

PEDRO GUAL AND THE PATRIOT EFFORT TO CAPTURE A MEXICAN PORT, 1816

At the close of 1815 the patriots of northern South America faced a seemingly impenetrable wall of Stygian blackness. Pablo Morillo and his Spanish legions had reconquered the Captaincy-General of Venezuela and were starving the defendants of the port of Cartagena into submission. For those who championed Venezuelan and New Granadan independence, foreign aid and coöperation with the more successful insurgent regions of Spanish America became a *sine qua non*. Bolívar, in his efforts to free Venezuela, was to receive succor from Alexandre Petion and the Republic of Haiti. The patriot leaders of Cartagena and Bogotá, on the other hand, sought aid from the United States in their hour of need. With his Haitian backing, Bolívar launched two expeditions from Aux Cayes and rescued northern South America from the Spanish, while those who labored to obtain the support of the United States became involved in a maze of intrigues all calculated to speed the cause of independence.

Pedro José Gual, the agent dispatched to the United States by Cartagena and the United Provinces of New Granada, was no novice. Exiled from Caracas by the royalist government in 1808, he labored for Venezuelan independence in Trinidad and two years later returned to his native city to take part in the establishment of Venezuela's first independent government. As secretary to Francisco Miranda, Gual served the new government until the Capitulation of San Mateo in July, 1812, terminated the initial patriot effort in Venezuela. For the next three years Gual served various masters. In the islands he beseeched British officials for aid; in the United States during 1812 he pleaded with merchants for matériel of war; in Cartagena he served as governor of the city and as mediator between the leaders of that stronghold and Bolívar. All these experiences marked him as a man of ability. His astuteness, impartiality, knowledge of English, and his intense and fervid desire to realize independence prompted his choice as agent to the United States in 1815.¹

¹ Sketches of his career appear in Ramón Azpurúa, *Biografías de hombres notables de Hispano-América* . . . (4 vols., Caracas, 1877), II, 368; Appleton's *Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (6 vols., New York, 1888), III, 8; and in José Espasa, *et al.*, eds., *Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana* (70 vols., Madrid, 1907-1933), XXVI, 1540.

Following the confirmation of his appointment by the National Congress of the Confederation of New Granada,² Gual sailed from Cartagena early in August, 1815. His instructions required him to obtain supplies and loans and to solicit aid and recognition from the Washington government.³ From Alexandria, Virginia, he informed Dr. William Thornton—the mentor of numerous Latin-American agents—of his arrival and pleaded the justice of the Latin-American independence movement.⁴ He then proceeded to Washington late in August where he was granted an interview by Richard Rush who was serving as secretary of state *pro tempore*. Gual proposed that United States warships convoy merchantmen carrying military supplies to Cartagena, but Rush discountenanced this suggestion as well as Gual's intimations respecting United States recognition of the new republics to the south.⁵ But this defeat did not lessen his ardor for United States support. "Our political situation," he wrote the New Granadan secretary of foreign affairs, "is plainly to recognize that relations with the United States are the first concern of New Granada." To further these relations he argued that "connections of friendship and commerce between the America of the North and that of the South" should be established.⁶ And, being a man of deeds as well of words, he enticed many to support with their funds and pens the cause of Spanish-American independence. More than this, he envisioned an immediate attack on the royalist strongholds in Spanish America—an attack that would perforce emanate from the United States.

Following the fall of Cartagena to Morillo late in 1815 and the taking of Bogotá early in 1816, Gual became an agent without a country; yet as he had adopted New Granada when Venezuela

² "Decreto del Congreso General acerca de la misión de la provincia de Cartagena á Norte América," August 12, 1815, in José Félix Blanco y Ramón Aspurrúa, eds., *Documentos para la vida pública del libertador de Colombia, Perú, y Bolivia*. . . (14 vols. Caracas, 1875-1877), V, 284-285. See also "Resolución sobre las misiones diplomáticas," July 1, 1815, in Eduardo Posada, ed. and comp., *Congreso de las Provincias Unidas* (Bogotá, 1924), p. 330.

³ "Instrucciones del Gobierno de Cartagena dadas á su comisionado para Norte América, Dr. Pedro Gual," May 22, 1815, in Blanco y Aspurrúa, eds., *op. cit.*, V, 277-278; Posada, ed. and comp., *op. cit.*, pp. 331-332.

⁴ Gual to Thornton, August 20, 1815, in William Thornton Papers, Vol. IV, Library of Congress.

⁵ Rush to James Madison, September 2, 1815, in Joel R. Poinsett Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁶ September 2, 1815, in Simón Bolívar O'Leary, ed., *Memorias del General O'Leary* (32 vols., Caracas, 1879-1888), XIV, 312-313.

fell he now attached himself to Mexico with the firm belief that by so doing he would be able to further the cause of independence throughout Spanish America. The economic importance of Mexico, its larger population and resources, and the active resistance of that area to Spanish authority in 1815 and 1816, attest to the wisdom of Gual's self-imposed change of allegiance. His loyalty to Venezuela and New Granada was not lessened by his desire to aid Mexico, for once that region was free he envisioned Mexican support to the other countries.

News of the progress of the revolt in Mexico had reached him shortly after his arrival in the United States. He was advised that the patriot cause there was "in a brilliant state." The Mexican congress, he was informed, had convened at Valladolid and had published a manifesto to the people which was "a masterpiece, full of moral principles, of political doctrines, sane and genuine. . . ." ⁷ Moreover, Gual was convinced that the "army" which José Álvarez de Toledo, whose patriotism can well be doubted in light of subsequent events, ⁸ was training on the frontier of the Internal Provinces, would be capable of maintaining lines of communication between the United States and Mexico. ⁹ During subsequent months, Gual's interest in Mexico grew, developing into an honest conviction that South American independence could not be achieved unless that of Mexico was won first. ¹⁰

The activities of Toledo constituted the second effort on the part of that self-styled general to gather a force with which to conquer Texas and Mexico. His first attempt had met with defeat by the Spanish in 1812. ¹¹ The second effort was more widely publicized, and Gual, like many another, still believed in

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

⁸ Respecting Toledo's lack of sincerity, cf. Joseph B. Lockey, "Toledo's Florida Intrigues," in *Essays in Pan-Americanism* (Berkeley, 1939), pp. 97-124; Julio Zárate, *La guerra de independencia* (Vicente Riva Palacio, ed., *México á través de los siglos* [5 vols., México, 1887-1889], III), 390-391, 560; Manuel Puga y Acal, "El caso de la Isla Amelia," *Revista mexicana de derecho internacional*, I (September, 1919), 475.

⁹ Gual to secretary of state and foreign relations, September 2, 1815, in O'Leary, ed., *op. cit.*, XIV, 313.

¹⁰ This opinion of Gual's motives was related by his Baltimore associate, John Laborde, to José Servando Teresa de Mier y Noriega (Mier y Noriega to "mui caro Frasquito," July 13, 1816, in J. E. Hernández y Dávalos, ed., *Colección de documentos para la historia de la guerra de independencia de México de 1808 á 1821* [6 vols. México, 1877-1882], VI, 907).

¹¹ The activities of Toledo are well put in Harris Gaylord Warren's *The Sword was their Passport. A History of American Filibustering in the Mexican Revolution* (Baton Rouge, 1943).

the general's professed sincerity and purpose. Early in September, 1815, Gual dispatched a letter to Toledo, who at that time was in New Orleans, in which he expressed satisfaction and interest in the Republic of Mexico and urged the appointment of a Mexican minister to the United States.¹² Unknown to Gual, José María de Herrera had been appointed to this post in July, 1815,¹³ but his departure had been delayed by domestic intrigues in Mexico.¹⁴ Encouraged by Gual's letter, which stated also that a Mexican representative would be welcome in Washington, Toledo left for Mexico. In November he returned accompanied by Herrera and his staff.¹⁵ From New Orleans, Herrera wrote Gual, thanking him for his interest, congratulating him on his arrival in Washington, and stressing that cooperation between Latin-American agents would be profitable and easy because of their common problems.¹⁶ Toledo, who had previously replied to Gual, seeking to snare another patriot, expressed himself in accord with the Venezuelan's desire to free Mexico before liberating South America.¹⁷ With the establishment of this harmony of ideas and purpose both parties busied themselves in popularizing their cause among American merchants and financial interests, purchasing supplies and recruiting troops.

Convinced of the ultimate potentialities of an attack on Mexico, Gual journeyed to Baltimore to visit the various men of commerce there who were in sympathy with the independence movement. Hezekiah Niles printed Gual's articles concerning patriot activities in Caracas, Bogotá, and Cartagena in his *Weekly Register*.¹⁸ While in Baltimore, Gual wrote Joel R. Poinsett, requesting

¹² José María de Herrera to Gual, November 8, 1815, in Archivo General de la Nación, México, Sección de Historia, Operaciones de Guerra, Notas Diplomáticas, tomo III [hereinafter cited as AGN, ND]; Herrera to Revolutionary Government of Mexico, November [?], 1815, in *ibid.*; Toledo to Supreme Government of Mexico, November 25, 1815, in *ibid.*

All manuscripts in Mexican and Spanish archives cited in this study can be found in the Library of Congress, either in photocopies or typescripts.

¹³ Oficio del Sup.^{mo} Gov.^{no} Mexicano, July 6, 1815, inclosure in [Sedella] to Onís, July 16, 1815, in Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Sección de Estado, Legajo 5559, Expediente 26 [hereafter cited as AHN, Est.]; Isidro Fabela, *Los precursores de la diplomacia mexicana* (Archivo histórico diplomático mexicano, Núm. 20, Mexico, 1926), p. 84.

¹⁴ Herrera to Gual, November 8, 1815, in AGN, ND, tomo III.

¹⁵ Toledo to Revolutionary Government of Mexico, November 25, 1815, in *ibid.*

¹⁶ Herrera to Gual, November 8, 1815, in *ibid.*

¹⁷ Toledo to Supreme Government of Mexico, November 25, 1815, in *ibid.*; *idem* to *idem*, November 26, 1815, inclosure in Onís to Cevallos, July 28, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5641.

¹⁸ Miguel Velásquez Varas, "Don José Miguel Carrera en Estados Unidos," *Revista chilena de historia y geografía*, III (3rd quarter, 1912), 20.

that he prepare a short paper setting forth the course which South America should follow in order to ensure future prosperity.¹⁹ Communications were also addressed to various parties in New York who were known to be interested in selling military supplies. Among those addressed was a "Mr. Robinson," probably William Davis Robinson, a merchant of Caracas during the pre-revolutionary period, who was now bent on recovering a fortune lost in the Venezuelan capital by selling arms to the Mexican patriots for a group of New York merchants.²⁰ He like Gaul was known to Dr. William Thornton and was associated with Fernando Fairfax who had multiple business connections in New York and elsewhere.²¹ Previous to Robinson's departure for New Orleans in December, 1815, Gual, it appears, discussed with him the probability of securing a future port on the Gulf of Mexico. But for the present it was agreed that Robinson was to investigate conditions in Mexico, feel out Toledo and Herrera, and await further developments.²²

By the fall of 1815 Gual was convinced of the necessity of securing a port which would afford ready access to merchant vessels and provide a harborage for patriot privateers. A surplus of arms and munitions in the United States following the close of the War of 1812 constituted an ideal source of supply if this matériel could be transported safely to Mexico. The dominance of the royalist forces along the coastal regions of that country served to lessen the ardor of American merchants in their desire to aid the patriots and at the same time rid themselves of a now useless commodity.²³ Prior to January, 1816, many United States merchants had been cautious in their dealings with the patriots

¹⁹ February 9, 1816, in Poinsett Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

²⁰ Gual to Thornton, October 7, 1815, in Thornton Papers, IV, Library of Congress; Narración de los Sucesos de William Davis Robinson, October 8, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5561, Exp. 10; and a similar manuscript from the Mexican archives in Enrique Ríos, *El historiador Davis Robinson* (Mexico, 1942), pp. 68-103.

²¹ Fernando Fairfax to Thornton, March 13, 1815, in Thornton Papers, IV, Library of Congress.

²² There is no available proof that Gual and Robinson met in 1815, but from the subsequent train of events in which both men were implicated, it appears almost conclusive that some prearrangements were made prior to Robinson's departure for New Orleans and Mexico.

²³ Gual to Thornton, October 7, 1815, in Thornton Papers, Library of Congress; Gual to Toledo, February 8, 1816, inclosure in Onís to Cevallos, July 17, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5558, Exp. 12. Toledo received additional assurance from his wife, who arrived in New Orleans in March, 1816, that supplies could be had in the East (Ygnacio de Arriaga to Mariano de Arriaga, April 1, 1816, inclosure in *ibid.*).

because of the possibility of violating the neutrality laws of the United States. But in that month President Monroe informed the newly recognized Spanish minister, Luis de Onís, that the laws of the United States not only permitted commerce with the insurgents, but that "all vessels flying patriot flags would be received and protected in American ports."²⁴

Grasping the significance of this pronouncement, Gual returned to Washington. Early in February, 1816, he informed Toledo that Monroe's statement had greatly increased the popularity of the Spanish republics' cause. He explained that the southern and middle states were prospering and wished to trade with the nations to the south, although numerous speculators, who desired to ship goods to Mexico could not do so because they did not know which ports the patriots held. Accordingly he encouraged Toledo to write to various merchants in the United States, indicating the safest means of carrying on trade. Furthermore, he recommended that Toledo take Veracruz or Tampico or have the Mexicans make ready a smaller port so as to occasion no delay in the shipment of supplies. "We are now at the crisis," Gual continued, "and a slight impulse would suffice to swing the balance in our favor." But he reiterated that the first attempt should be made in North America, that is, in Mexico. Once this region was freed, Gual continued, South American freedom would follow as a matter of course.²⁵

The letter reached Toledo at New Orleans in March, 1816.²⁶ He apparently concurred with Gual's suggestion concerning the acquisition of a Gulf port, for operations were begun to secure one. Discussions were held among Toledo, Herrera, Robinson, who had reached New Orleans in February, and others respecting the feasibility of seizing Tampico or Veracruz.²⁷ Financial aid, it was hoped, would be provided in part by the Mexican congress and

²⁴ Monroe to Onís, January 19, 1816, in *American State Papers, Foreign Relations* (6 vols., Washington, 1833-1859), IV, 426. The quotation is from Gual's letter to Toledo of February 8, 1816, an inclosure in Onís to Cevallos, July 17, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5558, Exp. 12. Monroe did not put the matter so forcefully. The United States had declared its ports open to patriot vessels in July, 1815 (Arthur P. Whitaker, *United States and Latin American Independence* [Baltimore, 1941], p. 118).

²⁵ Inclosure in Onís to Cevallos, July 17, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5558, Exp. 12; and quoted in part by Clarence Wyatt Bishpam, "Fray Antonio de Sedella," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, II (October, 1919), 389-390; and by Stanley Faye, "The Great Stroke of Pierre Laffite," *ibid.*, XXIII (July, 1941), 756.

²⁶ Faye, *op. cit.*, p. 752.

²⁷ For evidence of this plot see letters of W. D. Robinson in AHN, Est., Leg. 5561, Exp. 10; and in *Rfos, op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.

various merchants in Veracruz,²⁸ while additional man power was to be secured from Haiti where Toledo hoped to recruit Negroes.²⁹

Gual, it appears, was also the originator of the move to obtain aid in Haiti. He was in communication with Mariano Montilla, Luis Aury, and Juan Marimón—all associates of his during his governorship of Cartagena—who were in Aux Cayes aiding Bolívar in the preparation of the first expedition against Venezuela. One of them no doubt informed Gual that Negroes could be recruited there, and he forwarded this information to Toledo, Robinson, and Herrera.³⁰ They in turn wrote a certain Cadena, a Mexican agent in Haiti, who got in touch with Aury.³¹

To further the plan, Robinson, in March, 1816, left for Mexico on the United States brig of war *Saranac*. His real mission was cloaked in secrecy. It was publicly announced that he was being sent to collect a debt owed Joseph Nicolson, a New Orleans merchant, by the Mexican generals, Victoria and Terán. By April Robinson arrived at Victoria's headquarters. The general, however, refused to pay his debt and displayed no interest in the plan to take Veracruz or any other port. Furthermore, Robinson learned that General Terán had dissolved the Mexican congress which was to have supplied part of the funds for the expedition against Veracruz. Realizing that Terán held the upper hand, Robinson left for Tehuacán to interest him in the Gulf port scheme.³²

Meanwhile Gual was not idle. By May, 1816, he had gone to Philadelphia, the "hub" of patriot activity in the United States,³³ and there developed a vital adjunct to the scheme—the formation of a naval force to work in conjunction with Toledo's land forces. He had received word that Bolívar had left Aux Cayes for Venezuela with only a part of the forces collected in the Haitian port for Montilla and Aury had refused to participate in the attack on

²⁸ Onís to Calleja, July 14, 1816, in Apodaca Letterbooks, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

²⁹ W.D.R. to Toledo [June ?], 1816, inclosure in [Sedella] to Onís, July 16, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5559, Exp. 26.

³⁰ Respecting Gual's correspondence with the patriots in Aux Cayes see Gual to [Thornton], May 8, 1816, in Thornton Papers, IV, Library of Congress.

³¹ Morphy to Apodaca, July 9, 1816, in Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Papeles Procedentes de Cuba, Leg. 1900; Faye, "Commodore Aury," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (July, 1941), 622, 629.

³² Robinson's Narración, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5561, Exp. 10; John A. Nicholson to Terán and Victoria, July 20, 1816, inclosure in Apodaca to minister of state, in *ibid.*

³³ Gual to [Thornton], May 8, 1816, in Thornton Papers, IV, Library of Congress.

South America.³⁴ Having broken with Bolívar, Aury and Montilla proceeded to seek what was, in their opinion, a more logical use for the forces under their command. Aury had a sizeable squadron which would be welcomed by any patriot leader of the day. Hence Montilla, who was apparently acquainted with Gual's endeavors, left Aux Cayes for the United States to arrange with Gual the disposition of Aury's fleet.³⁵ For like Gual, Montilla and Aury felt that Mexico must be freed before any attempt could be made to invade the southern continent.³⁶

In Philadelphia, Montilla professed to have deserted the patriot cause. Actually he lost little time in establishing contact with other patriots in that city.³⁷ In short time Montilla and Telésforo Orea, the first Venezuelan agent to the United States, together with Manuel Torres, who had been exiled from New Granada in 1797, formed a revolutionary junta.³⁸ By mid-1816 this organization had a definite program of action. Plans were now completed for the great blow against the royalists of New Spain.

The details agreed upon are not known. But it is evident that Aury was to have cooperated with a land force headed by Toledo, who in turn hoped to act in concert with the leading Mexican generals. Gual had received word from Toledo concerning conditions in Mexico. The general wrote encouragingly, although he was perhaps better informed. He related that the government at Tehuacán was growing stronger daily, but due to a lack of arms its forces had lost control of the road connecting Veracruz and Mexico City.³⁹ Gual replied that plans for giving aid had been formulated; that, specifically, an expedition of twenty-six vessels was to leave Aux Cayes to attack Nautla, a

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Faye, "Commodore Aury," *loc. cit.*, p. 628; H. L. V. Ducoudray-Holstein, *Memoirs of Simón Bolívar* (Boston, 1829), pp. 131, 134-135, 138.

³⁶ Vicente Lecuna, ed., "Documentos inéditos para la historia de Bolívar—Expedición de los Cayos, I," *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de la Historia* [Venezuela], XIX (July-September, 1936), 329; Ducoudray-Holstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 131, 138.

³⁷ Onís to Cevallos, July 17, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5558, Exp. 12.

³⁸ In the months that followed this junta was greatly expanded. It included José Rafael Revenga and Juan Germán Roscio, foreign minister and vice-president respectively of the Republic of Colombia to be, Miguel Santamaría, a Mexican and later Colombian minister to Mexico and Mexican minister to Spain, Vicente Pazos of Buenos Aires and Upper Perú, a prominent figure in the Buenos Aires government of 1810-1812, and who, in 1818, was to launch an attack on Adams and Monroe for their interference in the Amelia Island seizure.

³⁹ Gual to [Thornton], May 8, 1816, in Thornton Papers, IV, Library of Congress.

smaller Mexican port. He requested that several barks be sent to await the expedition in the Bahama Channel, and suggested that instructions be entrusted to the captains of the barks regarding the ultimate destination of the fleet.⁴⁰

In New Orleans, Toledo and Herrera hastened to carry out Gual's suggestions concerning the fleet. Two vessels were made ready⁴¹ and two agents were dispatched to Haiti to make final arrangements. They carried blank Mexican commissions for privateers to Aury signed by Herrera.⁴² President Petion of Haiti lent his coöperation, and by the end of June a joint land-sea attack on some Gulf port was within the realm of possibility. When news of the arrangements reached New Orleans from Aux Cayes, orders were forwarded to Mexico to detain Aury if he should arrive before the land force under Toledo.⁴³

Meanwhile, Robinson was endeavoring to convince Terán of the necessity of taking a port through a land attack. He asserted that the Cartagenan refugees in Haiti who had refused to join Bolívar now desired to support the Mexican cause; and that additional succor had been offered by the president of the Negro republic. Except for funds, he assured Terán, all was in readiness for an attack on a royalist stronghold in Mexico. But Terán was skeptical of foreign help which might relieve him of his command;⁴⁴ hence Robinson was given only a vague promise of financial aid. Yet this was sufficient evidence to him of Terán's willingness to support the Gulf port venture, for he wrote Toledo in May and again in June urging him to go to Haiti to gather troops and supplies.⁴⁵

The scheme which Gual had nurtured for over six months neared completion. Early in May, 1816, he wrote Thornton: "I am almost decided to embark for New Orleans to join some of our best friends, as there is no hope for the present of getting assistance from the U. [*sic*] States. We are abandoned to our fate, and of course, we must try again to conquer, or die alone. Indeed,

⁴⁰ Morphy to Apodaca, June 21, 1816, in AGI, PC, Leg. 1900; Onís to captain general, August 3, 1816, in *ibid*, Leg. 1898.

⁴¹ Onís to captain general, August 3, 1816, in AGI, PC, Leg. 1898.

⁴² Morphy to Apodaca, July 9, 1816, in AGI, PC, Leg. 1900; Warren, "Toledo's Reconciliation with Spain and Projects for Suppressing Rebellion in the Spanish Colonies," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIII (July, 1940), 848-853.

⁴³ Morphy to Apodaca, July 9, 1816, in AGI, PC, Leg. 1900.

⁴⁴ Robinson to [Osorno, Terán, and Guerrero], May 9, 1816, inclosure in Apodaca to minister of state, January 20, 1818, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5561, Exp. 10.

⁴⁵ Robinson to Toledo, Belize, Monday afternoon, inclosure in [Sedella] to Onís, July 16, 1816, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5559, Exp. 26.

it is a terrible prospect; we are nevertheless on the point of entering into a new campaign with the firmness which the justice of our cause can but inspire."⁴⁶ But his intention of joining his "best friends" never materialized. In fact none of his carefully laid plans up to this point was realized. The squadron of Aury, reduced to only seven vessels, made no daring attack on Tampico, Veracruz, or Nautla, but sailed peacefully into unfortified Matagorda Bay in July, 1816.⁴⁷ Robinson, attempting to carry out his part of the scheme, accompanied Terán to Coatzacoalcos in southern Mexico, where he was captured by the Spanish and held until 1819.⁴⁸ Herrera returned to Mexico and received the king's pardon,⁴⁹ while Toledo officially returned to the Spanish fold through a prearranged recantation to Spanish authorities in New Orleans.⁵⁰

It is well to examine the significance of the Gulf port scheme. In the first place, although this failure had few material results in 1816, it did in part lay the groundwork for more significant actions on the part of Aury and Francisco Xavier Mina the next year in their joint attack on Mexico. Also the major participants in this scheme were to be involved in the Amelia Island episode of 1817. Gual, it might be pointed out in passing, was a party to both these affairs.

From the standpoint of historicity the Gulf port scheme is lacking in detail, yet threads of continuity of action, heretofore absent in accounts of this period of intrigue, are apparent. A consistency of effort and planning on the part of those who were sincere in their efforts, of those who sought only material gain, and of those who would serve any master for adequate compensation, is evident in the coöperation of Gual and the Philadelphia junta, Toledo and Herrera, and Aury and Montilla. Moreover, it displays an activity far beyond the more familiar diplomatic endeavors on the part of the agents sent to the United States from Spanish America. Gual's remark that there was "no hope for the present of getting assistance. . ." from the United States government is an indication of his clear understanding of the

⁴⁶ May 8, 1816, in Thornton Papers, IV, Library of Congress.

⁴⁷ Faye, "Commodore Aury," *loc. cit.*, p. 629.

⁴⁸ Harold A. Bierck, Jr., "Dr. John Hamilton Robinson," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (July, 1942), 665-666.

⁴⁹ Apodaca to minister of war, June 11, 1817, in Apodaca Letterbooks, Henry E. Huntington Library.

⁵⁰ Sedella to Apodaca, July 2, in AHN, Est., Leg. 5554, Exp. 12; [Sedella to Onís], July 16, 1816, in *ibid.*, Leg. 5559, Exp. 26.

principles of neutrality held by Madison, Monroe, and Adams. His solution—"to try again to conquer"—is indicative of the spirit of those who persisted in their efforts to secure independence from Spain.

This spirit, so often exemplified in the life of Bolívar, was equally strong in the hearts of the lesser leaders of the Spanish-American revolutionary period. Their contributions to independence while in the United States, their experience gained in that country, their observation of democracy in action, were to serve them well in their efforts to form republican governments and in their dealings with the United States following the establishment of independent governments. Gual's Gulf port scheme ended in failure, but this and other experiences in the *República del Norte* enabled him, for example, in subsequent years as minister of foreign affairs for the Republic of Colombia, to judge the relative importance of the United States to his country and despite his failure to secure aid in earlier years, to advocate a close and continuing friendship with that northern power.

HAROLD A. BIERCK, JR.

Carnegie Institute of Technology,
Pittsburgh.