anguishing"⁴⁵ months of 1836, when Indians and Anglo-Americans seemed about to dismember the republic from the Sabine River to the Pacific. Neither Calvo's new fighter units nor the presidial soldiers had checked the Apaches working out of the sierras when Sonora's bounty law produced its first real fruits.

Under an agreement with Governor Manuel Escalante y Arvizu, James Johnson of Kentucky killed Chief Juan José Compá on April 22, 1837. Johnson had concealed a cannon loaded with scrap metal and spread gifts before it for Juan's Mimbrenos in the Sierra de las Ánimas of southwestern New Mexico. When he touched his cigar to the fuse, the shrapnel cut down many men, women, and children. His

⁴⁰ González Flores, pp. 57-61; Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Calvo," *loc. cit.*, p. 325, "Gobernadores . . . : XI.—Lic. José Ma. de Echavarría," *Boletín*, II, núm. 12, (junio de 1940), 362, and *Diccionario . . . chihuahuense*, p. 44.

⁴¹ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 10.

⁴² Georg Friederici, *Skalpiere und ähnliche Kriegsgeräthe in Amerika* (Braunschweig: Druck und Verlag von Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn, 1906), p. 56; Alfonso Toro, *Historia de México* (México, D. F.: Editorial Patria, 1951), 421ff; Almada, *Diccionario . . . sonorenses*, p. 74; J. P. Dunn, *Massacres of the Mountains* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1886), 360f.

⁴³ González Flores, pp. 56-61; Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Calvo," *loc. cit.*, p. 325, y "Gobernadores . . . Echavarría," *loc. cit.*, p. 364.

⁴⁴ C. C. Rister, *Comanche Bondage, Dr. John Charles Beale's Settlement of La Villa de Dolores on Las Moras Creek in Southern Texas of the 1830's . . .* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1955), 121ff.

⁴⁵ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 10.

confederates fell upon others with knives and pistols. Although accounts of this treachery spread the total number slaughtered from nineteen to over 400,⁴⁶ they do not disagree on its effects upon Apache policy, which was to initiate half a century of costly warfare between Americans and Apaches. The incident also intensified the Apache-Mexican conflict, which continued even after Colonel Joaquín Terrazas had gathered 17,250 pesos worth of hair from sixty-two Mimbrenño warriors and 10,200 pesos worth of captives at Tres Castillos in October, 1880.⁴⁷ Only when Mexicans took the head of Chief Talline in 1885⁴⁸ and Geronimo paced the floors of Fort Marion did it end.

Enraged Apaches broke up copper⁴⁹ and silver mining operations throughout their sphere. Chihuahua countered by entering the scalp market a little deeper than Sonora had. She paid twenty-five pesos for the crown of a child under fourteen, 100 for a warrior's, and fifty for a squaw's.⁵⁰ Under Chihuahua's bounty programs, Santiago Kirker of El Paso del Norte became the most spectacular scalp captain in recorded American history. After he and his "little army" of Delawares, Shawnees, and border adventurers took fifty-five crowns

⁴⁶ Almada, *Diccionario . . . sonorenses*, pp. 74, 248; Henry S. Brooks, "A Scrap of Frontier History," *The Californian*, II (October, 1880), 345ff; John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations & Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and California . . .* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1854), I, 321; Woodward Clum, *Apache Agent* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1936), pp. 3-10; microfilm copy of narrative of B. D. Wilson dictated by him at request of Hubert Howe Bancroft, 1877, MS original in Bancroft Library; Arthur A. Woodward, "Scalp Hunters of Chihuahua," *Pony Express Courier* (March, 1938), pp. 5, 11; Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairie*, edited by Max L. Moorhead (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), 205f; Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *The Leading Facts of New Mexican History* (Cedar Rapids: The Torch Press, 1912), II, 46f; Dunn, p. 361; John C. Cremony, *Life Among the Apaches* (San Francisco: A. Roman & Company, 1868), p. 31; Robert Glass Cleland, *Pathfinders* (Los Angeles: Powell Publishing Company, 1929), 372ff; "Benjamin Davis Wilson's Observations on Early Days in California and New Mexico," with forward and explanatory notes by Arthur A. Woodward, *Historical Society of Southern California*, annual publication, XVI (1934), 77ff; *Exploring Southwestern Trails 1846-1854* (vol. VII, *Southwest Historical Series*, edited by Ralph P. Bieber, 1938), 114f.

⁴⁷ José Carlos Chávez, "Extinción de los Apaches," I, núm. 11 (abril de 1939), 365, and "El indio 'Victorio'," V, núm. 6, (agosto de 1944) 219, en *Boletín*.

⁴⁸ José Carlos Chávez, "Indio Ju," *Boletín*, I, núm. 11 (abril de 1939), 377.

⁴⁹ The government's monetary policy had injured copper mining already. Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Calvo," *loc. cit.*, p. 325.

⁵⁰ Friederici, p. 56; Toro, 421ff; Frank S. Edwards, *A Campaign in Mexico with Doniphan* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1847), p. 95; Frederick C. Ober, *Travels in Mexico and Life among the Mexicans* (Boston: Estes and Laurist, 1884), p. 627; Dunn, p. 360; Gregg, 207f; Thomas Edwin Farish, *History of Arizona* (Phoenix, 1915), I, 116; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, p. 599; Arthur A. Woodward, "Scalp Hunters of Chihuahua," *Pony Express Courier* (February, 1938), p. 12.

in one Apache village west of Socorro, New Mexico, Calvo contracted with him to raise his "volunteer corps" to fifty scalp hunters.⁵¹ Following the transfer of Mexican troops to meet French and Spanish invasion threats in the late thirties, little more than Kirker's Old Apache Company stood between the Chihuahuans and growing Indian activity. With better co-operation from the government and less jealousy from the military, Kirker might have accomplished much in getting rid of Indians. His agreement did not long survive Calvo's governorship, which ended on February 28, 1838.

An item appearing in the *Arkansas State Gazette* made this date even more significant for Mexico. It said that "a few enterprising capitalists" would establish Torrey's trading post on the Brazos River at present Waco, Texas, in order to tap the "immense booty" that "the most wealthy as well as the most powerful of the most savage nations of North America" was wresting from the land south of the Rio Grande. A treaty which Lt. Col. José Ignacio Ronquillo celebrated with Mimbrenño chieftains at El Paso on November 15⁵² did little to brighten the Mexican outlook in the Apache sector. By the summer of 1839, the civilian governor of Chihuahua, Don José María de Irigoyen, was turning to the Scalp Lord for help.⁵³

For \$100,000 from The War Society's voluntary fund, \$5,000 of it to start on, Kirker should increase his company to 150 American and fifty Mexican riflemen. He promised to bring the Apaches to a permanent treaty and to teach the Comanches a lesson.⁵⁴ On September 5 his scalp hunters butchered forty warriors of one Apache band in a shattering attack at Rancho de Taos, New Mexico.⁵⁵ José María Irigoyen extended Kirker's contract without permission of the departmental commanding general, Lt. Col. Cayetano Justíniani. This precipitated one of those civil-military squabbles characteristic of this period in Mexico. Justíniani resigned. Ronquillo succeeded him on December 13, and Kirker received a contract to hunt Indians for four

⁵¹ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Calvo," *loc. cit.*, pp. 299, 325; Fröbel, II, 219f; *The Republican* (Santa Fe, New Mexico), November 20, 1847; *Don Santiago Kirker*, edited by Glen Dawson *et al* (Los Angeles: Muir Dawson, privately printed, 1948), p. 8f.

⁵² Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 11.

⁵³ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . : XIV.—D. José Ma. de Irigoyen," *Boletín*, III, núms. 1-3 (octubre-diciembre de 1940), 390f.

⁵⁴ Fröbel, II, 219f; *The Globe* (Washington, D. C.), August 30, 1839; *Nile's Register* (Baltimore, Md.), September 7, 1839; *Arkansas State Gazette*, October 9, 1839.

⁵⁵ *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans, La.), February 28, 1840; *The Picayune* (weekly), March 2, 1840; *Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail*, edited by John Sunder (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 190ff.

months.⁵⁶ With only six or seven of his Delawares and Shawnees, he hit an Apache band a typical "Kirkeresque" blow south of Chihuahua City early in February, 1840. They took fifteen scalps and twenty prisoners.⁵⁷ Despite Kirker's big "harvests" of scalps, barracks lords charged him with profiteering.⁵⁸

In May and July General Francisco García Conde took over military and political authority in Chihuahua. This ended civil control of the governorship again. Conde's first act was to forbid the extension of Kirker's contract "through grave concern for the exchequer." He called it dishonorable to place direction of military campaigns in the hands of an "alien." (Kirker was a naturalized Mexican, originally from Belfast, Ireland, by way of the United States). Don Francisco's experiences had been broad. Born in Arizpe, Sonora, Conde had been acquainted with frontier problems from childhood. He was the son of General Alejo García Conde, a former commander of the Interior Provinces of the West, and had served as secretary of war and navy. But neither his background, his visiting, re-organizing, and strengthening frontier defenses,⁵⁹ nor his placing Lt. Col. Francisco Urgana in charge of military operations after he fired the Scalp Captain seemed to ease the Indian menace. Nearly half of present Mexico fell under the shadow of Indian terror. Plains nomads hit Texas and the loyal departments stunning blows throughout 1840. In the spring one band reputed to number 500 enveloped Real Catorce in San Luis Potosí, and on its withdrawal killed every soldier in a division of 200 between Monclova and the Rio Grande at Sabinas in Coahuila.⁶⁰ In October, according to reports, from two to four hundred Comanches entered Mexico. One source contends that they killed more than 700 people in Coahuila and nearly as many in Nuevo León.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 10, "Gobernadores . . . : XV.—Lic. D. José Ma. Irigoyen de la O," III, núms. 1-3 (octubre-diciembre de 1940), 391ff, y "Gobernadores . . . : XXIV.—Coronel Cayetano Justiniiani," IV, núm. 5 (octubre de 1942), 171, all in *Boletín*; González Flores, p. 89; Edwards, p. 95; George Wilkins Kendall, *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition* (Austin: The Steck Co., 1935), II, 57.

⁵⁷ Charles W. Davis to Consul General John Black, February 17, 1840, Consul General, Mexican Correspondence, U. S. National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁵⁸ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 10.

⁵⁹ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 10, "Gobernadores . . . Irigoyen de la O," *loc. cit.*, 392f, "Gobernadores . . . : XVII.—Gral. D. Francisco García Conde," III, núms. 1-3 (octubre-diciembre de 1940), 394ff, "La comandancia general de provincias internas," I, núm. 2, (junio de 1939), 41, y "Gobernadores . . . Justiniiani," *loc. cit.*, p. 171, *Boletín*; González Flores, p. 64.

⁶⁰ *Arkansas State Gazette*, April 1, 1840.

⁶¹ James T. de Shields, *Border Wars of Texas; being an Authentic and Popular Account . . .* (Tioga, Texas: The Herald Co., 1912), p. 326.

As Conde dropped the Scalp Lord, the departmental council of Durango sought salvation in bounties and hair hunting. Its law of July 27, 1840, authorized Governor Miguel Zubirle to pay ten pesos for each Indian captured or killed and provided fines for ranch administrators and their peons who failed to oppose the savages.⁶² Wild bands sweeping near Chihuahua City brought Conde to some sobering reflections on the contrast between Urgana's few, inconsequential brushes with the invaders along the Conchos and the big "hair harvests" of the Old Apache Company. His gazette evinced an expression of joy when the barbarians moved out of his department into Durango.⁶³ One large party caused alarm when it passed within four leagues of Durango City. A band said to contain 400 burned villages and killed Mexicans west of Monclova on December 21.⁶⁴ On the next day it defeated Don Víctor Blanco and his company of rangers west of Nadadores. Reports pin-pointed Comanche havoc around Mazapil in Zacatecas also and spoke of the savages "cleaning the country and killing whatever people they met" in San Luis Potosí. During the last week of December, 1840, the nomads swirled around Encarnación in southeastern Coahuila. Regulars, volunteers, and refugees hurried this way and that, but seldom accomplished more than to give the horse thieves a chance to gather in additional booty and scalps.

The Comanche tide ebbed on the walls of the Sierra Madre Oriental in San Luis Potosí, and probably lapped into Tamaulipas. After circling about for several days the invaders from Kansas struck out

⁶² *El Registro Oficial*, octubre 18 de 1849. The law makers of Durango had good reasons for mentioning neither heads nor scalps and requiring presentation of whole Indians for payment. In practice, judges did accept heads, however, but feared that they might buy Mexican scalps if they paid for crowns only. Their suspicion had a solid historic basis independent of widespread reports that Kirker collected on peon hair. Spanish and Mexican officials in the Durango area had paid bounties on hostile Indians either as captives or for their heads most of the time since the Tepehuane Rebellion, 1618-1621. Out of this seventeenth century beginning had emerged Spain's scalp price of 100 pesos and upward for a crown with ears. Friederici, p. 56; Andrés Cavo, *Historia de México* (México, D. F.: Editorial Patria, S. A., 1949), libro sexto, 17; Almada, *Diccionario . . . chihuahuense*, 696f; Capitán Alonso de León, *et al.*, *Historia de Nuevo León con noticias sobre Coahuila, Tejas, y Nuevo México* (tomo XXV, *Documentos inéditos o muy raros para la historia de México*, 1909), 137ff; Teodoro de Croix to Juan Bautista de Anza, October 23, 1779, in *Spanish Archives of New Mexico*, edited by Ralph Emerson Twitchell, II, nos. 285, 809.

⁶³ *La Luna*, enero 5, y febrero 9 de 1841.

⁶⁴ This could have been a war party that James Hobbs mentioned accompanying in his autobiography. He was a Comanche captive and warrior at this time. Hobbs said that it killed forty or fifty Mexicans, took twenty scalps and nine women and children, and drove off 1,400 horses and mules. *Wild Life in the Far West*, p. 32.

northward. They moved "very rapidly" toward Saltillo. Reports placed the dead citizens behind them at 300, and said that the raiders had a hundred captives as they pushed for the Rio Grande with an alleged 18,000 head of livestock. Soldiers and volunteers attacked them east of Saltillo. Among the Mexican dead after the fight was Judge José María Goriber of the Coahuilan supreme court, but the attackers recovered possibly forty captives and several thousand animals.⁶⁵ During these same weeks mountain Indians were even more destructive.

West of the Conchos every boulder seemed to hide an Apache raider. *El Sonorense* of Sonora compared this department as far south as the valleys of the Matape, the San Ignacio, and the Sonora to a house without doors, walls, or even a stick fence around it. Apaches switched from sneak raids to contemptuous, fearless campaigns along the Cordillera in the fall of 1840. The Chihuahuan gazette deplored the spectacle of 800 Apaches and Comanches raiding in its department in October, and exculpated Mexican freebooters who disguised as Indians and despoiled their own people.⁶⁶ Apaches killed and kidnapped within Arizpe,⁶⁷ the Sonoran capital. Papagos living along the Gila, the Quitevac, and the Sonoita Rivers revolted, broke up gold mines, and murdered.⁶⁸ Four hundred Mogolloneros and other Gileños surged down the Sierra Madre in November and started dispatches pouring into Conde's office from all over their sphere.⁶⁹ These appeared in a column of his gazette on Tuesdays headed: "EXTRACT of reports on the hostilities of the barbarians." In despair, Conde swallowed his pride and recalled the Scalp Lord.

He promised to pay Don Santiago two and one half pesos for each mule that he recovered. Kirker's hunters could keep whatever else they took from the Indians. The governor would buy the scalps which they brought in at a fixed sum each. Neither hunters nor Indians wasted time. In January, 1841, Mogolloneros and associated raiders worked along the Conchos southeast of the capital 500 miles from their homes. At one place near Hidalgo del Parral, Apaches killed one little son of María del Rayo Chávez, carried off a second son, and badly wounded her third son, besides slaughtering her mayordomo and two

⁶⁵ Bustamante, II, 106f; *La Luna*, febrero 2 y 9, y marzo 9 de 1841; Vito Alessio Robles, *Coahuila y Tejas desde la consumación de la independencia hasta el tratado de paz de Guadalupe-Hidalgo* (México: Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, 1946), II, 235f, 242.

⁶⁶ *La Luna*, noviembre 10 de 1840.

⁶⁷ *La Luna*, octubre 27 de 1840.

⁶⁸ *La Luna*, octubre 27 de 1840; Almada, *Diccionario . . . sonorenses*, p. 500.

⁶⁹ *La Luna*, enero 5 y 12, y febrero 9 de 1841; Almada, *Diccionario . . . chihuahuense*, pp. 47, 56.

of her shepherds.⁷⁰ Apache competition with the Comanches in the twilight zone remained strong until mid-year.⁷¹ In February and March, Apaches killed Mexicans up and down the Sierra Madre and along the Papigochic, the Santa María, and the Silver Road,⁷² and hit the vicinities of Temósachic, Bachiniva, Namiquipa, Galeana, and Balleza heavily.⁷³ One Apache chief, formerly a captive Mexican boy, led some of these raids.⁷⁴ His and other Apache bands also heaped many afflictions upon his native Sonora, especially along Los Alisos River.⁷⁵

New Comanche parties entered Mexico through May and blanketed eastern Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, and Zacatecas. Occasionally hostility between the mountain and plains Indians benefited the Mexicans. On May 12, Chief Santa Anna informed the commander of Fort San Carlos that Comanches were approaching the Rio Grande from the south. He and his Mescalero warriors went with twenty-five soldiers and vanquished them "totally." They brought the scalps of nine warriors and a squaw to the fort. Their booty also included 140 animals and a Durango mailbag with letters.⁷⁶ Sometimes Apaches and Comanches ran head on into the Terrazas clan.⁷⁷ This big family lived in the twilight zone. More stubborn than most Mexicans in dealing with the savages, it made Indian hair fly more than once. In the next generation the Terrazas became especially famous for hunting scalps and building a land empire. The governor's disbursements in the winter and spring of 1841 showed that a "bold and intrepid Irishman, named Kirker,"⁷⁸ was deep in the scalping business also.

Indeed, Conde objected to Kirker's raids on the exchequer with adulterated scalps more than he did the department's payment of 37,500 pesos to him for corralling 15,000 Indian mules.⁷⁹ Circumstantial evidence supports charges which George W. Kendall heard about Kirker in the fall of 1841 from citizens, who told this editor of the New Orleans *Picayune* that Kirker "did not scruple to kill any of

⁷⁰ *La Luna*, enero 5 y 12 de 1841.

⁷¹ *La Luna*, marzo 23, abril 20, mayo 4, 18, y 25, y junio 22 de 1841.

⁷² *La Luna*, marzo 2 y 30 de 1841.

⁷³ *La Luna*, abril 20 de 1841.

⁷⁴ *La Luna*, agosto 17 de 1841.

⁷⁵ *La Luna*, mayo 4, y agosto 17 de 1841.

⁷⁶ *La Luna*, mayo 25, y junio 22 de 1841.

⁷⁷ *La Luna*, marzo 30, y mayo 4 y 25 de 1841.

⁷⁸ *Lieutenant Emory Reports: a Reprint of Lieutenant W. H. Emory's Notes of a Military Reconnaissance*, edited by Ross Calvin (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1951), p. 116.

⁷⁹ Stephen Hall Meek, *The Autobiography of a Mountain Man, 1805-1889*, with notes by Arthur A. Woodward (Pasadena: Glen Dawson, printer, 1948), p. 7.

the lower order of Mexicans that he might meet with, when there was slight chance of being discovered and pass off their top-knots for those of true Apaches."⁸⁰ To force the Scalp Captain to concentrate on Indian instead of Mexican hair, Conde shifted him from piecework to a straight peso-a-day-per-man wage. This displeased Kirker. He retired to western Chihuahua, where he held out as a privateer.⁸¹ Apaches with mules to sell got him to fence for them. According to a member of his Old Apache Company, Kirker even became "the chief of the Apache nation."⁸² Also known as the "King of New Mexico," this border lord did not emerge as a governor's leading scalp hunter again until the middle forties. But meanwhile civilians and soldiers scalped Apaches wherever possible without the incentive of a state market.⁸³

V

INDIAN POLICY, 1841-1845

June and July following Kirker's retirement were months of extraordinary midsummer Apache⁸⁴ and Comanche activity. About forty miles south of Chihuahua City Captain Agustín Campos' company rescued seven young captives of both sexes from twenty-five plains Indians in a four-hour fight near Satévo on July 17.⁸⁵ Reports of Apache raiders returning toward Kirker's precincts with stolen animals and stories of the activities of Mexican freebooters raised Conde's suspicion. In August the governor and his council decreed death for those who traded with Indians.⁸⁶ But this had little to do with the decline in Apache raiding during the next three years (while Comanche incursions grew progressively more severe during the remainder of 1841⁸⁷ and over the following years before the American invasion in 1846). Most of the reason for the decrease in Apache raids is to be found in the treaties which Conde entered into with certain chiefs and his promises of rations, and in Mexico's military mobilization to meet American threats to her territory. Although a scarcity of source material makes it impossible to catalogue Comanche invasions again before 1843 or to study Apache raids in detail for

⁸⁰ *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition*, II, 57.

⁸¹ Julius Fröbel zu der *New York Tribune*, December 2, 1852, in *Aus der Amerikandischen Presse*, p. 500.

⁸² Hobbs, p. 81.

⁸³ *E. g. La Luna*, mayo 25, y junio 22 de 1841; Gregg, p. 208.

⁸⁴ *La Luna*, mayo 25, junio 29, julio 13 y 20, y septiembre 7 y 21 de 1841.

⁸⁵ *La Luna*, julio 20 de 1841.

⁸⁶ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Conde," *loc. cit.*, p. 397.

⁸⁷ *La Luna*, julio 20 de 1841.

half a decade, it is probably safe to conclude that bands of plains Indians continued to handle Mexican troops roughly, as one party did in southwestern Coahuila in August, 1842.⁸⁸

One of Conde's treaties with "General" José María and fifteen *capitancillos* on June 2, 1842, was significant because it brought more peace from Apaches to Chihuahua than the department had enjoyed in a decade. The "General" spoke for the Mogolloneros, Mimbrenos, and for "General" Espejo's Mescalero band;⁸⁹ however, neither these nor other Apaches felt any obligation to give Sonora respite. Mogolloneros joined Coyotereros in laying waste to this coastal department in the fall of 1842. Within Sonora Yaquis under "General" Tomás and Capitancillo Tenopomesa rose up and produced additional worries for Governor José Urrea. Mayos, Ópatas, and Pimas stopped scalping Apaches for the Mexicans and entered into the uprising also. Quiet did not return to Sonora until November and December.⁹⁰ In the winter and spring of the next year General José Mariano Monterde, who had succeeded Conde on December 8,⁹¹ inspected frontier posts and ratified treaties of friendship with the Mescaleros and with General Manuelito and Capitancillos Anava and Torres of the Gileño tribe.⁹² At Fort Janos, Monterde promised "General" Mangas Coloradas of the Mimbrenos and Capitancillos Jusilito, Itaudi, and Testigo of the Mogolloneros that the Mexicans would give rations to their people at this post like the king's men had in colonial times. In return, these chiefs bound their tribes to recognize the supreme authority of the Mexican nation, to inform the authorities about hostile Indians, to give up their white captives, and to lift the scalping knife against Comanches when they met them along the Conchos.⁹³ However, soon after the celebration of these treaties, several raids from the area of these Indians struck Encinillas and El Torreón in Chihuahua, and Apaches, Papagos, and Yaquis were plundering Sonora.⁹⁴ But Mangas Coloradas and other chiefs of the Gileño tribes

⁸⁸ *Suplemento al Registro Oficial del superior gobierno del departamento de Durango*, enero 29 de 1843.

⁸⁹ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 11, y "Gobernadores . . . : XVIII.—Gral. Mariano Martínez Lajarza," *Boletín*, III, núms. 4-6, (enero-marzo de 1941), 63.

⁹⁰ *El Registro Oficial*, enero 8 de 1845.

⁹¹ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . : XIX.—General J. Mariano Monterde," *Boletín*, III, núm. 7 (abril de 1941), 107.

⁹² *Revista Oficial*, periódico del gobierno del departamento de Chihuahua, abril 18 de 1843.

⁹³ *Revista Oficial*, abril 18, y julio 4 de 1845.

⁹⁴ Alphonse Pinart, *Colección de documentos impresos manuscritos pa. la historia de los estados de norte México (Baneroft Library, 1879)*, II, doc. núm. 661.

made still more peace pledges to the Chihuahuan authorities and tried to restrain their warriors, and Governor General Mariano Martínez de Lajarza of New Mexico entered amicable agreements with some of the same tribes through friendly Navajo chiefs on March 23, 1844.⁹⁵ These gestures raised official hopes for settlement of Gileños around Galeana,⁹⁶ but prospects for peace in January, 1843, were not this hopeful for the country east of the Conchos, where plains Indians were overrunning Chihuahua and northern Durango.⁹⁷

The storm threatening the northeastern departments abated, however, when Mexican armies mobilized along the border, following reports in mid-June that Colonel Jacob Snively was coming with 180 Texas volunteers⁹⁸ "to take possession of the city of Santa Fe . . . make an incursion into Chihuahua and stir up an insurrection in all of the continental part of Mexico."⁹⁹ (This information had arrived after Mexican alarm over American seizure of Monterey, California, October, 1842, following several invasions of Mexico by expeditions from Texas in 1841 and 1842). After the failure of Snively's project before it had reached enemy soil and Mexican troops had retired southward, plains Indians got in another of their thundering fall invasions. Stretching it through the first half of the next year, they devastated great sections of Mexico as far as the Tropic of Cancer.¹⁰⁰ At Laguna de los Pastores in southern Chihuahua in December, 1843, a Comanche band killed thirty-one officers and men of a company sent out from Santa Rosalia de Camargo.¹⁰¹ In August of the next year a renewal of war against Chihuahua by the Gileño tribes seemed inevitable.

This was due to the action of Colonel Antonio Narbona Jr., who commanded troops in Sonora and who revolted against the policy which allowed one department to feed savages that killed citizens in another. Treaty-bound Apaches living around Janos and along the San Pedro River in present southern Arizona had killed twenty-eight

⁹⁵ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Martínez de Lajarza," *loc. cit.*, p. 64.

⁹⁶ *Revista Oficial*, mayo 16, y junio 27 de 1843; *El Registro Oficial*, junio 18 de 1843.

⁹⁷ *El Registro Oficial*, febrero 19 de 1843.

⁹⁸ *El Registro Oficial*, marzo 5, julio 16 y 20, y agosto 3 y 6 de 1843; *Boletín extraordinario de San Luis Potosí*, febrero 25 de 1843, in *El Registro Oficial*, marzo 5 de 1843; *Revista Oficial*, junio 20 y 27 de 1843; Alcance a *Revista Oficial*, I, núm. 29, y núm. 32, julio de 1843.

⁹⁹ *El Registro Oficial*, julio 16 de 1843; Alcance a *Revista Oficial*, junio 16 y 20 de 1843.

¹⁰⁰ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 14 y 24 de 1843, y enero 4 y 25, febrero 1, marzo 14, 17, y 24, y abril 7 de 1844; *Revista Oficial*, junio 11 de 1844.

¹⁰¹ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 24 de 1843, y enero 4 de 1844.

or more of his soldiers, taken the cavalry herd at Fort Fronteras, and pillaged his department. Narbona had sent Lt. Col. José María González with over 300 soldiers to punish them. Don José's men surprised three Apache camps near Janos on August 23, 1844, and slaughtered over eighty "at their hearths," disposing of the children by "beating them against rocks."¹⁰² Fortunately, Chihuahua's treaties held and there was no Apache uprising, but across the department large parties of South Plains raiders were crossing the Rio Grande and adding to the difficulties of the authorities.

These Comanche bands gave Mexico the most thorough plundering to that date. The story of one band came to a climax beside Laguna de las Palomas in southeastern Chihuahua on October 26. In a surprise dawn attack Captain Juan N. Armendariz recovered thirty-two Mexican children and about 2,500 horses and mules. Reports of the fight give the children's names, ages, parents' names and addresses, and other information showing that these terrible raids dealt with human flesh and blood and were not merely semi-fictitious tales, as some American writers have treated them. Besides these little wretches rescued, the marauders carried away other persons,¹⁰³ presumably to the high plains. Such captives grew up to become warriors, chiefs, wives of chiefs, or mere camp slaves. In the face of such disasters, Durango tried to improve her defenses.

The governor and council decreed that all men eighteen to fifty years old should join *Patriotas de Policía* companies under Alejo García Conde. Every hacienda owner should organize and equip his peons. The government would name their officers and lay down rules of conduct.¹⁰⁴ But when these militiamen gathered for the required three-days service,¹⁰⁵ they usually lacked arms; therefore, they enjoyed little success against Comanches equipped with American carbines and plenty of ammunition. The picture looked no better in other northern departments as Mexico entered the crucial months of 1845.

¹⁰² *Revista Oficial*, septiembre 10 y 24 de 1844; Alcance a *Revista Oficial*, II, núm. 35, agosto de 1844; *El Correo de Chihuahua*, periódico del estado, abril 5 de 1851. Cf. Almada, *Diccionario . . . chihuahuense*, p. 372, *Diccionario . . . sonorenses*, p. 240, y "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 12.

¹⁰³ *El Registro Oficial*, septiembre 5 y 26, octubre 6, 27, y 31, noviembre 3, 7, 10, 17, 24, y 28, diciembre 1 y 29 de 1844; *Revista Oficial*, agosto 20, septiembre 24, octubre 1, 15, 22, y 29, noviembre 5, 12, 19, y 26, y diciembre 3 de 1844; Alcance a *Revista Oficial*, noviembre 19 de 1844.

¹⁰⁴ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 29 de 1844, y febrero 2 de 1845.

¹⁰⁵ *El Registro Oficial*, octubre 5 de 1845.

VI

NEW DEFENSE POLICIES OF 1845-1846

A rebellion which had started in Jalisco and had ended Santa Anna's dictatorship late in 1844¹⁰⁶ presaged more concern for national defense. Appointment of new governors followed, which resulted in different native policies. Luis Zuloaga replaced Monterde as governor of Chihuahua on January 20. He belonged to a clan remembered for producing a president (his brother),¹⁰⁷ some tough Indian fighters, and at least one professional scalp hunter. Indicative of the new accent on defense were the recommendations of Alejo García Conde to the minister of war and navy on February 14, 1845.

García Conde attributed the ineffectiveness of the troops against the Indians to their deployment on the interior. Situated between the western and middle Comanche trunk lines, Cerro Gordo (present Villa Hidalgo) in northern Durango was the main post for checking the invaders after they crossed the Rio Grande. When an alarm reached Cerro Gordo, according to García Conde, troops could not move fast enough to overtake the savages or to avoid defeat at some distant point. Campaigns from here wore out both horses and soldiers, allowing the enemy to escape "carrying considerable booty." García Conde proposed an outer and inner defense line for protecting the departments against Indians, Americans, and "usurpers from Texas."

The outer defense should encompass a string of posts along the south side of the Rio Grande from Matamoros to Villa del Paso del Norte, thence westward to the Pacific. This would be a series of Roman-style military colonies, each with a fort garrisoned by soldiers and their families.¹⁰⁸ This phase of García Conde's plan would utilize two existing presidios, San Carlos, located between the middle and western Comanche trunks in northern Chihuahua, and La Bahía, near the eastern trunk in Coahuila. García Conde's inner defense system imposed upon Chihuahua, Durango, and Coahuila the responsibility of protecting their respective sectors of the Bolsón de Mapimí. For Durango this would require a line of posts from near El Torreón de

¹⁰⁶ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 1 de 1844, y enero 16 de 1845; "Protesta de exmo. ayuntamiento de esta capital," suplemento al *Registro Oficial*, diciembre 26 de 1844; Alcance al *Registro Oficial*, enero 18, 20, y 30 de 1845; "Protesta pública del cura del Parral del departamento de Chihuahua . . .," diciembre 19 de 1844, con números del *Registro Oficial*, IV, diciembre de 1844.

¹⁰⁷ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . : XX.—Don Luis Zuloaga," *Boletín*, III, núm. 9 (junio de 1941), 137f.

¹⁰⁸ This was essentially the same line that El Caballero de Croix had conceived in 1778.

las Cañas, where the western Comanche trail entered the department, running across its margin of the Bolsón to Laguna de Tlahualilo on the Coahuilan boundary. Three of these posts would be the main anchor points for defense after the Indians reached the interior. San Blas, on the western end of the line, would be in the most appropriate position for pursuing Comanches when they crossed the Chihuahua-Durango boundary near El Torreón de las Cañas. Plains warriors also used this vicinity as their easiest departure point after raiding northern Durango (as they were doing in the very week that Conde wrote). La Estancia, a second anchor post, should be in northeastern Durango and could defend Mineral de Mapimí, a political, military, and trade center on the middle Comanche trunk. La Estancia could also watch another favorite departure point near Agua, by which Indians returned to their Bolsón rendezvous after raids. The commander of this interior line should reside at Pelayo, a third post, in the center of Durango's frontier, and he should have the greatest force.¹⁰⁹ Local militia should be used to back up this inner defense line, according to García Conde.¹¹⁰ The national congress did not authorize planting the military colonies "to restrain . . . the savages" until December 4, 1845;¹¹¹ war with the United States delayed their establishment until 1849.

The same issue of the Durango gazette which published García Conde's report also informed its readers that the United States congress had resolved to admit Texas into the Union. Comanches, who understood the strained relations between the two nations better than the Apaches did, moved southward to take advantage of Mexico's crisis in an earlier-than-usual invasion.¹¹² Apaches abandoned their peace agreements with Chihuahua in March, 1846, on the pretext that Monterde was no longer governor.¹¹³ Espejo Mescaleros broke their armistice with the forts of El Norte and San Carlos and opened war on the Mexicans.¹¹⁴ The governor of Sonora pointed to Indian raids as the chief cause of the misery and dejection of the population of northern Mexico and proposed joint action by Chihuahua, Durango, New Mexico, Sonora, and the national government to settle the

¹⁰⁹ García Conde recommended Captain Juan N. Arméndariz of Cerro Gordo for this position. In 1849, Arméndariz joined the list of professional scalp hunters under contract with the government of Chihuahua.

¹¹⁰ *El Registro Oficial*, marzo 2 de 1845.

¹¹¹ Francisco F. de la Maza, *Código de colonización y terrenos baldíos de la república mexicana* (México, D. F.: 1893), p. 356.

¹¹² *El Registro Oficial*, febrero 2 y 27 de 1845.

¹¹³ Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 11; *El Registro Oficial*, julio 10 de 1845.

¹¹⁴ *El Registro Oficial*, septiembre 7 de 1845.

Apaches in villages, where they would be taught to work.¹¹⁵ But his plan received little attention, partly because a new governor of Chihuahua, Don Angel Trías Sr., faced up to his department's problems.

Trías, who entered office August 24, 1845, became one of Chihuahua's most outstanding governors. A man of action and of considerable cultural interest, he co-operated with the national government against the United States and tackled the Indian menace on the domestic front. Encouraging travelers to go armed, he sought weapons from the interior and improved communications between his capital and the villages. He created a *Junta de Auxiliares* to assist forces intended for the reconquest of Texas and ordered men above seventeen to enlist in the Defenders of the Department.¹¹⁶ But most dramatic was his price of 9,000 pesos on the head of Kirker.

The "chief of the Apache nation" heard of this. He made a deal with Trías through an intermediary, deserted the Apaches, and rode down to the capital for a conference. Kirker signed a contract to bring in the scalps of his "redskin brothers" for fifty pesos each. With over 150 Delawares, Shawnees, unemployed teamsters, and border adventurers, he surprised the village of Chief Cachise near Jesús María, where he had been "chief." Kirker re-entered the capital triumphantly with a mule load of green scalps (182), nineteen Apache captives, and some rescued Mexicans. When Trías could not pay him in full, he quit scalping for the government¹¹⁷ and did not re-enter the business until early the next year. (Except for brief intervals, Chihuahua's return to the bounty policy lasted as long as she had unpacified Indians, or into the eighties).¹¹⁸ Apaches ran over the department freely during the rest of 1845,¹¹⁹ taking revenge on

¹¹⁵ *El Registro Oficial*, marzo 6 de 1845.

¹¹⁶ Almada, "Gobernadores . . . : XXII.—Gral. D. Angel Trías Sr.," III, núms. 10 y 11 (julio y agosto de 1941), 174f, y "Gobernadores . . . : XXIII.—Coronel Mauricio Ugarte," IV, núm. 3, 86ff, en *Boletín*, y *Diccionario . . . chihuahuense*, 9ff, 714f; González Flores, 83ff; Doña Teresa Amador y Trías de Noreño, "Algunas notas bibliográficas del gral. Angel Trías," *Boletín*, III, núms. 1-3 (octubre-diciembre de 1940), 427; Fröbel, II, 277f; Bartlett, *op. cit.*, II, 424ff; *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade, 1844-1847* (vol. I, *Southwest Historical Series*, edited by Ralph P. Bieber, 1931), 225.

¹¹⁷ The only source for the story of Kirker's scalping campaign as I have told it is one of his men, James Hobbs, given in his *Wild Life in the Far West*, pp. 81-95. Hobbs probably gave his account from memory prior to the publication of his autobiography a generation after the incident. Various circumstances indicate that it occurred in 1845, instead of 1842, the date that Hobbs gave.

¹¹⁸ Scalping Indians for state markets became so much of a business that one editorial writer referred to it as an "industry" in 1849. *El Faro*, septiembre 15 de 1849.

¹¹⁹ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 4 y 14 de 1845; *El Provisional*, periódico del gobierno de Chihuahua, enero 20 de 1846.

shepherds, travelers, and workmen, and forcing mines to close. But their havoc did not equal that of the Comanches.

The incursions of the plains Indians outdid their destruction of life and property for any previous year. On September 19 governors Esparza of Zacatecas and José Antonio Heredia of Durango made desperate appeals to the national government for help. Bands of nomads were overrunning two-thirds of the upper department and striking at the lower. Along their middle trunk line, in the district of Cuencamé they killed fifty persons in October alone.¹²⁰ Regulars and volunteers rushed here and there, but never seemed to reach the right place or to do the correct thing at the proper time. Panic prevailed from Durango City to Zacatecas City. Three or four big Indian parties were dashing over much of Durango and Zacatecas in day and night visits to every inhabited spot, when Governor Esparza sent another frantic call for help to Mexico City on October 9. One band ran into an ambush of troops on the next day at La Boquilla de San Benito in southeastern Durango, where Captain Francisco de Paula López recovered seventy children and hundreds of horses.¹²¹ Undeterred, this war party moved southward again. It reached the ranch of Santa Cruz thirty-five miles northwest of Zacatecas City before turning back. The invaders were slightly over 300 miles from the national capital, and more than 1,000 miles from their home range. Little in the way of defense stood between them and Mexico City. Mexican forces, needed to meet American armies moving toward their border, had to worry most about the enemy in the heart of their country. Their strategy resembled American frontier tactics in fighting Comanche raiding parties, which called for trapping the raiders as they withdrew and recovering captives and horses.

Throughout Durango, officers hurried over the land with companies, trying to anticipate the course of the enemy. The big war party re-crossed the Tropic of Cancer near Chalchihuites and followed roughly the present Pan-American Highway northward. The raiders moved rapidly. The number of their children captives grew hourly. Dead people and livestock, smoking villages, and parents wailing for lost children marked the route of the savages. At place after place people resisted them with every sort of homemade weapon at their command. The Indians passed nearer than half a mile from Nombre

¹²⁰ Reports to the governor of Durango published in the gazette will not bear out the statement of Bancroft, II, 600, that Comanches had killed 100 persons in the district of Cuencamé in September, 1845.

¹²¹ For the names and stories of these children rescued at La Boquilla de San Benito see the issues of *El Registro Oficial* in the fall of 1845.

de Dios, a military post, and about midday on October 16 skirted within sight of the capital of Durango. Fifteen miles north of the seat of government they killed eighteen persons at Guadalupe. The raiders also started a fire which destroyed approximately 5,000 *fanegas* of corn and consumed twenty more people. They brushed with Don Alejo García Conde and 140 Patriotas de Policía near present Francisco I. Madero. With better co-ordination and less jealousy between civil and military leaders, the invaders might have encountered difficulty, for other officers in this vicinity had several times as many men as the Indians did. On "the doleful eighteenth" the nomads hit San Juan del Río. This was the seat of a military district nearly 100 miles north of Durango City, but officers and soldiers were out chasing rumors and quarrelling with one another. With "no more weapons than their bare arms," slings, rocks, sticks, fifteen practically useless guns, and fanatical faith, women, children, and a few men rushed out upon the Indians, who killed eighty-four of them, wounded fifty more, and pushed on.

Ahead of the marauders, Mexicans speculated on half a dozen possible passes which the raiders might use to reach the Bolsón, while behind the savages civil and military leaders were fighting a battle of recriminations and alibis which ran on in and out of the press for months. Higher authorities replaced district commanders at Cuencame, Nombre de Dios, and San Juan del Río. This confusion illustrates the kind of chaos that Indian raids frequently produced in Mexico, but never before had the country been so near invasion by a major power at the same time that Indians were despoiling broad areas. Companies from Santiago Papasquiaro, Cerro Gordo, and various ranches rushed to the Sierra de las Cuchillas west of La Zarca and took a position. The Comanches arrived and assailed them in several charges on October 22. The Mexicans stood their ground. The invaders fled eastward and reached their Bolsón rendezvous with part of their plunder, livestock, and captives; but the soldiers had recovered twenty-eight children, whose names and stories appeared in the Durango and Chihuahua gazettes.¹²² This sketch concerns only one of many Comanche raiding parties that crisscrossed the northern departments in the fall of 1845.

During the first week of November, South Plains nomads had the population of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, and Zacatecas much more alarmed than the nation's international crisis. The raiders had

¹²² *El Registro Oficial*, septiembre 4, 7, y 21, octubre 5, 9, 16, 19, 23, 26, y 30, noviembre 2, 6, 9, 13, 16, y 20 de 1845.

stripped the country of horses and mules needed for mounting troops, pulling artillery, and drawing supply trains. In places the air behind them became foul from decaying plow oxen and from cattle, goats, and sheep, which might have supplied civilian and military larders, as well as from cadavers of cowboys, muleteers, and travelers. They and the Apaches had sent up thousands of bushels of grain in smoke across New Mexico, Arizona, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Sonora, Durango, Nuevo León, San Luis Potosí, Tamaulipas, and Zacatecas, and in independent Texas. Local, departmental, and national leaders struggled to mobilize manpower, morale, and resources among men afraid to leave their homes. Soldiers, who were needed to watch filibusters and Texas and United States armies about to descend upon their borders, stayed busy trailing Indians in the interior. Receiving rumors from every direction, the military expected that the worst raids were yet to come. Late in November General Francisco García Conde withdrew 400 men from the border and searched out the Bolsón. As usual when soldiers entered this region, he found no enemy. But after his departure, raiders reappeared as from nowhere. Reports from the accursed areas and editorials deplored the appearance of a paralyzed, depopulated land returning to nature. Its mines were closed. Commerce was dead; the future of the land seemed hopeless. With an American war possible, the editor of the Durango gazette could see no end to Comanche incursions.¹²³ West of the Conchos, mountain Indians belabored Chihuahua and Sonora.

Late in December, 1845, they edged into the Comanche zone.¹²⁴ Mescaleros and Lipans from the Big Bend joined them.¹²⁵ Nomads and sierra savages operated through the winter and spring of 1846 without letup. No initial half year had witnessed such severe raids.¹²⁶ To recount the tragedies, kidnappings, stealing, and destruction which Apaches¹²⁷ and Comanches¹²⁸ brought to more than a quarter of the Mexican republic would be too lengthy. Events of May 13 will illustrate the dual nature of Mexico's dilemma.

In Washington, the United States Congress declared war on her

¹²³ *El Registro Oficial*, noviembre 9, 13, 16, 20, 23, y 27, diciembre 4, 11, y 14 de 1845; Alcance al *Registro Oficial*, diciembre 5 de 1845.

¹²⁴ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 14 de 1845; *El Provisional*, enero 20 de 1846.

¹²⁵ *El Registro Oficial*, diciembre 4 de 1845.

¹²⁶ Mexican gazette reports and American sources are the most complete on Indian raids in Mexico for any year thus far.

¹²⁷ *El Provisional*, enero 20, febrero 3 y 10, marzo 17, abril 7 y 28, mayo 12, 19, y 26, junio 9 y 23, y julio 27 de 1846.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, enero 20, febrero 3 y 10, marzo 17, mayo 19 de 1846; *El Registro Oficial*, marzo 5, 8, 12, y 15, y mayo 24 y 28 de 1846.

on that day, while at home the commander of Santiago Papasquiaro in Durango received word of Comanches in his district. With all means at his disposal, he sought them, but found only their abandoned camps, over seventy dead horses, and evidence of cruel treatment to their Mexican captives.¹²⁹ On the same dismal thirteenth, other Indians (probably Apaches) fell upon woodchoppers near Balleza in Chihuahua, killed Juan José Mendis, and carried away Eugenio Rodríguez.¹³⁰ Several hundred miles to the north Apaches came upon Fort Carrizal. They took livestock, killed Vivián and Hilario Jiménez, stripped Pedro Corona and Pantaleón Sedillos of their clothes, carried off Sedillos's son, and gravely wounded Jesús Sambrano.¹³¹ Meanwhile, east of the Río Parral in southern Chihuahua, Comanches killed Andrés Munezin and carried off fourteen-year-old Alejo Ramos. Wails of the people and pleas for arms from district commanders continued to go up to the departmental authorities, but to no avail.¹³² Carlos Pacheco, father of President Manuel González, secretary of *fomento* (in the eighties) of the same name, commanded at Hidalgo del Parral. He complained that the "public security has disappeared." Atrocities filled the villages, murders occurred along the roads, and robberies covered the countryside, while the very land itself looked savage. The "absolute lack of disposable force, no less than of usable arms, munitions of war, and other necessary resources is the reason that those Indian evils are not checked," wrote Pacheco to the departmental government.¹³³ Every diarist going through northern Mexico agreed fully with his summary of conditions and found himself taxed for words to describe the pall of desolation, buzzard-picked human skeletons, and deserted settlements.¹³⁴ Faced with thousands of plundering, murdering savages at home, according to one Mexican historian's interpretation, and a Yankee invasion from abroad, Mexico called upon her most vigorous men. One was José Félix Maceyra, described as a "practical man." Within a fortnight of the thirteenth he had per-

¹²⁹ *El Registro Oficial*, mayo 28 de 1846.

¹³⁰ *El Provisional*, junio 9 de 1846.

¹³¹ *El Provisional*, junio 9, julio 7 de 1846. Sambrano had his day of revenge in the fifties as a professional scalp hunter.

¹³² *El Provisional*, mayo 26, junio 9, y julio 7 de 1846.

¹³³ *El Provisional*, mayo 26 de 1846.

¹³⁴ *Ruxton of the Rockies*, edited by LeRoy Hafen (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950), pp. 123, 129f, 132-140, 154f, 158, 164; Fröbel, p. 298; *Diary & Letters of Josiah Gregg*, edited by Maurice Garland Fulton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), I, 296, 304, 322; *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade, 1844-1847*, pp. 231f, 236, 240f; Samuel C. Reid, Jr., *The Scouting Expedition of McCulloch's Texas Rangers; or the Summer and Fall Campaign of the Army of the United States in Mexico . . .* (Austin: The Steck Company, 1935), p. 66.

sueded Chihuahua to play its "last card." On May 20 and 28 the departmental council proclaimed war to the bitter end against the hostile natives. Maceyra consolidated sentiment in the council behind the proposal of "two unlyrical North Americans" and put through a "drastic resolution."¹³⁵ Its preamble read like a paragraph from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in the days of Viking invasions of England. It said:

"Subjected effectually to the domination of a few barbarians, we travel along the roads until this hour at their whim; we cultivate the land where they wish and in amount that they wish, we use sparingly things that they have left to us until the moment that it strikes their appetite to take them for themselves, and we occupy the land while the savages permit us . . ."¹³⁶

"Perhaps," the Chihuahuan gazette added, "there is not a single person in the department, who has not had to lament the death of some relative, or the loss of all, or the major part, of his fortune at the hands of the Indians."¹³⁷

The "drastic resolution" created the Council of Honorary Rewards. Similar local councils were to follow, each with a president and three or four other members. They had the duty of examining, verifying, and displaying scalps when presented for warrants on the state treasury. The exchequer should pay fifty "overweight" pesos as an "honorary reward" for the scalp of each hostile Indian. The "notorious" Lord of the Scalp Hunters (alias the "TERROR to the Apaches")¹³⁸ should conduct the war against the Indians in the field. He had struck the camp of chiefs José Chato and Maturan on March 20 near Chuchuichupa in northwestern Chihuahua and brought away Apache hair.¹³⁹ Although the government recognized Kirker as the leader of a special corps of 125 men, other companies might organize independently under article ten and set forth on separate campaigns.¹⁴⁰

Don Santiago gathered volunteers and trailed raiders of Chief

¹³⁵ Fuentes Mares, p. 137f. This source does not identify the "two unlyrical North Americans." One could have been Kirker. Another possibility is that Fuentes Mares has confused the facts here with the Fifth Law, May 25, 1849, and was thinking of the alleged influence of Major Michael H. Chevallé and Captain John Joel Glanton in its enactment. The Fifth Law set up Chihuahua's best-known scalp bounty program.

¹³⁶ Fuentes Mares, p. 137.

¹³⁷ *El Provisional*, junio 23 de 1846.

¹³⁸ *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California*, edited by William Elsey Connelley (Kansas City: Bryant & Douglas Book and Stationery Co., 1907), p. 388.

¹³⁹ *El Provisional*, mayo 12 de 1846.

¹⁴⁰ *Boletín del Provisional*, noviembre 7 de 1846.

Reyes's band to Galeana. After entertaining them with whiskey until they were in a stupor, his men and the local Mexican population fell upon them and scalped 148 on July 7. The Chihuahuan historian, Francisco R. Almada, called the slaughter a "veritable carnage," but did not mention Kirker's triumphal delivery of the trophies strung along poles into the capital for payment.¹⁴¹ The entry of Trías upon a second term as governor on August 25, 1846, meant a shift of attention from Indians to Americans.

As leader of the war party, he offered the Scalp Lord a command as colonel in the army sent against Colonel Alexander Doniphan and his First Regiment of Missouri Mounted Volunteers. But Kirker was in contact with President Polk's agent, James W. Magoffin, who had helped to effect the peaceful conquest of New Mexico. Magoffin persuaded the Scalp Captain to desert to Doniphan. Kirker joined the invaders a few hours after their victory at Brazito and guided them through Mexico to Matamoros.¹⁴² Severe Apache¹⁴³ and Comanche¹⁴⁴ raids continued through the year. At Acatita de Baján near the Laguna de Tlahualilo one Comanche band annihilated Don Francisco de Paula López, Durango's most successful Indian fighter, and nearly 400 of "the best disciplined and organized" soldiers of the department on June 1.¹⁴⁵ Both American and Mexican sources dwell upon the wretched appearance that the savages gave to the land. They agree also that Indians kept clear of Yankee invaders. On various occasions American soldiers filled in spare time chastising

¹⁴¹ *El Provisional*, julio 7, 14, y 21 de 1846; *El Registro Oficial*, julio 26 de 1846; Almada, "Gobernadores . . . Ugarte," *loc. cit.*, p. 87; *Ruxton of the Rockies*, 148f; George F. Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (London: John Murray, Albemarle St., 1847), 151ff; Diary of Lt. Cave Coutts, microfilm copy of MS (Berkeley: Bancroft Library), 51f; *El Sonorense*, periódico del gobierno de Sonora, julio 24 de 1846; "Documents for the History of Chihuahua." Extracts from the MSS & Printed Matter in the Collection of Mons. Alphonse Pinart, II (1824-1855), 35; Almada, "Los Apaches," *loc. cit.*, p. 10.

¹⁴² *The Republican* (Santa Fe, New Mexico), November 20, 1847; Dawson, 10ff; Edwards, p. 96; *Marching with the Army of the West, 1846-1848*, edited by Ralph P. Bieber (vol. IV, *Southwest Historical Series*, 1936), 237; *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California*, pp. 101f, 388f.

¹⁴³ *El Provisional*, julio 7, 14, y 21, y agosto 4 de 1846; *Boletín del Provisional*, octubre 31, noviembre 7 y 14, y diciembre 5 de 1846; *El Registro Oficial*, junio 14 de 1846.

¹⁴⁴ *El Provisional*, julio 7 y 14, y agosto 4 y 25 de 1846; *Boletín del Provisional*, septiembre 11, 18, y 26, octubre 10 y 17, y noviembre 7 y 14 de 1846; *El Registro Oficial*, junio 7, 14, 21, y 25, julio 5 y 19, agosto 6, 9, y 13, septiembre 6, 13, 20, y 24, octubre 4, 22, y 29, noviembre 8, 12, y 19, y diciembre 17 de 1846; Suplemento al *Registro Oficial*, octubre 21 y 22 de 1846.

¹⁴⁵ *El Registro Oficial*, junio 14, 21, y 25 de 1846.

the marauders. They brought the first relief from savages that northern Mexico had ever known. With their withdrawal after the war, the mountain and plains Indians resumed their raiding. This went on until forces within the United States broke up the tribes after the American Civil War.