

THE HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW

Vol. XXXI

August, 1951

No. 3

BOLÍVAR AND SAN MARTÍN AT GUAYAQUIL

VICENTE LECUNA*

The Spanish-American struggle for independence began in Caracas, Venezuela, on April 19, 1810, when that province proclaimed its autonomy. The Venezuelan Congress met in 1811 and, on July 5, declared the absolute independence of the region from Spain. But the cause was not popular. In subsequent years there occurred a series of tremendous popular reactions favoring Spain, and the first of these, headed by Domingo Monteverde, triumphed over the government of Francisco Miranda in 1812. Although the country was liberated by Bolívar in 1813, new and more violent royalist outbreaks directed by José Tomás Boves in 1814 led to numerous battles which resulted in the total devastation of the country and a second return to power of the Spaniards. Bolívar renewed the struggle in 1815 and, following a maze of bloody conflicts, eventually freed New Granada in the Boyacá campaign of 1819 and Venezuela in that of Carabobo two years later.

The provinces of the Río de la Plata first proclaimed their autonomy on May 25, 1810, and decreed their independence at the Congress of Tucumán in 1816. In those distant regions of relatively homogeneous race, there were no popular demonstrations favoring Spain. The republicans of Chile, however, defeated by

*The author is a member of the Academia Nacional de la Historia, Caracas, and is the editor of the monumental edition of Bolívar's letters (11 vols., Caracas, 1929-48). Acknowledgment should be made here of the generosity of Dr. Lecuna, in distributing to historians and other scholars in this country, as well as to libraries, the eleventh supplementary volume of *Cartas del Libertador* and the three-volume work, *Crónica razonada de las guerras de Bolívar*, in which the author has brought together his diverse studies of the Liberator. In the interest of a still broader knowledge and appreciation of Bolívar in the United States Dr. Lecuna, with the support of the Banco de Venezuela, has arranged for the translation of a selection of Bolívar's writings into English. This work, *Selected Writings of Bolívar*, has also been given wide free distribution in the United States. The present article, and the *Selected Writings* were translated into English by Harold C. Bierck, Jr., of the department of history, University of North Carolina—Ed.

Spanish troops dispatched from Peru, sought refuge in the Argentine city of Mendoza. There General José de San Martín, under orders of the Buenos Aires government to equip an expedition against Chile, had established himself. In 1817, an Argentine-Chilean army crossed the cordillera, triumphed at Chacabuco, and occupied the capital, Santiago; the next year, at Maipú, the same army defeated the troops sent from Peru to maintain Spain's sovereignty in that area. Thanks to Bernardo O'Higgins, and with his assistance, San Martín prepared the expedition designed to liberate Peru.

These movements for freedom were influenced by the political transformations evidenced in both New-World continents at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries and by the repercussions from these changes which affected the monarchy and people of Spain. The revolutions of 1810 in South America took place as a consequence of the almost complete occupation of Spain by the French in that year. The reaction in Venezuela in 1812, however, was due exclusively to the royalist sentiments of the great majority of the Venezuelan people and to the effect of the earthquake which took place on the eve of the anniversary of independence. Later, the fall of Bonaparte and the liberation of Spain played a decisive part in the heroic defeat sustained by Bolívar in 1814. From that year forward the patriots in Venezuela were forced to regain their independence step by step, while those in the Río de la Plata area experienced no reactions whatsoever in favor of the mother country. They were spared the pillage, robbery, and beheadings to which those in the extreme north of the continent were subjected. Venezuela alone, from 1810 to 1814, lost 300,000 souls—victims all of the Spanish and *criollo* royalist swords. The geography of Venezuela, land of plains and ports with its horses and cattle and mestizo populations, explains the heartless and anarchic character of the warfare in that country.

LIBERATION OF PERU

Peru, Upper Peru or Bolivia, and Quito or Ecuador remained in Spanish hands in 1820. Bolívar, struggling midst the havoc wrought by ten years of violent internecine conflict, advanced laboriously toward the South. Colombia, created at the Congress of Angostura in 1819 by the union of the three states of Venezuela, New Granada, and Quito and made a constitutional republic by the Congress of Cúcuta in 1821, was governed by Vice-President Francisco de Paula Santander while President Bolívar

pursued his career as Liberator. In 1822, the limited forces commanded by Bolívar and Sucre liberated the cities of Pasto and Quito, following the hard-won battles of Bomboná and Pichincha. A Peruvian brigade sent by General San Martín took part in the latter campaign. This brigade constituted a replacement for the royal *Numancia* battalion, composed of native Colombians, which had deserted to the patriot cause in Peru.

Chile had the honor of forming a naval squadron composed of experienced sailors and the good fortune of entrusting its command to the former English officer, Lord Cochrane, whose subsequent activities forced the Spanish navy from the Pacific. It was then that San Martín, with full assurance of safety, undertook his expedition to Peru. Landing first to the south and then to the north of Lima, he liberated extensive areas without opposition from the Spaniards, who could not successfully oppose him because of their inferior forces and their lack of naval support. Lima was soon evacuated, and the Spanish forces retired to the cordillera; moreover, Governor José de La Mar surrendered the port of Callao to San Martín without firing a shot. Thus the Argentine general, after only one small action fought by his lieutenant, General Arenales, became master of the Peruvian coastal region and, with his ability and talents as an organizer, formed an army which the Spaniards dared not attack. The independence of Peru was proclaimed on July 28, 1821, and San Martín, now recognized as "Protector of the freedom of Peru," established a civil government which included three administrative secretariats. The attitude of complaisance encountered by the Independents in Peru, as well as the lenient policy of the Spaniards in Venezuela in 1820, was the result, in part, of the Liberal revolt of 1820 in Spain headed by Riego and Quiroga. This policy lasted until 1823, during the period in which the inept Liberal party governed Spain.

DEPENDENCY OF GUAYAQUIL

In 1803, by reason of the Spanish war—as an ally of France—with England, the Madrid government was disposed, in order to facilitate the defense of Guayaquil, to give control of that city's defenses to the viceroy in Lima, as the viceroy of New Granada was too distant and lacked means of rapid communication. Troops from Peru were sent to garrison the city. Their stay was prolonged by the revolutions favoring independence which took place in Quito and Bogotá in 1809 and 1810 respectively. But royal control was reestablished in the first of these cities,

and its governor, Baron de Carondelet, in accord with the wishes of the inhabitants, declared allegiance to the Crown. On June 3, 1819, the Council of the Indies, in a royal *cédula*, declared the province of Guayaquil and its capital to be part of the *presidencia* of Quito, and therefore subject to the jurisdiction of the viceroy of New Granada.¹

The military occupation of Guayaquil by Peruvian royalist forces awakened in the patriot politicians of Peru the desire to incorporate that province into Peru. This desire prompted their aid to the Guayaquil revolution of October 9, 1820. The city was placed under the military protection of General San Martín, but Sucre arrived early in May, 1821, and concluded a treaty with the governing *junta* of the city presided over by the eminent poet José Joaquín de Olmedo. In this treaty the *junta* declared:

the province which it represents to be subject to the patronage and protection of the Republic of Colombia. In consequence thereof it confers all powers on His Excellency the Liberator President in order to provide for its defense, to maintain its independence, and to include it in all negotiations and treaties of alliance and of peace and commerce that might be celebrated with friendly, enemy, and allied nations; in which event the governing *junta* will meet and will remit, directly or through the medium of commissioners, those points of view that considerations recommend and which this province must merit in all treaties in light of its geographic, military, and mercantile situation.²

The *junta* did not attempt to proclaim the incorporation of the province with Colombia, for it did not possess powers to do so. This treaty, nevertheless, through the general powers granted the Liberator-President, annulled in fact the military powers which the very same body had conceded to San Martín, for a state cannot simultaneously submit to two separate and distinct powers.³

On January 12, 1822, San Martín issued a manifesto in Lima which included these words:

For the cause of the American continent I am about to put into effect

¹ For the *Real Orden* of July 7, 1803 see the *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de la Historia* [Caracas], No. 94 (abril-junio, 1941), 214; the *Real Cédula* of 1819 is reproduced in *ibid.*, No. 100 (octubre-diciembre 1942), 390. This *Boletín* will hereinafter be cited as *B.A.N.H.*

² Simón Bolívar O'Leary, ed., *Memorias del General O'Leary* (33 vols., Caracas, 1879-1884), XIX, 40-41.

³ Camilo Destrugge [D'Amecourt], *Historia de la revolución de octubre y campaña libertadora de 1820-1822* (Guayaquil, 1920), pp. 230-231.

a design which flatters my fondest hopes. I am going to Guayaquil to meet the Liberator of Colombia. The general interests of Peru and Colombia, the rapid termination of the war in which we are engaged, and the permanent destiny which America is rapidly approaching, make our meeting necessary, now that the order of events has made us largely responsible for the outcome of this sublime undertaking.⁴

In keeping with this statement, the Protector left Callao on February 8, 1822, for Guayaquil;⁵ but two weeks later, having arrived at Huanchaco, mid-way to his destination, he suddenly returned to Lima and there set in motion measures hostile to Colombia. What prompted this development?

In February, 1822, Bolívar was eight hundred kilometers north of Guayaquil between Pasto and Quito in an area occupied by the Spaniards. From Cali, where he was organizing troops to liberate Pasto and Quito, he sent a note to the president of the Guayaquil *junta*, revealing that:

At this moment General Torres' division is marching on your capital with 2,000 men. The Guard will follow next month, as shall I.

I shall be pleased, Your Excellency, if the Republic of Colombia shall have been proclaimed in your capital before I enter it. Your Excellency must know that Guayaquil is a natural part of Colombia, for a province has no right to separate itself from an association to which it belongs; moreover, it would be a violation of the laws of nature and of politics to allow an intermediate land to become a battleground for two powerful states; and, furthermore, I believe that Colombia will never permit any American power to seize your territory.⁶

This categorical declaration reached Guayaquil on February 7, 1822. A bomb could not have produced a greater effect either on the *junta* or on the Peruvian representative. The latter, General Francisco Salazar, sent the following note to his government:

Illustrious and Honorable Minister of State and Foreign Relations, don Bernardo Monteagudo. Guayaquil, February 7, 1822.

As a result of the arrival at this very instant of official communications from the Liberator Bolívar, this government has determined to issue a special pronouncement including said communications, the threatening tone of which leaves no room for doubt but that the objective of

⁴ Bartolomé Mitre, *Historia de San Martín* (2nd ed.; 4 vols., Buenos Aires, 1890), III, 610.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 611.

⁶ O'Leary, ed., *op. cit.*, XIX, 112.

that leader is to obtain at any risk the incorporation of this province with his Republic; this must take place very shortly, for these people do not have the means to oppose the army corps which is on the march for this purpose. I do not doubt for one moment but that this move will force General Sucre's withdrawal, thereby paralyzing the progress of the campaign against Quito, so that he may come to this city in compliance with the orders of the Liberator with the pretext of awaiting the combined forces which are being sent here rather than to Juanambú as had previously been revealed.

In such difficult circumstances my presence here is now worthless and degrading to the State which I represent because of a lack of courtesy on the part of those in the opposition party, from whom I am doubtless going to suffer insolent insults, for I well know their methods of operation; moreover, they have not attempted to look upon our government with deference, for in their meetings they have lost no opportunity of discrediting it and making it appear odious in every respect. In order to avoid incidents of this nature, I ask Your Excellency that, in the briefest time possible, the necessary instructions be sent embracing all the critical developments which I am inevitably going to see exposed. General La Mar has not written as he is ill, but he also asks to be informed of that which the Protector will have the goodness to dictate, in order to work in harmony with his views.

I have the honor of extending to Your Excellency my deepest respect and regard. *Francisco Salazar.*⁷

News of Bolívar's suggestions to the president of the Guayaquil *junta* and the announcement of the expected arrival at Guayaquil by sea of the Colombian division commanded by Torres was despatched by special messenger to San Martín on the afternoon of February 7, arriving in Huanchaco on the 20th or 21st of that same month. On February 22, the Protector of Peru, severely angered, began his return to Lima, which he reached on March 2. Sailing time for vessels between Guayaquil and Callao against the Humboldt Current required from twenty-two to twenty-six days. Huanchaco, as has been stated, is located mid-way between the two ports. Therefore, it is evident that San Martín, in going to Guayaquil, had no intention of conferring with Bolívar who was far to the north of the Royalist territories; moreover, although informed that the Liberator would arrive in Guayaquil by sea from Buenaventura in time to continue his journey and to hold the conferences in the port indicated, the Protector returned to Lima.

⁷ Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán, *Historia del Perú independiente. Primer período* (Lima, 1868), p. 389.

If San Martín had no thought of meeting Bolívar in Guayaquil, what was his purpose in going to that city? It can have been no other but that of influencing the people of the city in favor of their joining Peru. Substantiation of this contention is to be found in the hostile orders issued the day following his arrival in Lima. These orders were; (1) Colonel Santa Cruz, commander of the Peruvian brigade then en route with Sucre's division in the Pichincha campaign, was to withdraw toward Lima under the pretext that the capital was being threatened by the Spanish generals La Serna and Ramírez;⁸ (2) General La Mar, commanding general of the province of Guayaquil, so named by the *junta* at the suggestion of Peru, was directed to retire and join Colonel Santa Cruz at a place he judged convenient "in order to maintain actively the independence of Guayaquil, if that city so wishes; or, if it should prefer to accede to the proposals of the Liberator, to fall back to the boundary of the department of Trujillo. *His Excellency, the Supreme Delegate, is disposed to make every sacrifice that should be necessary if Guayaquil wishes to fulfill the oath it made. In that case, Your Excellency will lend that government every assistance that the circumstances and your zeal will permit.* But, in the opposite case, you will station yourself with the division in Piura, permitting that province to follow freely the steps that it may adopt, in order that the world can see that the government of Peru has no interest other than the desire to see the general will carried out in all its regions and that this is its sole guiding policy."⁹

In another note of the same date, March 3, 1822, also sent to La Mar, the Protector's government was more explicit, stating: Whenever the government [of Guayaquil], in accord with the majority of the inhabitants of that province, *solicits sincerely the protection of the armed force of Peru, it being their will to persevere their independence from Colombia, you are to employ all the forces at your command in support of the spontaneous decision of the people.* But, in the opposite case, if the government of Guayaquil and the bulk of the inhabitants of the province express an opinion favorable to the views of Colombia, you will withdraw, without delay, to the Department of Trujillo and take command of the northern coastal region, joining Colonel Santa Cruz's division at Piura, developing wherever possible the resources of the territory and working in keeping with the demands of the security of the department of Trujillo.¹⁰

⁸ Santa Cruz to Sucre, March 29, 1822, Andrés Eloy de la Rosa, *Firmas del ciclo heróico* (Lima, 1938), p. 362.

⁹ Paz Soldán, *op. cit.*, p. 389. Dated March 23 in error for March 3. Italics mine.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

In brief, therefore, the Peruvian government, relying upon the majority vote of the citizens of Guayaquil, ordered Santa Cruz to abandon Sucre's campaign against Quito and to retire to Guayaquil and instructed La Mar and his army to support the absolute independence of Guayaquil if that was the will of the people, or, if the contrary were true, to retire to the Peruvian department of Trujillo. Thus, San Martín, relying on the favorable opinion of the people of Guayaquil, considered defending, by force of arms, the independence of that province against Colombia; and with that view in mind he consulted his Council of Government about whether or not to declare war on Colombia. The Peruvian members of the Council gave him their approval, but the Argentines Montegudo and Alvarado abstained from voting.¹¹

Shortly thereafter, on March 14, the Protector received notice from the Guayaquil *junta* of the treaty signed on February 15 with the commander of the Spanish frigates which had sailed from Acapulco, Mexico. Abandoned by the Spanish government and without hope of aid, the commander had put in at Guayaquil to place his fleet at the orders of Peru.¹² At the same time, informed from Guayaquil that Bolívar had not arrived there, San Martín ordered Santa Cruz to continue participation in Sucre's campaign.¹³ Actually, the presence of the Spanish frigates in those waters was a positive indication that Bolívar, with his weaker vessels, would not venture to undertake his projected voyage to Guayaquil. Olmedo apparently did not have the same feeling of security respecting the possible arrival of Bolívar and his troops; for, in a letter of February 22 included in the communication sent express to the Protector, he referred to the dangers that menaced them and expressed his hope for "a large, efficacious, and powerful measure that would give them the security desired."¹⁴

So mistaken was the Protector about the Colombian rights to the province of Guayaquil that, on March 3, prompted by the Peruvian politicians to undertake hostile measures against Colombia, he wrote in a lengthy letter to Bolívar: "We must permit Guayaquil to determine its own destiny and to consider its best interests in order to allow it freely to join the area it should choose,

¹¹ Destrüge, *op. cit.*, p. 395; José Manuel Restrepo, *Historia de la revolución de la república de Colombia* (4 vols., Besançon, 1858), III, 194.

¹² *Documentos del archivo de San Martín* (12 vols., Buenos Aires, 1910-1911), VII, 435.

¹³ Paz Soldán, *op. cit.*, p. 260. This author gives another interpretation of these events.

¹⁴ *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, VII, 433.

because it cannot remain isolated without danger from both." This letter was not received by Bolívar until after the liberation of Quito on July 22. He then immediately answered San Martín, stating, "I do not believe as does Your Excellency that the views of a single province should be consulted in order to determine national sovereignty, for not a part but all the people deliberate in those general assemblies which are freely and legally convoked."¹⁵ In view of the royal *cédulas* of 1803 and 1819 respecting the dependency of the province in question, of the Constitution of Colombia, and the obligation of its chief magistrate, the principle alleged by the Liberator was final and beyond debate.

TREATIES OF CONFEDERATION AND THE PANAMA ASSEMBLY

During the months of March and April, 1822, the government of Peru took no other measure threatening to Colombia, for Bolívar had not reached Guayaquil and, moreover, a Peruvian division was defeated at the Battle of Ica on April 7. On May 1, Joaquín Mosquera, Colombian ambassador and minister plenipotentiary, reached Lima. He had been sent to propose a confederation of Hispanic-American states—a constant thought of Bolívar, advocated from the very first years of his political career. Mosquera succeeded in calming the growing Peruvian unrest respecting Colombia;¹⁶ news of the victory at Pichincha, which reached Lima on June 22, assured the conclusion of the treaties signed by Mosquera and Monteagudo on July 6, 1822.

The first of these treaties was designed to reconcile the two states and to provide mutual aid in case of internal strife or foreign invasion; the second, to promote a meeting, in some central location such as Panama, of representatives from those Hispanic-American states which were so disposed, for the purpose of uniting in a pact of perpetual union, league, and confederation. The assembly of this union would serve as a council during conflicts, as a center in times of danger, as an interpreter of treaties in case of misunderstanding, and as judge and conciliator for disputes and differences. Such was the basic idea conceived by Bolívar for the formation of a political bloc capable of joining the great republic of the United States of the North in order to maintain a world balance of power.¹⁷

¹⁵ Both letters appear in *B.A.N.H.*, No. 100 (octubre-diciembre, 1942), 488-491.

¹⁶ "La política del General San Martín, protector del Perú, respecto a la ciudad y provincia de Guayaquil, por Joaquín Mosquera," *B.A.N.H.*, No. 103 (julio-setiembre, 1943), 165-169.

¹⁷ O'Leary, ed., *op. cit.*, XIX, 324-330; see also "Informe del secretario Muñoz Tebar en la asamblea del 2 de enero de 1814," *B.A.N.H.*, No. 18 (diciembre, 1921), 637.

The day following his memorable entry into Quito (June 17), the Liberator wrote San Martín offering him the armies of Colombia if they were needed in Peru. On July 13, the Protector replied accepting the offer, the better to speed the campaign. He also revealed his intention to depart again for Guayaquil and then Quito to greet Bolívar and to combine at large the interest of their respective peoples.¹⁸ A few days after receiving news of the Battle of Pichincha (June 24), San Martín had sent a dispatch to Sucre "asking him to return the Santa Cruz division and an additional 1,500 to 2,000 brave Colombians in order to end the war in America."¹⁹ This was the only force that San Martín ever requested of Bolívar for the campaign in Peru! With this force he believed and stated that the war in America could rapidly be concluded. Even before this official letter reached Quito, Bolívar had been disposed to send two strong battalions, at least the equivalent of the brigade of Santa Cruz, if Guayaquil agreed to become peacefully a part of Colombia. In this manner Colombia, by returning the generous aid of Peru, would have contributed to its final triumph.²⁰

Keeping in mind the unfriendly measures toward Colombia taken by the Protector early in March, 1822, and the publication made in Guayaquil to this effect, Bolívar, from El Trapiche on June 1, consulted the executive power of Colombia respecting his course of conduct when he approached Guayaquil.²¹ This body, through its secretary of foreign relations, Pedro Gual, recommended that he always attempt, in his efforts to recover Guayaquil, peaceful negotiation, but it also authorized him to use arms if necessary, to occupy the entire province, and to maintain in this manner the integrity of the Republic.²²

Such was the result of the heated discussions respecting the possession of Guayaquil and the cause of the clash between San Martín and Bolívar. The former became embroiled in an effort to satisfy a Peruvian aspiration, and the latter, in his position as constitutional president of Colombia, endeavored to defend the honor of the nation which had granted him his powers. All that has been written contrary to this thesis has resulted either

¹⁸ O'Leary, ed., *op. cit.*, XIX, 307, 335.

¹⁹ Paz Soldán, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

²⁰ Vicente Lecúna, ed., *Cartas del Libertador* (11 vols., Caracas and New York, 1929-1930, 1948), III, 45-48.

²¹ *Ibid.*, XI, 216.

²² Gual to Bolívar, June 25, 1822, O'Leary, ed., *op. cit.*, XIX, 318. By error of transcription the date is omitted by O'Leary.

from ignorance of the documents or from the desire to mask the true designs of the Protector at the expense of the reputation and moral integrity of the Liberator.

THE QUESTION OF GUAYAQUIL

Bolívar did not remain long in Quito. Fully informed of the artifices perpetuated to influence Guayaquil in Peru's favor, he soon departed for the port city, followed by the Colombian division which had been offered to Peru and by the brigade of Santa Cruz which was now returning home. On the afternoon of July 11, 1822, he reached Guayaquil, followed minutes later by the auxiliary division, composed of the veterans of Bomboná and Pichincha. The forces of Santa Cruz, meanwhile, had received orders in Guaranda to go by way of Cuenca and to embark at the port of Naranjal, a bit south of Guayaquil—a wise measure designed to avoid, on their march to the port of embarkation, the intrigues and violence of the adherents of Peru in Guayaquil.

The Liberator was received in Guayaquil with unusual enthusiasm. The popular demonstrations grew increasingly more ardent, lasting until July 13, at which time Bolívar, in order to calm the populace, decided to assume command of the city. By this action the absolute freedom of the people to voice their opinion was not restricted, as was demonstrated in the electoral college of the province on July 31.²³ Although Bolívar had guaranteed the safety of their persons and property, the members of the governmental *junta*, who feared Colombia, and various officials and public employees, Argentines and Peruvians long resident in the city, sought refuge on the Peruvian fleet that had recently arrived to embark the brigade of Santa Cruz.

The incorporation of Guayaquil into Colombia was accomplished through the decision of all the social classes and especially of the masses, under the protection of the two battalions mentioned above, which were needed to curb the demagogism always prevalent in every human society. To state that the incorporation was accomplished by force is no more true than to say that Caracas proclaimed its autonomy on April 19 under the protection of its garrison; that Bogotá and Quito obtained their final independence as a direct consequence of the victories of Boyacá and Pichincha; that Lima proclaimed its freedom protected by the army of San Martín; and that the similar movements in the other

²³ Destruge, *op.cit.*, 342; Pedro Fermín Cevallos, *Resumen de la historia del Ecuador* (6 vols., Guayaquil, 1886-1889), III, 413; Roberto Andrade, *Historia del Ecuador* (7 vols., Guayaquil, n.d.), III, 1353.

capitals were brought about under identical circumstances. In no city was the decision unanimous.

In order to judge correctly the annexation of Guayaquil, analogous, although disproportionate, examples must be considered, Savoy, which had since early times belonged to the Italian kingdom of Piedmont or Sardinia, was annexed to France as a reward for the campaign of 1859 favoring Italian unity. Although France had no rights to this beautiful European region, this move had been popularly approved; for the majority of the inhabitants had voted in favor of France, thus legalizing the annexation. For four years the great Abraham Lincoln, backed by the northern states, directed a sanguinary war against the southern states which were endeavoring to separate themselves from the union in order to maintain slavery. A total of 3,750,000 men was mobilized by both sides and over 500,000 fell, victims of their own convictions.²⁴ It is true that the United States had been established since the previous century, but it acquired the Floridas, Louisiana, Texas, and many western territories by purchase and conquest without consulting the people of those areas; and, against the will of the great majority of the inhabitants of the South, it spilled torrents of blood.

The case of Guayaquil is completely justified. Colombia, created by the Congresses of Angostura and Cúcuta, as successor to the viceroyalty of New Granada had unquestionable legal rights of possession through the Spanish royal *cédulas*, and Bolívar, as president of the republic, was authorized by the constitutional government of Colombia to take possession of the province. As events determined, he had no cause to employ arms, as the vote of the inhabitants was almost unanimous. His conduct, censured by certain writers, was just and legal.

San Martín's intentions respecting his journey to Guayaquil have been revealed above. His biographer, Bartolomé Mitre, after narrating Bolívar's conduct, expresses himself in the following manner:

San Martín, on his part, was prepared to effect an analogous undertaking consistent with his policy and statements committing him to support a free vote of the state in question. To this purpose, he had been preceded by the Peruvian fleet commanded by Blanco Encalada, which was in Guayaquil on the pretext of receiving the Peruvian-Argentine auxiliary division of Santa Cruz. These troops, en route from Quito, had

²⁴ Ernesto Oton Hopp, "Los Estados Unidos de la América del Norte y la Guerra Separatista," *Historia universal de Guillermo Oncken* (Barcelona 1889), p. 248.

to embark at the aforementioned port. Thus, once having occupied the territory both by sea and by land, the Protector expected to be able to guarantee the free vote of the *guayaquileños* and perhaps to influence the vote in favor of Peru. He thought that on his arrival the Liberator would still be in Quito where he himself intended to go as he had stated, to seek an agreement while holding an advantageous position. But Bolívar *le ganó de mano*, as he later declared.²⁵ The members of the dissolved *junta* of Guayaquil took refuge on board the Peruvian fleet in spite of the urgings of the Liberator that, being conquered, they should place themselves under the protection of the conqueror.²⁶

General Rufino Guido, aide-de-camp of the Protector, in his *Apuntes sobre la entrevista de Guayaquil*, wrote:

General San Martín left Callao for Guayaquil for the ostensible purpose of having an interview with General Bolívar, but very secretly for the purpose of taking possession of that important department which had declared itself in favor of Peru, anticipating [the designs of] General Bolívar, whose intentions and whose troop movements had reached the attention of the Peruvian government. For this enterprise two battalions were embarked, and with part of the fleet we weighed anchor at Callao for the previously mentioned department. General San Martín and the author of these lines were on the ship of war *Macedonia*, which drew ahead of the convoy.²⁷

This significant declaration and especially the revelation that San Martín carried two battalions in his fleet confirms what has been said and reveals the true plan of the Protector respecting his voyage to Guayaquil, cloaked by the pretext of a conference.

THE GUAYAQUIL CONFERENCE

The Protector embarked at Callao on July 14, the day after he wrote Bolívar announcing his trip to Guayaquil and his intention of continuing to Quito to greet him and to arrange all pending questions. He believed that Bolívar would be delayed in Quito organizing that recently liberated province, and so hoped to be the first to reach Guayaquil in order, as Mitre states, to influence the destinies of that city and province. But, when the

²⁵ These words were spoken by San Martín to his chief aide, General Rufino Guido; see "Informe del general Rufino Guido, apuntes," *Revista de Buenos Aires*, XV, 74; and Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 619 n.

²⁶ Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 619.

²⁷ República Argentina, Comisión Nacional (Ley 13.661); *San Martín en la historia y en el bronce*. "Año del Libertador General San Martín" (Buenos Aires, 1950), p. 171.

Macedonia arrived at Puna Island he was advised that the intricate contest over the fate of the province had already been determined. Imagine the exaggerated tales, boastings, and accounts of the numerous Argentines and Peruvians shortly before employed in the political, treasury, and customs branches of the government when they hastened from the vessels on which they had sought refuge to the *Macedonia*! Stunned by such an unexpected disappointment, San Martín did not even wish to disembark. It was necessary that Bolívar, after his first note of greeting was delivered by two aides-de-camp, send another, also accompanied by two aides, begging him to land in order to satisfy his eagerness to embrace, on Colombian soil, the first friend of his heart and country. "Is it possible," he asked, "that you have come so far only to deny us the definite presence in Guayaquil of the one man whom all long to know and, if possible, to touch?"²⁸

While the aides-de-camp came and went during the course of July 25, the *Macedonia* advanced majestically toward the port in the long course of the Guayas estuary. On the morning of the 26th, the *Liberator*, eager to know the hero and courteous as was his fashion, went out to greet him on board ship. San Martín then landed with his entourage and went to the magnificent house near by, which had been especially prepared for him. During the brief walk an infantry battalion did him honors. Bolívar, in uniform and accompanied by his general staff, entered first and awaited him in the vestibule. On San Martín's approach, Bolívar advanced a few steps to meet him and to give the official salute. They then went together into the salon. Immediately after, San Martín received various civic groups and a group of ladies including the beautiful Señorita Carmen Garaicoa who offered him a crown of gold-encrusted laurels. These ceremonies and receptions concluded, the two leaders closeted themselves to confer. Shortly thereafter, Bolívar withdrew and San Martín went to the balcony and "greeted the crowd with words of thanks and gratitude for the patriotic expressions with which they honored him."²⁹ A large gathering cheered him as liberator of Peru.

The visits over, San Martín went to pay his respects to the *Liberator* with whom he remained for half an hour. He then

²⁸ Lecuna, *op. cit.*, III, 56-57.

²⁹ "Relación de Rufino Guido," in Gerónimo Espejo, *Recuerdos históricos. entrevista de Guayaquil* (Buenos Aires, 1939), p. 80; see also "Relación de la conferencia por el secretario Pérez al ministro de relaciones exteriores de Colombia, Guayaquil 29 de julio," *B.A.N.H.*, No. 101 (enero-marzo, 1943), 62; and Lecuna, *La entrevista de Guayaquil* (Buenos Aires, 1948), p. 219.

returned to dine. The next day, July 27, he issued orders concerning his return voyage and again went to Bolívar's residence. On this occasion they were alone for four hours. At five o'clock in the afternoon they left together and walked to the dining-room to attend a banquet for fifty offered by Bolívar to his illustrious guest, after which the Protector returned to his house to rest. At nine in the evening he attended a ball given in his honor by the city; at one o'clock in the morning he called his aides and, accompanied by Bolívar, departed by an inside stairway in order to escape being seen by the public. He then embarked, taking leave of Bolívar on the pier.

Finding the principal object of his voyage defeated—for the fate of Guayaquil had already been resolved—San Martín, in the conferences, told Bolívar he objected to nothing respecting the affairs of Guayaquil, in which he had not mixed. He also complained of the tribulations of a commander, stated that he was a partisan of the federation of the American nations, and expressed great confidence in General O'Higgins. He also voiced his views favoring the placing of Peru in the hands of a European prince; furthermore, he requested nothing of Colombia. On the contrary, with respect to the Peruvian campaign, he asserted that the Spaniards were less strong than he and that their leaders, La Serna, Canterac, and Valdés, although daring and enterprising, were not awe inspiring. He added, moreover, that he would immediately speed the campaign by means of a sea expedition to the so-called "intermediate" ports, covering the capital by making a frontal march by way of Lima. Bolívar replied that he was not in accord with the project regarding a European prince because monarchs were foreign to the Latin-American entity. He repeated the views proposed in his letter of July 23, with respect to a joint action on the part of the deputies of Colombia, Peru, and Chile in their negotiations with the Spanish commissioners who were expected in Colombia to discuss peace; and to this suggestion General San Martín gave his wholehearted approval.

Bolívar summed up the results of the conference in these words: "He has not told me of any plan whatsoever, nor has he asked anything of Colombia other than the troops which were already requested and prepared." These forces were the 1,500 to 2,000 brave Colombians which San Martín had asked of Sucre in order to end the war in America. They also spoke of and agreed on the utility of making peace with Spain for the purpose of obtaining independence, even though it might be at the cost of concessions that would have to be modified later.

These developments are revealed in three accounts, dated July 29, 1822, sent by Bolívar to the secretary of foreign relations of Colombia, to General Sucre, and to General Santander.³⁰

INDEPENDENCE OF PERU

Discouraged by the failure of his mission, San Martín, on reaching the Peruvian capital, experienced a further disappointment—the Peruvian politicians, roused by the turbulent priest and deputy Luna Pizarro, had revolted against San Martín's first minister, the noted Argentine, Bernardo de Monteagudo, and had exiled him forcibly to Panama. San Martín could easily have regained control of his government, but, as he related at a private banquet in London in January, 1825, he did not wish to take reprisal.³¹ Although he had assured Bolívar that he would await the first victory before retiring from the government, he resolved, in view of the revolt against his minister Monteagudo, to retire at once. He therefore convoked the Congress and renounced the executive power. On September 20, during the night and unaccompanied, he quietly set sail for Chile.³²

The government which succeeded San Martín, presided over by General La Mar, had little knowledge of directing a war or an administration. The Lima press showed itself hostile to Colombia, and the government, on a flimsy pretext, returned to Guayaquil the auxiliary division sent by Bolívar. Meanwhile, General Rudecindo Alvarado, designated by San Martín to command the army, was defeated in January, 1823, at the battles of Torata and Moquegua. The new president, Riva Agüero, seeing that his government was about to perish, requested aid of Bolívar. In April, the Liberator sent him two expeditions composed of 6,000 men hurriedly augmented by the cadres of the Colombian division returned by Peru. President Riva Agüero had created a Peruvian army, but, upon being approached by the Spaniards, it disintegrated in the course of useless marches and counter-marches. Its leaders, Santa Cruz and Gamarra, retired to the coast virtually alone on October 1, 1823, having lost both army and armament.

³⁰ In the order listed the originals of these reports are located in Bogotá, Quito, and Caracas; the first two in the National Archives and the third in the Casa Natal del Libertador. Published copies are included in the following: *B.A.N.H.*, No. 101 (enero-marzo, 1943), 16-21; Lecuna, *La Entrevista de Guayaquil*, pp. 40-45; Vicente Lecuna, *Crónica Razonada de las Guerras de Bolívar* (3 vols., New York, 1950), III, 202-205.

³¹ Enrique de Gandía, ed., *Memorias del general Tomás Iriarte* (3 vols., Buenos Aires, 1945), III, 123.

³² Paz Soldán, *op. cit.*, 345-347; Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 664.

Peru also found itself in a disastrous economic situation. Its exportable products—metals from the mines of the cordillera—could not be exported as the coastal area and the sea were controlled by the Independents. Thus, there was no commerce. This state of affairs had existed since the occupation of Lima on July 28, 1821, and constituted one of the reasons for the unpopularity of the Protector. All Peruvian interests clamored for peace and the reestablishment of commerce. The nobles, merchants, manufacturers, agriculturists, and mine owners looked to Bolívar as the only man, because of his energy and military ability, capable of speedily restoring peace. The only opposition—and this was not publicly avowed for fear that they would lose their authority—came from the men in the government.

Called by the President and Congress of Peru, and having obtained permission from the Colombian government, Bolívar left Guayaquil for Peru on August 7, 1823, and reached Lima on September 2. Upon receiving command of the troops, he committed the error—out of consideration for the Peruvian parties—of failing to assume control of the government, indispensable as it was to the maintenance of the army. The third president, Torre Tagle, did not know how to organize the treasury, and the army was in a deplorable condition. The Argentine troops stationed in Lima and Callao revolted in favor of the Spaniards and surrendered the fortress at Callao; and President Torre Tagle himself with a majority of the members of the government soon deserted to the enemy. Bolívar remained alone with his Colombian army, now weakened by illness and desertion, but the Congress, prior to its dissolution, named him dictator. In a proclamation he told the Peruvians, "Your republic is dying, but it has not yet expired. The Colombian army is still intact, and it is invincible. Furthermore, we are expecting ten thousand brave soldiers from Colombia, the land of heroes. For what more could you possibly hope?"³³

Retiring to northern Peru with his Colombian troops and several demoralized sections of the Peruvian army, Bolívar devoted himself to the strengthening of this army. The Spaniards, after the expeditions to Torata and Moquegua and the surrender of Lima and Callao by the Argentines, had enormously increased their forces. Once his military arrangements were concluded, Bolívar crossed the *cordillera blanca* with his army well equipped

³³ Vicente Lecuna, ed. and comp., *Proclamas y discursos del Libertador* (Caracas, 1939), p. 288.

and accustomed to the rare atmosphere of the Andes. On July 29, in the vicinity of Pasco, he issued this proclamation to his troops:

Soldiers! You are about to complete the greatest undertaking that Heaven has entrusted to men—that of saving an entire world from slavery.

Soldiers! The enemy which you must destroy boasts of fourteen years of triumphs. They are worthy, therefore, of measuring their arms with yours, which have glistened in a thousand combats.

Soldiers! From you, Peru and all America expect peace, the daughter of victory, and even liberal Europe views us with amazement, for the freedom of the New World is the hope of the Universe. Would you scorn it? No! no! no! You are invincible!³⁴

Bolívar advanced between the two cordilleras with his 7,600 men—all the troops he was able to muster—resolved to seek battle. At the same time, Canterac, with 8,000 troops, marched in search of Bolívar. By means of an astute maneuver, Bolívar endeavored to cut off part of the enemy's army which was advancing along the desolate shore of Lake Junín. Becoming aware of the move the Spaniards hurriedly withdrew, and once out of danger advanced with their cavalry against Bolívar, who had gone to the plain with his mounted forces. The action took place near Junín. Brilliant cavalry charges forced the Spaniards to retreat, and Canterac, pursued by Bolívar, speedily retired to the south toward Cuzco. The two armies now remained separated by the Apurimac River. Because the rainy season was now beginning, and informed of the pending arrival on the coast of reinforcements from Colombia, the Liberator gave Sucre command of the army and left to liberate Lima and to make the necessary preparations for the troops expected from the north.

United under the command of Viceroy La Serna, the Spanish forces left Cuzco resolved to give battle. Extensive movements designed to surround the patriots were undertaken by the viceroy, whose troops numbered 11,000 effectives. Sucre, with 7,000 Colombians and Peruvians, maneuvered with skill, withdrawing to the valley floors where the Spaniards were not able to surprise him. The two armies clashed on December 9, 1824, on the plain of Ayacucho. On that day the Spaniards numbered 9,300 men while Sucre possessed but 5,780. During the battle Sucre defeated the enemy divisions one by one as they descended the ridge to attack him. Destroyed in large part, they were obliged to sur-

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

render. In victory Sucre was magnanimous: he guaranteed the enemy their belongings and persons, and the Spaniards in turn relinquished all territories held except Callao, which refused to yield. This decisive battle for American independence was celebrated in Buenos Aires, Chile, Caracas, Bogotá, and Quito as the greatest Spanish-American victory.

Two days earlier, on December 7, Bolívar, from Lima, had called on all the Spanish republics to unite in an American confederation. To this end each would send representatives to Panama to establish the union and to form an assembly of plenipotentiaries "which would serve as a council during major conflicts, as a point of contact during common dangers, as a faithful interpreter of public treaties should misunderstandings occur, and, in brief, as a conciliator of the differences that might develop between the various republics."³⁵

Such, briefly told, is the actual history of the independence of Peru as historians have written it. Each people and their prominent men have been given the merit that their deeds deserve, without favoring one above the other. In the middle of the last century, however, false legends were introduced in a deliberate attempt to alter the truth in favor of the peoples of the South. Therefore, this account must be continued.

THE APOCRYPHAL LETTER OF LAFOND

The departure of San Martín and the resulting disintegration of the Peruvian state which he had created left numerous Argentine and Peruvian public employees without positions. Refusing to adjust to their precarious situation, they criticized the motives which had prompted the Protector's unexpected action. The principal of these, General Tomás Guido, San Martín's confidant and minister of war, wrote him from Buenos Aires on August 30, 1826: "Never will I forgive you for retiring from Peru, and history will disclose in future works that this opinion is justified. Think what you wish about this, such is, and always will be, my opinion."³⁶

Various inaccurate accounts have sprung from the confusion of these former servants of San Martín's government. One of these, destined to achieve success, blamed Bolívar for San Martín's resignation. It surmised that the former had refused to provide the aid of Colombian forces—the only possible explanation comprehensible to the Argentines for the action of the Protector. They overlooked his old and constant desire to relinquish

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

³⁶ *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, VI, 500.

all power, his reluctance in the circumstances to serve his native land Argentina, his health which had visibly declined, and his disgust at the treatment accorded Monteagudo—all reasons for his unwelcome resolution. Considering all this, an understanding of the origin and persistence of the unfortunate tale becomes more feasible.

The Frenchman, Gabriel Lafond de Lurcy, merchant-seaman and officer in the service of Colombia and Peru during the wars of independence, published in Paris, in 1844, a travel account. In it he included a history of the independence movement which contains many honest observations but also many serious errors. He was not a man of integrity. This fact becomes obvious when, in his narrative, he compares the eulogies lavished on Bolívar. This is done justly with the exception of the brief period of the Guayaquil conference which is based on falsehoods and insinuations in order to lend credence to the fallacy contained in what is now known as the "Lafond Letter." This supposed letter of San Martín to Bolívar, dated August 29, 1822, makes it appear that the former Protector of Peru charged Bolívar with having refused him, at Guayaquil, the aid of Colombian forces, which was necessary if the two states were to complete the struggle for independence.³⁷

The falseness of such a charge becomes apparent in the light of the facts contained in the irrefutable contemporary documents which prove conclusively that the opposite was true. These documents are: (1) the three accounts of the conference sent by Bolívar to the Colombian authorities, in which he stated that San Martín had not asked him for troops other than the 1,700 previously offered and already en route for embarkation, for San Martín had assured him that the Spanish forces were inferior to his; (2) the four statements made by San Martín on his return to Lima—his message to the Congress in which he said, "The enemy forces no longer menace the independence of any people who seek freedom and who have the means to obtain it. The army is ready to march to end the war forever";³⁸ his letter to O'Higgins of August 25, stating, "The army has been reinforced by four squadrons and three battalions, three of the former being Colombian. Today the army contains a total of more than 11,000 veterans. The end of the campaign directed by Rudecindo [Alvarado] and Arenales

³⁷ Gabriel Lafond de Lurcy, *Voyages autour du monde et naufrages Célèbres par le capitaine G. Lafond* (3 vols., Paris, 1844), II, 138.

³⁸ Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 664.

is near at hand, and there is not the slightest doubt of its success";³⁹ and his letter to his friend Luzuriaga, minister to Buenos Aires, saying, "This country is completely safe. I leave eleven thousand veterans in the best of condition in the capital. Rudecindo will depart shortly with an expedition of 4,500 men for Intermedios; in the meantime Arenales will have dislodged them from the sierra. Yes, if, as I firmly believe, there is speed and wisdom in the operations, this year no enemies will remain in Peru";⁴⁰ and his letter to Alvarado, his chief lieutenant and commander of the army, stating, "You remain to conclude the great undertaking. How you will ease my remaining days and those of future generations if you conclude it, as I am certain, with success."⁴¹ In these documents the Protector declared that he was leaving eleven thousand well-organized veterans to terminate the work of independence. He considered the final outcome assured and was definitely terminating his political career, for in later years he did not wish to engage in any service, even that of his native country, the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata.

In the apocryphal letter of Lafond there are three false affirmations which the Protector could not have made. These are, (1) the assertion that in 1822 the Spaniards in Peru possessed a strength of 19,000 men when they actually commanded 8,250; (2) the statement that Bolívar and Sucre had not given replacements to Santa Cruz's division whereas the latter had twice received them, first in Quito and again in Cuenca, where he not only received from Sucre a full complement of 1,200 men but 400 extra combatants as well, increasing his division to 1,600; and (3) the expression of regret over the losses suffered by Santa Cruz during his long marches over land, when actually, during the days of the conference, he was embarking at the port of Naranjal on the squadron specifically sent by the Protector in anticipation of his arrival at the port. These errors in the apocryphal letter are sufficient in themselves to establish its lack of authenticity.⁴²

³⁹ *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, V, 516-517.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, X, 351-352.

⁴¹ Paz Soldán, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

⁴² Prof. Gerhard Masur, in an article published in this REVIEW (XXI, May, 1951, 189-229), tries to defend the apocryphal letter of Lafond and to explain the three basic errors which prove its falsity. First: the error of attributing 19,000 men to the Spaniards in Peru in 1822 is easily dealt with by supposing that it is typographical error of transposition and that San Martín meant to say 10,900. The Argentine historians, serious and sagacious scholars, have maintained the exactitude of the figure 19,000 and they continue to do so. Secondly: as to the replacements given Santa Cruz and which are denied in the apocryphal

According to the report drawn up by Colonel Vidal, the Spanish forces in Peru and Upper Peru as of August 19, 1822, numbered 9,530 men. This included the forces of La Serna, Canterac, Valdés, Maroto, Olañeta, and all other Spanish field commanders, which were spread from Huamanga in Peru to Tupiza in Upper Peru. Allowing 1,200 to 1,400 for the garrisons in Pasto, Jauja, and Huancavelica, the total number of enemy forces in Peru numbered exactly 10,930 men,⁴³ of which 2,680 were in Upper Peru and only 8,250 in Lower Peru. The 19,000 attributed to the Spaniards in the apocryphal letter were possessed by them in 1824 after the victories of Torata and Moquegua and following the surrender of the Callao fortresses in February, 1824. The exact number of Spanish troops in that year reached 18,598 according to Chief of General Staff O'Connor, whose report was compiled after the Battle of Ayacucho.⁴⁴

But there exists another document of Bolívar, decisive in itself in regard to the letter of Lafond. This is the official letter directed to the governments of Peru, Chile, and Buenos Aires from Cuenca on September 9, 1822. The Liberator was not satisfied with the plan of campaign which San Martín had revealed to him during their meeting—that same plan mentioned by the Protector in his farewell letters to his friends. It consisted of attacking the Spaniards on two operational fronts 300 leagues distant; one force would set out from Lima toward Jauja while the other would embark upon a sea expedition for the so-called *puertos*

letter, proofs are conclusive that they were twice provided and that even four hundred extra men were given. In Quito, Santa Cruz was given seven hundred veteran soldiers, natives of that province, seasoned in war, who had been taken prisoner in the battle of Pichincha. In the situation of these people at the time, they served one side as well as the other. In Cuenca three hundred more were provided to balance any losses (by desertion or otherwise) which might occur in the course of the march to the point of embarkation. Thirdly: it is not likely that the Colombian division sent to Peru should have been embarked and that the Peruvian troops returning to their country should have been sent by land. Santa Cruz was detained in Piura, whence he had started his campaign, for personal reasons. He was accompanied there by some officers of that place where he had recruited one of his battalions.

The reference to the letter of Santa Cruz to Colonel Heres made by Bolívar in a letter of September 14 proves nothing because the date is not given. But there is an argument which in itself completely refutes the allegations of Professor Masur. Bolívar had no ships and San Martín had at his disposition a magnificent fleet which had been brought expressly to Guayaquil to transport the troops. Therefore it was for San Martín to embark the Peruvian division of Santa Cruz. Bolívar, without ships, could not so dispose. Neither was it in his power to order its march by land through Peruvian territory.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 328, 435.

⁴⁴ O'Leary, ed., *op. cit.*, XXIII, 93.

intermedios, for the purpose of invading the sierra. Bolívar pointed out to San Martín that he considered it wiser to attack the Spaniards on one front only, as Bolívar himself did in 1824, but the Protector insisted on his plan.⁴⁵ Bolívar, fearful that San Martín would be defeated and expecting him to remain in Lima until the first victory had been achieved, told him through the medium of his secretary, in the letter of September 9:

Although the Protector of Peru, in his interview with the Liberator in Guayaquil, manifested no fear of danger respecting the fate of Peru, the Liberator, notwithstanding, has since devoted himself to the most cautious and constant meditation, hazarding many conjectures which perhaps are not entirely well founded, but which persist in disturbing His Excellency's peace of mind.

His Excellency the Liberator believes that it is his duty to communicate this anxiety to the governments of Peru and Chile and even to that of the Río de la Plata and to offer the immediate services of Colombia in favor of Peru.

His Excellency proposes first to send to Peru 4,000 men in addition to those already remitted, immediately upon receiving an answer to this note and provided that the Peruvian government has the goodness to accept the offer of this added reinforcement; it does not march immediately because it has not yet been made ready, nor has it been requested by His Excellency the Protector.⁴⁶

This letter was published in the *Argos* of Buenos Aires on May 31, 1823, with the account of the defeat of the Peruvian army in January of that year. At that time San Martín was in Mendoza, living in retirement. He read the letter in the *Argos* and did not protest Bolívar's statement that he had not asked him for troops at the conference. Far from this, he wrote Bolívar a friendly letter on August 3, 1823, recommending Colonel Brandsen.⁴⁷ Yet so jealous was San Martín of his honor and good name that, on June 1, 1823, he protested vigorously against an erroneous account of his efforts to free Peru, published shortly before in the *Correo Mercantil* of Lima.⁴⁸

THE APOCRYPHAL LETTERS OF COLOMBRES MÁRMOL

The account of the Guayaquil conference, dated July 29, 1822,⁴⁹ sent to Sucre by the Liberator, which explains the exact

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, *Narración*, II, 173.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, XIX, 370.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, XX, 249.

⁴⁸ *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, VII, 293.

⁴⁹ *B.A.N.H.*, No. 88 (octubre-diciembre, 1939), 392.

truth of the events at the Guayaquil conference, was published by the author in 1939. One year later, Eduardo L. Colombres Mármol, Argentine minister to Peru and formerly to Colombia, published a voluminous book entitled *San Martín y Bolívar en la entrevista de Guayaquil*, designed to support the calumny. To this end he made use of thirteen apocryphal letters of Bolívar, Sucre, and San Martín, forged in order specifically to support the veracity of the aforementioned letter of Lafond. The documents were assumed to be authentic at first, and the work was received enthusiastically in Argentina.⁵⁰ Mármol offered to sell (and later to give) the Argentine government the documents in question for the sum of 50,000 pesos. The Academia Nacional de Historia of Buenos Aires, on being consulted by the government, valued them at 25,000 pesos. At the very time of the conclusion of the sale the author's work establishing the absolute falseness of the letters used by the historian and diplomat reached Buenos Aires.⁵¹ The Buenos Aires academy delayed its decision and appointed a committee to reconsider the matter. The official handwriting expert, Angel de Luca, declared the signatures forged, and the academy, on November 1, 1941, issued an official statement declaring that "the disputed documents lack the essential attributes necessary to establish their unquestioned authenticity and therefore allow that the Minister be counselled that they should not be acquired."⁵²

The legal adviser of the Ministry of Justice and Public Instruction, in the light of the academy's conclusion, also advised rejection of the gift of the documents "because the State cannot accept as a gift any documentation lacking the conditions essential to the establishment of its undeniable authenticity."⁵³ The minister of justice and public instruction himself, in view of the fact that the documents in question "lacked the conditions essential for the establishment of their unquestioned authenticity, resolved to inform Señor Eduardo L. Colombres Mármol that the State cannot accept the gift of the documents in virtue of the circumstances

⁵⁰The full title of the work is, *San Martín y Bolívar en la entrevista de Guayaquil, a la luz de nuevos documentos definitivos* (Buenos Aires, 1940).

⁵¹Vicente Lecuna, "En Defenso de Bolívar," *B.A.N.H.*, No. 91 (julio-setiembre, 1940), 409; "Dictamen de la Academia", *ibid.*, 398.

⁵²Academia Nacional de la Historia, Buenos Aires, *Resoluciones sobre documentos de la guerra de la independencia, relacionados con San Martín, Bolívar y Sucre. Advertencia de Ricardo Levene, presidente de la academia* (Buenos Aires, 1945), pp. 11, 16.

⁵³"Dictamen del Asesor Legal del Ministerio de Justicia e Instrucción Pública. Buenos Aires, julio 16 de 1943. Firmado, Juan Silva Riestra, Asesor Legal," *ibid.*, p. 22.

involved." Immediately following this announcement, President Ramírez of the Argentine Republic, issued Decree Number 8,971-43, which stated: "This confirms in all parts the resolution of July 22, ultimo, which rejected the historical documentation offered for sale and the gift made by Señor Eduardo Colombres Mármol, for the fundamentals in the case have so dictated. *Ramírez. Elbio Carlos Anaya.*"⁵⁴ The academy, in addition to the official statements cited, inserted in their publication respecting the whole matter the extensive report of the handwriting official. This expert proved the forgery of the signatures on every document presented by Mármol.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Both statements appear in *ibid.*, pp. 24, 25.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-91. All these recent developments and questions were treated by this author in a two-hundred- and eighty-page book entitled *La entrevista de Guayaquil*, first published in Caracas. In 1949 this work was sent to the Buenos Aires printing firm of Imprenta López for reprinting, but, upon learning of this, the government of the Argentine Republic ordered the reprinting confiscated. Fortunately, this second edition had already reached Caracas, hence only a few copies were actually taken. The Imprenta López, however, was closed. This confiscation took place in January, 1950, and word of it was cabled to all of Latin America and to the United States. The Argentine government, moreover, did not limit itself to committing this offense but, through a congressional committee, declared that in Argentina it would be permissible to discuss all historical topics that might be desired with the exception of those relating to the character of General San Martín because his memory was considered sacred and therefore unassailable by criticism—a unique measure never taken in any other country.