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U.S. Military Intelligence in Mexico, 1917-1927: An Analysis

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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Corbett S. Gottfried for the Master of Arts degree in History were presented October 24, 1995, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Corbett S. Gottfried for the Master of Arts in History presented October 24, 1995.

Title: U.S. Military Intelligence in Mexico, 1917-1927:
An Analysis.

The Military Intelligence Division (MID) was the U.S. Army's intelligence agency that reported to the Chief of Staff within the War Department. During the years 1917-1927, the MID routinely conducted surveillance of Mexico, including: espionage, mail censorship, radio intercepts, intelligence gathering, and development of plans for the invasion of Mexico.

This study utilizes a tripartite model to evaluate the production and analysis of military "intelligence" by the MID in Mexico during the period 1917-1927. First, the organization and development of the Military Intelligence Division from its origins in 1885 through the year 1927 is explored with sections on institutional history and objects of investigation. Second, a quantitative analysis of intelligence documents identifies the focus and priorities of the MID in Mexico. Third, a textual analysis of

intelligence documents makes use of a cross-cultural framework to demonstrate the prevailing attitudes, perspectives and world views of the MID toward the Mexican state and its peoples.

The thesis question as to whether the U.S. Military Intelligence Division created an accurate and complete picture of "reality" of Mexico is answered in the negative. The MID perspective was colored by cultural bias, ignorance, and misunderstanding. Ultimately, the MID failed to grasp the reality of Mexico because it failed to ask the right questions. It seriously misunderstood the nature of Mexico and its peoples, especially in its relationship with the United States..

The particular model developed for this study lends itself to the possibility of further research in the area of international history and cross-cultural studies. The use of multiple analysis techniques provides a more comprehensive picture of the various factors involved that influence historical events.

U.S. MILITARY INTELLIGENCE
IN MEXICO, 1917-1927:
AN ANALYSIS

by
CORBETT S. GOTTFRIED

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
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HISTORY

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Special thanks goes to the hard working interlibrary loan staffs at both Portland State University and Portland Community College. Eileen Pecka of Portland Community College was extremely helpful in securing copies of dissertations and theses. A warm thank you goes to Lee Ellington, Portland State University history department secretary, who retired several days before my thesis defense. Lee always took care of the necessary details with a smile and offered kind words of encouragement and support.

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With me in spirit throughout this entire adventure, I wish to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father, John P. Gottfried (1910-1990) and my father-in-law, Jack W. Bevens (1923-1976).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with the intelligence gathering and surveillance activities of the U.S. Military Intelligence Division (MID) in relation to Mexico during the years 1917-1927. The Military Intelligence Division was the U.S. Army's intelligence agency that reported to the Chief of Staff within the War Department. Throughout the time period in question, the MID routinely conducted surveillance of Mexico, gathered military intelligence on Mexico, developed plans for the invasion of Mexico, conducted espionage activities in Mexico, intercepted Mexican diplomatic radio transmissions, and conducted censorship of the mail crossing the U.S.-Mexican border.

In addition to the actual historical events, this researcher is interested in the attitudes and perceptions of the Military Intelligence Division as manifested in its intelligence gathering and surveillance of Mexico. This study shows how the production and analysis of military "intelligence" helped to create a "Mexican reality" that became the truth for the MID. This truth was then passed on to policy-makers in Washington, D.C., including the State Department and the President of the United States,

and was used to assist in the formulation of policy and in the decision-making process in regards to Mexico.

In order to analyze the attitudes and perceptions of the Military Intelligence Division, as well as to examine the reality of Mexico, it is necessary to take a cultural approach in addressing the issues. Unfortunately, according to Akira Iriye, "there is no definition of culture that is completely satisfactory for the study of international affairs."¹ However, for purposes of this study, I will use Iriye's definition of culture:

Culture in the study of international relations may be defined as the sharing and transmitting of consciousness within and across national boundaries, and the cultural approach as a perspective that pays particular attention to this phenomenon.²

Iriye goes on to explain that culture includes the "creation and communication of memory, ideology, emotions, life styles, scholarly and artistic works, and other symbols."³

In terms of the cultural approach, this study is also informed by the scholarly work of Edward Said. Although

¹Akira Iriye, "Culture and International History," in Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 214-215. Iriye also explains that there is no "good theoretical work that serves as the point of departure for the application of the concept of culture to diplomatic history." See also Frank Ninkovich, "Interests and Discourse in Diplomatic History," Diplomatic History 13 (Spring 1989): 135-161.

²Ibid., 215.

³Ibid.,

Said's interest is in the concept of "Orientalism," many of his findings regarding culture can be applied to the relationship between Mexico and the United States.

According to Said:

Culture, of course, is to be found operating within civil society, where the influence of ideas, of institutions, and of other persons works not through domination but by what Gramsci calls consent. In any society not totalitarian, then, certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others; the form of this cultural leadership is what Gramsci has identified as hegemony, an indispensable concept for any understanding of cultural life in the industrial West.... it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures.⁴

Even today, according to Said, "standardization and cultural stereotyping" of the Orient continues.⁵ I would argue that the same holds true for the American view of Mexico.

In their study, American Cultural Patterns, Edward Stewart and Milton Bennett define the term American as meaning "citizen of the United States of America." For purposes of this study, I will use the same definition. Stewart and Bennett define the term American culture as the

⁴Edward W. Said, Orientalism (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 7. Said also explains that "there is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter."

⁵Ibid., 26.

"dominant patterns of thinking and behaving of mainstream Americans, composed primarily, but not exclusively, of members of the white, male middle class."⁶ I will also utilize the same definition when referring to American culture.

The above mentioned works of Akira Iriye, Edward Said, Edward Stewart and Milton Bennett are used as the intellectual underpinning to develop the theoretical framework or construct to inform this study. Thus, this study seeks to develop a cross-cultural model to analyze the international relationship between the United States and Mexico as seen through the eyes of the U.S. Military Intelligence Division. According to Stewart and Bennett:

The core difficulty in cross-cultural interaction is - simply stated - a failure to recognize relevant cultural differences. Because of superficial stereotyping and the belief that one's own values and behaviors are natural and universal, Americans (and others) at home or abroad often fail to grasp the social dynamic that separates them from their associates.⁷

The American perspective during the period 1917-1927 encouraged the expansion of American culture, trade, and investment. In fact, "The 1920s were the most economically expansionist decade in American history (until the 1960s), and Republicans like Hoover encouraged this private

⁶Edward C. Stewart and Milton J. Bennett, American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective, (Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991), xii.

⁷Ibid., 6.

internationalist impulse."⁸ It is also argued that "international relations during the 1920s may be said to have been characterized as much by cultural as by military or economic affairs."⁹

The U.S. military, specifically the Military Intelligence Division, reflected the prevailing attitudes and cultural bias of the American public. It is the contention of this researcher that the results of this study will show that an unique U.S. cultural orientation and ethnocentrism hampered the effectiveness and accuracy of military intelligence in relation to Mexico. In fact, the Military Intelligence Division failed to grasp the significance of what was taking place in Mexico during this time. As a result of this, I would argue that the MID was actually incapable at this time of truly educating American officials concerning the "reality" of Mexico. Without an accurate intelligence picture of Mexico, American officials had no solid basis nor frame of reference on which to base their attitudes and perceptions.

The thesis question raised in this study is the following: Was the reality of Mexico as perceived and viewed through the eyes of the U.S. Military Intelligence Division accurate and complete?

⁸Emily S. Rosenberg, Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 140.

⁹Iriye, "Culture and International History," 224.

Four questions that inform the thesis question are raised in this study. First, what constitutes "intelligence" in the context of the Military Intelligence Division in Mexico during the period of 1917-1927? Second, what were the priorities of the MID in relation to Mexico during this time? Third, what were the attitudes and perceptions of the MID toward Mexico during this time? And fourth, how did cultural differences color the military intelligence analysis of Mexico?

This study makes use of three different methods or techniques to address the thesis question and its related secondary questions. The three methods include: a historical overview, a quantitative analysis, and a textual (literary) analysis. The three methods are described in detail below.

Chapter II provides a historical overview of the organization and development of the Military Intelligence Division from its origins in 1885 through the year 1927. An institutional history focuses on the activities of the MID in Mexico, as well as providing general background information. Particular attention is paid to organizational issues, intelligence gathering, intelligence production or analysis, personnel selection, training, and reporting techniques. The sections on objects of investigation include extracts from selected intelligence reports that speak on various topics, such as: rebel

activities, radical movements, military intervention, economic conditions, politics, and Japanese activities in Mexico.

Chapter III includes the quantitative analysis portion of this study. The intent of the quantitative analysis is to identify and tabulate the various topic categories contained within the selected military intelligence reports. The frequency and percentage of the various topic categories are tabulated for three different time periods: 1917-1918, 1919-1920, and 1921-1927.

The following primary sources were used for the quantitative analysis: 1) Richard Challener's thirty volume collection containing twenty-six volumes of weekly intelligence summaries and four volumes of daily summaries for the period 1917-1927; 2) Dale Reynolds' microfilm collection containing approximately 9,000 pages of documents for the period 1919-1941; and 3) a sample of documents from the National Archives in Washington, D.C., selected by this researcher. All documents are military intelligence reports contained in the National Archives, specifically Record Group 165, War Department General Staff, Military Intelligence Division.

The sample drawn for this quantitative analysis utilized all 254 weekly and thirty-nine daily summaries (100%) relating to Mexico contained within the Challener collection covering the years 1917-1927; 182 out of a

possible 272 documents (67%) covering the years 1919-1927 contained in the Reynolds' collection; and seventy-six documents selected from the National Archives covering the years 1917-1924. Thus, the comprehensive sample drawn for this study reflects a plausible and systematic approach toward securing a representative sample of documents. The number of documents selected from the microfilm collection and the National Archives was limited due to time constraints, access to archive materials, readability of microfilm records, and cost considerations. The intent of this study is to provide a model of analysis that can be used by other researchers for more extensive studies.

The purpose of this quantitative analysis is to identify the focus and priorities of the Military Intelligence Division relative to Mexico during the years 1917-1927, by calculating the amount of coverage given to various topics (military operations, politics, economics, foreign relations). Although limited in scope (MID records in the National Archives are extensive), the results of this quantitative analysis should serve as a fair indicator of the emphasis placed by the MID on various components of its surveillance of Mexico. The documents, records, and reports generated by the MID helped to shape and define the U.S. government's perspective or concept of the reality of Mexico.

Chapter IV contains the textual (or literary)

analysis portion of this study. I am using the term "textual" rather than "literary" because the source material involves intelligence reports and documents rather than works of literature. However, the methodology is the same. The methodology employed in this study includes the identification of themes, discussion, and the support of conclusions through the use of examples.

The textual analysis used in this study is performed on selected documents used in the quantitative analysis portion of the study. The textual analysis makes use of the Stewart and Bennett framework for cross-cultural perspectives by analyzing the language used in selected intelligence reports. I believe that through the use of this technique I am able to demonstrate more clearly the prevailing attitudes, perspectives, and world views of the Military Intelligence Division toward the Mexican state and its peoples. It should become more evident that the ethnocentrism of the MID got in the way of painting an accurate portrait of the reality of Mexico during the years from 1917 to 1927.

The conclusions drawn in Chapter V reflect the findings of this tripartite model of analysis, as well as addressing the thesis question itself. In addition, there is a section that provides implications for further study. The value of an interdisciplinary approach toward the study of international history is also demonstrated.

CHAPTER II

U.S. MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN MEXICO: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

ORIGINS OF THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

Although various military intelligence activities can be traced back to the founding of the United States, it was not until 1885 that the War Department created a separate army office with specific responsibility for military intelligence. According to Colonel Marc B. Powe, USA, :

The immediate cause was a request for information on a foreign army from the secretary of war. The adjutant general, R.C. Drum, had to report not only that he did not have the information, but also that there was no effective system for obtaining it. Shortly thereafter, the Military Information Division (MID), Miscellaneous Branch, the Adjutant General's Office, was established with the general mission of collecting "information concerning the coast defenses and interior topography of the harbors of Central America, New Mexico, Cuba, Canada, and probably one or two other countries."¹

When it was created, the Military Information Division

¹Marc B. Powe, "A Sketch of a Man and His Times," in The Final Memoranda: Major General Ralph H. Van Deman, USA Ret., 1865-1952: Father of U.S. Military Intelligence, ed. Ralph E. Weber (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1988), ix. The official history of the MID is contained in Bruce W. Bidwell, History of the Military Intelligence Division, Department of the Army General Staff: 1775-1941 (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986). Also see Marc B. Powe, The Emergence of the War Department Intelligence Agency: 1885-1918 (Manhattan, KS: Military Affairs, 1975).

consisted of one officer, one civilian intelligence analyst, two assistants and a messenger. The entire operation was situated in a single room.²

Not surprising, war brought about an expansion of the organization. The Spanish-American War of 1898 saw the MID increase to "eleven officers, ten clerks, two messengers, two rooms, and a budget of \$3,640." The work of the central MID office was "supplemented by some forty National Guard units across the country."³

Fortunes shifted again and by 1908, the Military Information Division "had disappeared as a separate entity, having been relegated to committee status within the newly created War College Division." The situation did not significantly change with the 1911 reorganization of the general staff because "the War College continued to be responsible for the collection and dissemination of all military intelligence."⁴

The issue at this point in time was the analysis (or lack thereof) of the intelligence that was gathered. As one historian explains:

Information was being collected, primarily by the military attachés at American embassies around the world who routinely sent messages to Washington.

²Roy Talbert, Jr., Negative Intelligence: The Army and the American Left, 1917-1941 (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 3.

³Ibid., 3-4.

⁴Ibid., 5.

At the receiving end, however, nothing happened to the reports because the army lacked even a systematic filing system, to say nothing of a processing capability. Although by 1915 there were ten committees theoretically handling intelligence, no single officer was dedicated to and responsible for analyzing the data that arrived.⁵

This issue of the lack of intelligence analysis will be a recurring theme throughout this study.

Although the MID was struggling for its organizational identity during this time, there is no doubt that the MID was active in and around Mexico. However, the MID was not alone. Before 1911, there were at least seven government agencies working in cooperation with the Mexican government to monitor the revolutionary activities of the magonistas and maderistas. The U.S. government agencies included:

Division of Post Office Inspectors
 Treasury Department, Secret Services Division
 State Department, Special Agents
 Treasury Department, Customs Agents
 Justice Department, Bureau of Investigation
 Navy Department, Office of Naval Operations
 War Department, Military Information Division⁶

Even though there was intelligence activity taking place along the border, there was not any systematic coordination of efforts taking place.

Despite President William Howard Taft's mobilization of 20,000 troops on the Mexican border in March of 1911 and

⁵Ibid., 5-6.

⁶W. Dirk Raat, Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903-1923 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1981), 194.

the resulting fear of Japanese agents operating in Mexico, the "Taft administration collected little intelligence on Mexico." In fact, the War Department was not prepared for the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution. As one historian describes:

Caught off guard by the revolution in Mexico, Hunter Liggett, new chief of the War College Division, sent a request for information on Mexico to the chief intelligence officer of the navy, T.M. Potts. Potts replied that he did not have any information on Mexico in his files because there was no naval attache in Mexico and because Mexican ports were rarely visited by vessels of the navy.⁷

Although war plans for the invasion of Mexico were developed in 1912, the MID did not take an active role in the development of those plans. In fact, "printed maps and travel books formed the intelligence upon which plans were formulated."⁸

In a study of army intelligence collection in relation to Mexico during 1913-17, Carter Rila concludes that by early 1913 "the Army developed an increasingly active intelligence organization along the border in cooperation with the civil authorities." Rila also states that by the end of 1913 "the basics of an efficient collection system had evolved in the Southern Department." Rila goes on to contend that:

By 1915, there were in place (a.) a comprehensive

⁷Joan Jensen, Army Surveillance in America, 1775-1980 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 119.

⁸Ibid., 120.

collection organization operating along the Southern Department's portion of the line in cooperation with the WCD; (b.) the beginning of a regular cycle of intelligence collection in response to specific requirements concerning known deficiencies in the data base, resulting in proactive collective efforts, actively seeking information, not just gathering what happened to come in; and (c.) a system of distributed production by the office which could do it best, assigned by geographical area, which assured that everything was covered once, and nothing was left uncovered.⁹

As the Mexican Revolution continued through 1915 and 1916, unrest was evident along the border and war with Mexico was a real possibility. In 1915, the Southern Department was allocated nine hundred dollars for "secret service" work in Mexico.¹⁰ When Ralph Van Deman returned to duty with the WCD in 1915 he "found a table piled high with information reports from the Mexican border which were not even being filed."¹¹ Van Deman lobbied for the creation of a "separate Military Intelligence Division, reporting directly to the army chief of staff, responsible for all military information matters, and freed from other staff duties."¹²

⁹Carter Rila, "Army Intelligence Collection and the Mexican Revolution, 1913-1917" (M.S. Thesis, Defense Intelligence College, 1991), 127-129. Headquarters for the Southern Department was San Antonio, Texas. The Southern Department had responsibility for the Mexican border from the Colorado River at Yuma, Arizona, to the Gulf of Mexico at Brownsville, Texas.

¹⁰Jensen, Surveillance, 125.

¹¹Powe, in Memoranda, xv.

¹²Talbert, Jr., Negative Intelligence, 7. Deman's lobbying efforts were not successful at this point in time,

Pancho Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico, on March 9, 1916, was a turning point in Mexican-U.S. relations, as well as the further development of military intelligence.

One historian concludes that:

Villa's raid crystalized American suspicions of foreign plots and intrigue involving Germany, Japan, Mexico, and the PSD; in the United States, it became the rallying point for those eager to strike back against America's enemies, real and imagined.¹³

After crossing into Mexico in pursuit of Villa, Brigadier General John Pershing appointed Major James Ryan as his intelligence officer. Military intelligence personnel from both the War Department and the Southern Department were attached to Pershing's expedition headquarters. Soon, information was flowing back to Washington. Unfortunately:

The net result of all this intelligence appreciation was that frequent and copious information reports were sent back to the War Department, mostly in the form of telegrams. Although an officer of the War College Division had been detailed to read these reports, this was apparently the only positive

however he was given free rein within the War College concerning intelligence matters.

¹³James A. Sandos, Rebellion in the Borderlands: Anarchism and the Plan of San Diego, 1904-1923 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 140. The Plan of San Diego (PSD) was drafted in 1915 and signed by nine Mexican-Americans in San Diego, Texas. According to Friedrich Katz, the PSD "called for an uprising of Mexican-Americans and blacks against Anglo-American domination in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and California. All Anglo males over the age of sixteen were to be killed. After victory each state would first constitute an independent republic which would then have the option of joining Mexico." For further information about the PSD and the German connection with it, see Friedrich Katz, The Secret War in Mexico: Europe, the United States, and the Mexican Revolution (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 339-344.

action taken in connection with them. As a matter of fact, it remains very doubtful that the bulk of them ever found their way into the War College files.¹⁴

By the end of 1916 there was a marked increase in the number of reports coming out of Mexico concerning German activities. Intelligence reports emanating from El Paso reported "German capital financing a Villista movement in Mexico to capture oil fields in Tampico." According to one historian, the reports from Mexico "helped harden Wilson into a posture of no compromise with Germany." In fact, publication of the Zimmermann telegram "linked the fear of Japanese, Mexicans, and Germans together and drove the administration and the American people toward war."¹⁵

THE EXPANSION OF MID DURING WORLD WAR I

According to the official historian of the Military Intelligence Division, Bruce Bidwell, the status of the army's intelligence agency at the start of World War I was

¹⁴Bidwell, History of MID, 94-95. Pershing utilized native informants to provide information on both the villistas and carranzistas. He also used Apache scouts for local reconnaissance and tracking missions.

¹⁵Jensen, Surveillance, 130. The Zimmermann telegram was sent by the German foreign secretary Arthur Zimmermann to the German minister in Mexico Heinrich von Eckardt. The telegram was intercepted by British intelligence who possessed the German codes and it was ultimately forwarded to the Americans. Basically, the telegram was suggesting a German alliance with Mexico and Japan in the event of war with the United States. See Barbara W. Tuchman, The Zimmermann Telegram (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958).

worse than dismal, "to all intents and purposes, there was no such agency in existence."¹⁶

In his introduction to the thirty volume collection, United States Military Intelligence, Richard Challener states that until 1917 "the United States Army, unlike the Navy, had given slight attention to the development of an intelligence capability." Challener explains that:

Indeed, when Elihu Root created the General Staff in 1903, intelligence was not made an integral part of the staff but rather relegated to the status of a subsidiary section of the Army War College. Thereafter it languished and was little more than a collector of military information. The business of the Intelligence Section was conducted in desultory fashion by a mere handful of officers and clerks; in April 1917 there were, in fact, only two officers and two clerks.¹⁷

After the declaration of war with Germany, the entire military complex expanded rapidly. The atmosphere surrounding this expansion was one of "complete disorder, mainly on the basis of expediency, while compromise and makeshift remained the principal order of the day." After typical bureaucratic infighting, the Military Intelligence Section, War College Division, was officially created on May 3, 1917. This came about "through changes published in the War College Division Manual rather than by the more

¹⁶Bidwell, Military Intelligence Division, 109.

¹⁷Richard D. Challener, ed., United States Military Intelligence, 1917-1927, vol. 1 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1978), v.

normal method of a War Department general order."¹⁸

Major Ralph H. Van Deman was named to be the Chief of the new Military Intelligence Section. This new unit began with two general staff officers, one other officer, and two civilian clerks. By November 11, 1918, the unit had grown to a total of 282 officers and 1,159 civilian clerks.¹⁹

On June 15, 1917, Congress authorized \$500,000 for the Military Intelligence Section and \$85,000 for the military observer account. A total of \$1,000,000 was appropriated for FY 1918, with an additional \$100,000 "for the hire of spies, guides and interpreters in the field." A total of \$2,000,000 was appropriated for FY 1919, with an additional \$100,000 "to cover military observer expenses abroad," and \$250,000 in a new fund "for emergency and extraordinary expenses, including the employment of translators."²⁰

The specific functions assigned to the Military intelligence Section included:

- (a) The collection, collation and distribution of military information....
- (b) The supervision of the duties of our Military Attaches abroad, insofar as those duties pertain to the collection of military information.
- (c) Supervision over Department Intelligence Officers and Intelligence Officers at posts or stations and with commands in the field in matters relating purely to military intelligence.

¹⁸Bidwell, Military Intelligence Division, 109-110.

¹⁹Ibid., 110-111.

²⁰Ibid., 111-112.

- (d) The consideration of questions of policy to be promulgated by the General Staff in connection with all matters of military intelligence.
- (e) The supervision and control of such system of military espionage and counter-espionage as shall be established,...
- (f) Cooperation with the Intelligence Sections of the General Staff of the various countries at war with Germany,...
- (g) The preparation of instructions in military intelligence work for the use of our forces in the field.²¹

The War Department went through a reorganization in February 1918 and the Military Intelligence Section was upgraded to branch status and assigned to the new Executive Division of the General Staff.²²

Finally, on August 26, 1918, the General Staff was reorganized through a War Department General Order in which Military Intelligence was accorded division status. The functional assignment given to the new Military Intelligence Division was as follows:

This division shall have cognizance and control of military intelligence, both positive and negative, and shall be in charge of an officer designated as the director of military intelligence, who will be an assistant to the Chief of Staff. He is also the chief military censor. The duties of this division are to maintain estimates revised daily of the military situation, the economic situation, and of such other matters as the Chief of Staff may direct, and to collect, collate, and disseminate military intelligence. It will cooperate with the intelligence section of the general staffs of allied countries in connection with military intelligence; prepare instructions in military intelligence work for the use of our forces; supervise the training of personnel for intelligence work; organize, direct,

²¹Ibid., 113.

²²Ibid., 116.

and coordinate the intelligence service; supervise the duties of military attachés; communicate direct with department intelligence officers and intelligence officers at posts, camps, and stations; and with commands in the field in matters relating to military intelligence; obtain, reproduce and issue maps; translate foreign documents; disburse and account for intelligence funds; cooperate with the censorship board and with intelligence agencies of other departments of the Government.²³

The internal organization of the Military

Intelligence division was based upon the British model.

The British term "intelligence" came to replace the American military term of "information." The British terms "espionage" and "counterespionage" were also adopted by the Americans. Van Deman adopted the British numbering system to designate functional units within the intelligence agency, for example:

- M.I. 1 - Administration
- M.I. 2 - Collection, Collation, and Dissemination of Foreign Intelligence
- M.I. 3 - Counter-Espionage in the Military Service
- M.I. 4 - Counter-Espionage Among Civilian Population
- M.I. 5 - Military Attachés
- M.I. 6 - Translation
- M.I. 7 - Graphic
- M.I. 8 - Cable and Telegraph
- M.I. 9 - Field Intelligence
- M.I. 10 - Censorship
- M.I. 11 - Passports and Port Control
- M.I. 12 - Graft and Fraud
- No # - Military Morale Section²⁴

Van Deman borrowed further from the British in order

²³Ibid., 117.

²⁴Ibid., 122-124. The Military Morale Section was formed in 1918 as an unnumbered section of MID. Bidwell explains that just before the Armistice, it became a separate branch of the General Staff and reported to the Executive Assistant of the General Staff.

to divide the functional units into two "fields of endeavor." Van Deman introduced the British terms of "positive intelligence" and "negative intelligence." Thus, the MID was further divided into two branches:

<u>Positive Branch</u>	<u>Negative Branch</u>
M.I.2 Foreign Intelligence	M.I.3 Counter-Espionage
M.I.5 Military Attachés	in Military
M.I.6 Translation	Service
M.I.7 Graphic	M.I.4 Counter-Espionage
M.I.8 Cable and Telegraph	Among Civilian
M.I.9 Field Intelligence	Population
	M.I.10 Censorship
	M.I.11 Passports and
	Port Control
	M.I.12 Graft and Fraud
	Military Morale
	Section ²⁵

One of the key issues for the MID during this time was that of personnel selection and training. According to one historian of the British intelligence agency:

on the one hand, intelligence work was thought of as a professional backwater, suitable only for officers with a knowledge of foreign languages and for those not wanted for command. On the other hand, the activities of the many men of average or less than average professional competence who were thus detailed for intelligence confirmed the low estimate that had already been made of the value of intelligence work.²⁶

²⁵Ibid., 125. Positive intelligence can be defined as the gathering of information. Positive intelligence can be gathered through either overt or clandestine means. Negative intelligence can be defined as the safeguarding of one's own secrets, or counterintelligence. See Nathan Miller, Spying for America: The Hidden History of U.S. Intelligence (New York: Paragon House, 1989).

²⁶Keith Jeffery, "Intelligence and Military History: A British Perspective," in Military History and the Military Profession, ed. David A. Charters, Marc Milner, and J. Brent Wilson (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992), 106.

In terms of the American MID, Van Deman was outspoken in his belief that intelligence work required "special qualifications and men of the utmost integrity." The reality was that intelligence positions suffered a high turnover rate as officers became trained and were sent to the European front. It was not until the end of the war before "systematic training" for officers was initiated, when "regular in-service lectures were established and a course on intelligence was added at the General Staff College."²⁷

MID AND MEXICO DURING WORLD WAR I

Institutional History

At the beginning of the war, military intelligence was functioning more efficiently along the Mexican border than in Washington. In one study, it was shown that the U.S. Army "had an efficient collection and production organization in place on the Mexican border which served well throughout the war." Intelligence activities along the border included surveillance, collection, and SIGINT. The problem was the critical need at the receiving end in Washington for an efficient "central analysis and dissemination function."²⁸

²⁷Talbert, Jr., Negative Intelligence, 25.

²⁸Rila, "Army Intelligence Collection," 132. Signals intelligence (SIGINT) sources at this time included telegraph and radio cryptanalysis. The head of the newly

Military intelligence was active along the Mexican border, in part due to the heightened emotions of the time. There was fear of a Japanese invasion emanating from Mexico and German spies slipping into the United States to commit sabotage. Loyal Mexican Americans were accused of pro-German sympathies and anti-Americanism.²⁹ Americans who opposed the entry of the United States into the European war (as well as a few draft-dodgers) crossed into Mexico, where they were branded as "slackers," radicals, and socialists. Another group crossing from the United States into Mexico which attracted vigilance by both the British and the U.S. intelligence agencies were members of the Indian anticolonial movement. Finally, attempts by the Wilson administration to convince the Carranza government to drop its neutral stance and side with the Allies resulted in Mexican hostility toward the United States.³⁰

By late 1917 the U.S. Censorship Board was able to implement a plan whereby all mail was intercepted passing between the United States and Mexico. Federal censors were

created cryptologic section of the Military Intelligence Division, MI-8 was Herbert Osborne Yardley. See David Kahn, The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967). See also Departments of the Army and the Air Force, Fundamentals of Traffic Analysis (Radio-Telegraph), File SRMD-017, Record Group 457, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

²⁹Raat, Revoltosos, 258-259.

³⁰Barry Carr, Marxism & Communism in Twentieth-Century Mexico (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 18-19.

located at Galveston, El Paso, Laredo, San Antonio, Nogales, San Diego, and San Francisco. Working with these censors were individuals from the Department of State, Department of Justice, the War Board, and the Military Intelligence Division. Telegraphs, letters, and cables were censored "as the authorities sought to root out those individuals with anti-American, pro-German, and anti-war opinions."³¹

In a memo dated October 25, 1917, from the Military Censor in Laredo, Texas, to the Chief Military Censor in Washington, D.C., an explanation was provided concerning the contents of a message sent from Walter Hawk in Mexico to Samuel Holmes in Chicago. Attached to the memo were copies of the actual message. Correspondence initiated within the MID concerning the situation were included with this memo in the MID file. The memo stated:

1. Copy of message dated Laredo, Texas, October 22nd, 1917, addressed to Samuel S. Holmes, 11 S. LaSalle St., Chicago, Ills., signed Walter D. Hawk.
2. The message was written in Mexico City and delivered to this office for transmission to Chicago. Mr. Charles A. Douglas, legal representative of President Carranza, brought the message in.
3. Mr. Hawk and Douglas made a trip together to Mexico City, leaving Laredo about three weeks ago.
4. The message as written by Mr. Hawk appears to have been corrected by running his pencil through certain sentences and that you may see the trend of his original thoughts when compiling the message I am attaching exhibit "A".
5. The business referred to inclines me to the belief that some huge colonization plan is in contemplation for Lower California.

³¹Raat, Revoltosos, 258.

6. I am inclined to believe that the deal is being financed from pro-German sources.

7. Mr. James J. Garfield of Cleveland, Ohio, can probably give you details of the deal if desired.³²

Concerned about possible schemes in Lower California, the Western Union Censor intercepted a statement sent from the Mexican governor of the Northern District of Lower California to the Associated Press:

I feel justly indignant at the news that the press of the United States has been publishing, relative to schemes imputed to me of annexation and independence of Lower California. Allow me to honestly and forcibly state that these reports are absolutely false and groundless. I solemnly protest that neither as Governor or as a private citizen will I ever endorse the cession of any portion of the Mexican soil.³³

Another MID unit that was very active during the war was Herbert Yardley's cryptographic section, MI-8. A number of functions were carried out by this section. One was to develop codes to be used by the U.S. government.³⁴ Another was to break foreign codes and ciphers.³⁵

³²Military Censor, Laredo, Texas to Chief Military Censor, Washington, DC, Oct. 25, 1917; File 9700-432; Registers of Communications Received from Military Attachés and Other Intelligence Officers (Dispatch Lists) 1889-1941; Military Intelligence Division; Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Record Group 165; National Archives, Washington, DC.

³³Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 27, Daily Summary for February 6, 1918.

³⁴Powe, "Sketch," in Final Memoranda, ed. Ralph E. Weber, xx. MI-8 was the predecessor of the U.S. Army Security Agency.

³⁵Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, ix. He points out that of the 579 foreign codes and ciphers broken by 1919, 541 were Mexican. David Kahn in The Codebreakers

Subsections were established to study shorthand systems and secret-ink writing.³⁶ And finally, Yardley placed mobile radio intercept stations along the Mexican border in order to monitor German attempts to build a wireless station in Mexico.³⁷

An intercepted cipher message, dated December 28, 1917, from President Venustiano Carranza of Mexico to the Mexican ambassador to the United States Ignacio Bonillas, indicates the Mexican concern over American complicity in allowing Mexican rebels to arm themselves in the U.S. and then cross back into Mexico. A translation of the message reads:

I have information that on the American side parties of Mexicans are allowed to organize, and armed and mounted men cross into our territory. Please take up this matter with the Secretary of State, advising me of the result.³⁸

states that MI-8 was reading the diplomatic telegrams of Argentina, Brazil, Chili, Costa Rica, Cuba, Germany, Mexico, Spain, and Panama. Most of the intercepted cipher letters sent to MI-8 by the censorship office turned out to be personal notes in very simple systems. Kahn quotes Yardley's response to some of the torrid love letters: "It rather worried me to see husbands and wives trust their illicit correspondence to such unsafe methods."

³⁶Kahn, Codebreakers, 352-353. The shorthand subsection was eventually able to read intercepted letters in more than thirty different systems. The secret-ink subsection was able to test 2,000 letters a week for invisible writing after the discovery of a general reagent.

³⁷Powe, "Sketch," in Final Memoranda, ed. Weber, xx.

³⁸Venustiano Carranza, President of Mexico, to Ignacio Bonillas, Mexican Ambassador to U.S., Dec. 28, 1917; Part 2, Box 9, Doc. No. 73; Mexican Intercepted Messages 1912-

The MI-8 section sent copies of the intercept to both the State Department and to the Intelligence Office of the Southern Department.

While MI-8 was highly successful for the most part in conducting their intercept traffic, problems did occur. For example, proper translation protocols were not being followed by naval communication agents before forwarding cipher messages to MI-8 as evidenced in the following note:

Please try to get us the original Spanish text of this message. The Naval Communications translator has obviously translated as Spanish what is really a part of the Cipher message. We have the entire alphabet of the cipher used in this message, but nothing can be made of the message in its present mutilated form.

We have again and again pleaded that the Naval Communications agents be instructed to send the untranslated text of messages partly in cipher and partly in a foreign language. It is absolutely essential that this should be done. Will you not have Naval Communications give orders to this effect?³⁹

Throughout the war the Military Intelligence Division was concerned about propaganda emanating from Mexico, particularly that which had a pro-German or anti-American slant. The Daily Summary report for February 23, 1918, included the following information from a "reliable American source" in France: "the German Minister has

1924, MI-8, Yardley File; Records of the National Security Agency/Central Security Office, Record Group 457; National Archives, Washington, DC.

³⁹A. Madrazo, Mexico, to Rafael Mieto Cargo Agencia Financiera, New York, February 4, 1918; Part 3, Box 9, Doc. No. 224; Yardley File; RG 457; NA.

requested his government to furnish him twenty million pesos for propaganda."⁴⁰ Intelligence agent W.H. Conway made the following observation about pro-German propaganda in a 1917 report to the Southern Department Intelligence Office:

Creation of pro-German sentiment is fostered through publication of misleading newspaper articles. I attach to this report (exhibit A) a newspaper which contains a statement to the effect that American labor agents hire Mexicans, place them in chair cars at the border but later transfer them to "stock cars." Articles of this kind, absolutely untrue, are firmly believed by natives, fostered by Germans, and create an unfavorable anti-American (consequently pro-German) feeling.⁴¹

During this same month, the military attaché in Mexico City reported that "The pro-German sheets, particularly the Boletin de la Guerra, have become, if possible, more bitterly hostile towards the United States than ever before."⁴²

The Passports and Port Control section (MI-11) of the Military Intelligence Division was created on September 23, 1918. This section replaced two different subsections that were contained within MI-3 and MI-4. The MI-11 section was

⁴⁰Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 27, Daily Summary for February 23, 1918. The twenty million pesos was to be used in connection with promoting pro-German propaganda in Mexico.

⁴¹W.H. Conway to Captain G.V.S. Quackenbush, October 1, 1917; File 9700-334, Dispatch Lists; RG 165; NA.

⁴²Captain R.M. Campbell, Military Attaché, to Lt. Col. R.H. Van Deman, General Staff, October 10, 1917; File 9700-372; Dispatch Lists; RG 165; NA.

required to coordinate efforts with agencies of the Department of State and Department of Justice.⁴³

There was concern and anxiety among members of the U.S. federal agencies charged with the control of traffic crossing the Mexican border. During the fall of 1917, a flurry of letters flew between the Departments of Justice, State, and War concerning the large volume of Mexican border traffic and the lack of control over the situation.⁴⁴ In a letter from R.W. Flourney, Jr., Acting Chief of the Bureau of Citizenship, to Lt. Colonel R.H. Van Deman, Chief of the Military Intelligence Section, it was suggested by Mr. Flourney that it would be:

very desirable to have some competent person make a tour of inspection of the Mexican border, with a view to ascertaining and reporting definitely as to what further measures to regulate entry and exit across the border should be adopted....Recent reports indicate that slackers as well as German agents are crossing into Mexico. Thus the matter seems to be one of special interest to the War Department.⁴⁵

In a memo from Mason Peters to Colonel Van Deman summarizing the situation, Peters states:

Mr. Flourney suggests that the European system of searching passengers before they reach the Border, instead of actually at the Border, be adopted in

⁴³Bidwell, Military Intelligence Division, 124.

⁴⁴Letters between the State Department, Justice Department, and War Department, Oct. 15, 1917 to Dec. 21, 1917; File 9700-416/1-15; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁴⁵R.W. Flourney, Jr., Acting Chief, Bureau of Citizenship, to R.H. Van Deman, Chief, Military Intelligence Section, Nov. 6, 1917; File 9700-416/5; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

this country. The custom of giving passes to those who make daily trips to and from the Mexican side is also ineffective.

Briefly, the State Department says that the lines of communication between the United States and Mexico are not under control.⁴⁶

One year later, the new Director of Military Intelligence, Marlborough Churchill, wrote a memo to the Provost Marshall General stating that during the past few months there had been "innumerable cases of German aliens surreptitiously crossing the border into Mexico." Churchill also expressed concern over the numbers of draft evaders appearing along the border "with the intention, no doubt, to seize the first opportunity to cross into Mexico." Churchill went on to make suggestions for requiring picture identification cards for "all males between the ages of 18 and 45" traveling within a "certain prescribed area" along the border. Churchill also offered to share information from MID files regarding the "illegitimate crossing of the Border."⁴⁷

A key MID position in Mexico during the war was that of the military attaché. At the outbreak of World War I, the military attaché in Mexico City was Frank Ross McCoy. According to Andrew Bacevich, Jr., the "traditional

⁴⁶Mason Peters to Colonel Van Deman, Dec. 21, 1917; File 9700-416/15; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁴⁷Brigadier General Marlborough Churchill, Director of Military Intelligence, to the Provost Marshall General, Washington, DC, October 8, 1918; File 9700-416/24; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

function of a military attaché is to report to his government on military activities within the host nation." Bacevich explains that in 1917, the Mexican government was so focused on containing the rebel activities of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, that "the line separating civil and military affairs was ill-defined, if not altogether invisible." Bacevich argues that since the Mexican military was so involved in politics, "McCoy's responsibilities assumed abnormal importance."⁴⁸

In his role as military attaché, McCoy was to investigate reports of German activities in Mexico, including "sabotage directed against American-owned oil fields near Tampico; construction of submarine bases on the Gulf coast; and establishment of wireless stations to coordinate U-boat operations." After chasing down numerous rumors, McCoy came to the conclusion that the German threat was less dramatic than articulated by Washington. McCoy also made a distinction between anti-Americanism as voiced by Mexicans and active support for Germany. Basically, McCoy told Washington "not to overreact."⁴⁹

As the war was drawing to an end, the military attaché in Mexico was Major (later Lt. Colonel) R.M. Campbell. On September 10, 1918, Campbell submitted a

⁴⁸Andrew J. Bacevich, Jr., "American Military Diplomacy, 1898-1949: The Role of Frank Ross McCoy," (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1982), 140-141.

⁴⁹Ibid., 143-144.

report to the Chief of Military Intelligence, entitled "Forces Necessary in Case of Armed Conflict between the United States and Mexico." Campbell made the following rationalization:

Relations between the United States and Mexico being in such a condition that, at any moment an armed conflict may be precipitated, I submit the following opinions for such use as the Military Intelligence Branch may deem expedient. Of course, the situation is not one to cause immediate alarm, but it is of such delicacy that some trivial and unforeseen incident may produce a rupture any day. German influence will undoubtedly be exerted to prevent a rupture for economic reasons, both in regard to present conditions and post-war trade, and also because the many Germans in Mexico would have no place of refuge except San Salvador or certain South American countries, and merely casual vigilance on the part of our Navy would prevent an exodus to those havens. But German effort is constantly engaged in fermenting hostile feeling towards the United States; the existing Government is unfriendly, and this being true, relations may suddenly assume a state which will be beyond the control of diplomacy.⁵⁰

After several modifications, Campbell's plan was endorsed by the Military Intelligence Branch. One reviewer of the plan noted that:

From my experience in Mexico I would commend fully the report, in so far as it treats of intervention plans. The writer has a good grasp of the Mexican situation and an accurate knowledge of the Mexican character.⁵¹

⁵⁰Military Attaché, Mexico City, to Chief, Military Intelligence Branch, September 10, 1918; File 10541-764/1; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁵¹Memorandum for Major Cotten, December 3, 1918; File 10541-764/f/w; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

Objects of Investigation

Throughout the war, there was a great deal of U.S. military intelligence activity taking place in Mexico, despite the war in Europe. In addition to the concern regarding German and Japanese activities, propoganda efforts, and rumored espionage; the MID was evaluating the internal situation of Mexico. Intelligence reports coming out of Mexico discussed rebel activities, the stability of the Mexican government, attitudes of the Mexican people, relations with the United States, military capabilities of the Mexican army, and other timely topics as illustrated below.

In the Military Intelligence Summary Report of June 23, 1917, it was reported:

A report to hand, transmitted through the Southern Department, informs us that it is believed that Carranza is supporting Germany, that U-boats are receiving food supplies and "gas" on the Gulf Coast, and that Carranza will shortly force an issue with the United States.⁵²

The following week it was reported that a "reliable source" had informed Naval Intelligence that the "partially educated class are anti-foreign and particularly anti-American." The report went on to say that the "upper class are, in a large majority, pro-Ally, though there are among them a great many rabid pro-Germans."⁵³

⁵²Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, Weekly Summary for June 23, 1917, 23.

⁵³Ibid., June 30, 1917, 16.

The political situation in Mexico was a constant topic for reporting by Military Intelligence Division. The following report was filed in August, 1917:

From the West Coast it is reported that General Obregon is continuing his preparations with a view to leading a revolutionary movement against the Carranza Government, while Carranza, it is stated, is preparing to oust Governor Cantu of Lower California.⁵⁴

The Mexican press was always combed for tidbits of information to be used by military intelligence, particularly in countering propaganda efforts. The following excerpt is from the August 15, 1917, edition of the Mexican newspaper La Orientacion, published in Hermosillo, Sonora:

The proclamations state that true North Americans prefer to die in their own country rather than to die in foreign countries, fighting for the interests of American and English millionaires.⁵⁵

Relations between Mexico and the United States were a concern relative to the possibility of armed intervention by the United States or an invasion initiated by Mexico. The assessment on this issue was reported in September, 1917:

Recent reports to hand indicate that Mexico will in the future give little trouble to the United States, owing to the fact that it is so greatly impressed by the extent of our military preparation. There may be internal troubles, but there will be

⁵⁴Ibid., August 11, 1917, 21.

⁵⁵Ibid., September 8, 1917, 35.

no united action against this country.⁵⁶

By the end of 1917, it was being reported that the situation in Mexico had deteriorated significantly as evidenced by the following report:

Conditions in Mexico are becoming more and more disturbed. Reliable informants give as their opinion that there is such a marked undercurrent of unrest in Mexico that it is believed that Carranza is doomed to fall. How and when the overthrow of Carranza is to be brought about, remains unanswered.⁵⁷

The continuing conflict between the Mexican government and the Yaqui Indians was another topic that caught the eye of military intelligence, particularly the implications for possible intervention by the United States, as pointed out in the following report:

During a recent raid by Yaqui bandits, many women and children were massacred and young girls maltreated and carried off into captivity.

... It is believed that intervention on our part might be useful in order to insist that some measures be taken to protect private property and life of the inhabitants in Sonora.⁵⁸

The issue of possible U.S. intervention was still being debated in Mexico the following month. An informed "observer" in Sonora reported to military intelligence that "All well informed Mexicans believe that a conflict with the United States is inevitable and among some the

⁵⁶Ibid., September 15, 1917, 24.

⁵⁷Ibid., vol. 2, December 1, 1917, 26.

⁵⁸Ibid., vol. 2, January 12, 1918, 37.

conviction is growing that Mexico should strike first."⁵⁹ Even by April, the situation had not improved, "The General situation in Mexico continues seriously demoralized, with no improvement indicated for the immediate future."⁶⁰

As the war in Europe was nearing its end, relations between Mexico and the United States were reported to be improving. In August, 1918, it was stated that "Recent reports from various parts of Mexico agree in noting an improved feeling toward the United States, and a decline of German influence."⁶¹ By November, 1918, just days before the end of the war, it was reported:

There can be no doubt that the changed tide of battle in Europe has had a marked effect in Mexico. The comparatively small reading and thinking element of the population has begun to realize that the war is proceeding to an end very different from that which the German propagandists have prophesied. Gradually the convictions of this class, supplemented by a more active campaign of publicity for pr-Ally aims and victories, is taking effect upon the feeling of the ignorant masses. It is easy to convince a Mexican that his interest lies on the side of the winner.⁶²

THE IMMEDIATE POST-WAR YEARS

Institutional History

The termination of the European war brought about a

⁵⁹Ibid, vol. 3, February 9, 1918, 13.

⁶⁰Ibid, vol. 4, April 27, 1918, 17.

⁶¹Ibid, vol. 4, August 3, 1918, 26.

⁶²Ibid., vol. 6, November 2, 1918, 95.

number of changes for the U.S. Army, as well as the Military Intelligence Division. Downsizing and reorganization were critical issues that needed to be addressed. According to Bidwell, MID officials were "realistic enough after World War I to accept the fact that most of the Army intelligence activities would be curtailed to a considerable degree upon the return of peacetime conditions."⁶³ By July 1, 1919, the MID had been reduced to "110 officers, 5 noncommissioned officers and 159 civilian employees." The MID suffered a further reduction by June 30, 1920, to "79 officers, 4 noncommissioned officers and 150 civilian employees."⁶⁴

The National Defense Act of 1920 resulted in the reorganization of the Army and constituted "the primary legal basis in governing the growth of the United States Army for many years to come."⁶⁵ The War Department issued orders for the reorganization of the General Staff in compliance with the National Defense Act, creating four equal staff divisions: Operations, Military Intelligence, War Plans, and Supply. The mission of the Military Intelligence Division was to be responsible for the "collection, evaluation and dissemination of military information for the use of the Secretary of War, Assistant

⁶³Bidwell, Military Intelligence Division, 249.

⁶⁴Ibid., 252.

⁶⁵Ibid., 250.

Secretary of War, Chief of Staff, and War Department General Staff."⁶⁶

The specific functions assigned to the Military Intelligence Division during this reorganization, included the following:

- (a) Formulation of policies with reference to military topographical surveys and maps, including their reproduction and distribution.
- (b) Supervision and training of military attachés, observers and foreign language students.
- (c) Formulation of policies affecting and the supervision of intelligence personnel for all units.
- (d) Use of codes and ciphers.
- (e) Translation of foreign documents.
- (f) Establishment and maintenance of contact with other intelligence agencies of the government and with duly accredited foreign military attachés and military missions.
- (g) Construction and reproduction of special maps required for intelligence purposes, including the procuring of maps from foreign sources.
- (h) Custody of the General Staff map and photograph collection.⁶⁷

Another reorganization of the General Staff took place in 1921 after General Pershing was designated as the Chief of Staff on July 1, 1921. Pershing's reorganization resulted in the creation of five General Staff Divisions: Personnel (G-1), Military Intelligence (G-2), Operations and Training (G-3), Supply (G-4), and War Plans (WPD).⁶⁸

Objects of Investigation

The focus of the Military Intelligence in the

⁶⁶Ibid., 251.

⁶⁷Ibid., 251.

⁶⁸Ibid., 255.

immediate postwar era centered on the perceived threats of Bolshevism, socialism, radical activities, and labor unrest, among others. In Mexico, the MID watched for these same potentially dangerous movements spilling over into the United States, as well as monitoring Mexican insurrection movements and rebel leaders.⁶⁹

The District Intelligence Officer in El Paso made the following observations concerning the general situation in Chihuahua, after the release by Francisco Villa of three American officials of the Erupcion Mining Company in November, 1918:

Villa is really the master of the state of Chihuahua, outside of one or two of the large towns in the southern part of the state. The Carranza government is absolutely helpless when it comes to protecting the property of foreign interests. In reality Villa himself can give certain American interests better protection than can the Carrancistas. In this connection there is no doubt but that Villa is going to wage a campaign against American interests in order to raise a sum of money to outfit his coming campaigns. If these demands are not fulfilled, Villa will destroy American property.⁷⁰

After the deaths of Emiliano Zapata and Aurelio Blanquet in 1919, it was thought by the Military Intelligence Division that "the rebel menace in Mexico" would lessen. Concerning the elimination of Zapata, the

⁶⁹Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, ix.

⁷⁰Ibid., vol. 6, Weekly Summary for November 30, 1918, 283. The three Americans captured by Villa and held for ransom were Frank Knotts, D.B. Smith, and Ammon Tinney. The ransom paid to Villa was \$15,000 plus a quantity of flour and sugar.

MID made the following assessment:

Though many believed Zapata a noble patriot who was whole-heartedly desirous of returning to the natives the land exploited by Diaz, the disappearance of this Aztec Moses, a type little amenable to the requirements of advanced civilization, cannot help but bring the pacification of Mexico one step nearer than heretofore. With their leader gone, it is logical to expect the entire disappearance, in a short time, of the so-called Zapatistas. The Mexicans are more apt to be influenced by the personality of their leader than by the principles of the cause for which they fight.⁷¹

As during the war itself, discussions about intervention by the United States continued within Mexico and was monitored by the MID. In a January, 1919, assessment it was reported that "An increasingly large native element in Mexico is beginning to look forward to foreign intervention in a spirit of hopeful anticipation, or, at worst, of resignation." The report ended by stating that "Intervention is looked upon as not desirable in itself, but as something to be borne with resignation as bringing relief in an unbearable and impossible condition of affairs."⁷²

Also mentioned at the beginning of 1919, in connection with Mexico was that "Bolshevism." Since the spread of Bolshevism into the United States was feared, any mention of it was sure to raise alarm. In one report, Carranza was painted with the Bolshevik brush:

⁷¹Ibid., vol. 7, April 26, 1919, 824.

⁷²Ibid., vol. 6, January 4, 1919, 397.

"Bolshevist" is being used with increasing frequency as an adjective descriptive of the Carranza Government. In this connection the reorganization of the so-called Casa del Obrero Mundial, a labor organization of extreme I.W.W. tendencies, is viewed with increasing concern....That Carranza should permit its resuscitation is regarded as ominous.⁷³

The Weekly Intelligence Summary for March 8, 1919, reported that "Bolshevist agitation in Mexico is causing the Central Government considerable concern." In addition to Bolshevist agents being identified in Mexico, it was also noted that there was an increase in the number of "I.W.W. propagandists" observed in the country. Tampico was identified as the center for the Bolshevist movement. In addition, the Germans were being blamed because "it is apparent that they prepared the way for the radical doctrines now being preached by the I.W.W. and Bolshevist agents in Mexico."⁷⁴

In an article written July, 1920, in the Mexican newspaper, El Obrero Industrial, an American named Linn A.E. Gale expounded upon the virtues of Bolshevism. Naturally, the article made its way into the files of the Military Intelligence Division. In the article, Gale states that "No country needs bolshevism more than Mexico with the agonies it has passed thru for centuries, its

⁷³Ibid., 398.

⁷⁴Ibid., vol. 7, March 8, 1919, 664.

brutal exploitation and terrible poverty."⁷⁵ In a cipher intercept of a message from Fernando Yglesias Calderon in Washington, DC, to the government in Mexico City, Gale was described as a "socialist," considered "dangerous, went to Mexico in 1917, evading military service and it seems he is wanted by the military authorities."⁷⁶

By September, 1920, Bolshevist propaganda was reportedly spreading into Campeche and Yucatan. It was alleged that Bolshevism was "being spread by revolutionary agents in an attempt to overthrow the government."⁷⁷ The next month, it was reported that "authorities in the State of Nayarit were confronted with the problem of Bolshevism." This same report indicated that state authorities "would deal most harshly with all persons found propagating this dangerous doctrine and arrested several agitators."⁷⁸

The Military Intelligence Division was not the only

⁷⁵Translation of Article from "El Obrero Industrial," July 1920; File 10038-0-12/8/W; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁷⁶Fernando Yglesias Calderon, Washington, to Relaciones, Mexico City, July 27, 1920; Part 22, Box 12, Doc. No. 2553; MI-8, Yardley File; RG 457; NA. As early as April 12, 1920, the Mexican government was made aware that the Americans had intercepted correspondence from Gale in Mexico to Bolsheviks in the United States. See Diego Fernandez, Washington, to Relaciones, Mexico City, April 12, 1920; Part 22, Box 12, Doc. No. 2146; MI-8, Yardley File; RG 457; NA.

⁷⁷Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 14, Weekly Summary for September 18, 1920, 5410.

⁷⁸Ibid., vol. 15, October 9, 1920, 5532.

intelligence agency concerned with the threat of Bolshevism emanating out of Mexico. Rear Admiral Albert P. Niblack, Director of Naval Intelligence, reported in December 1919 to Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy:

A Nation-wide Terrorists' campaign is being hatched on the Pacific and Atlantic Coasts by Germans, Russian and Mexican Terrorists.... The main planning is being done in Mexico City by old-time German anarchists who escaped from Chicago during the Haymarket riots. No definite date has yet been set. The Terror will surpass anything that ever happened in this country and the brains of the plot are already on the Pacific Coast, but it may be January or February before anything will be attempted, but the real directing is being done from Mexico City and the Mexicans who enter this country as railroad laborers are message carriers.⁷⁹

Another focal point for MID surveillance centered around Japanese activities in Mexico. As seen in the following report, the underlying basis or rationale for this concern could be questioned. In a memo to Major Barnes in the War Department from Major R.B. Woodruff, it was reported:

It has been reported by a gentleman returning from Mexico City that while he was staying at the Cosmos Hotel there, two Japanese occupied either Room 33 or 34 and appeared to entertain many other Japanese. Two Japs also occupied Room 27 in this hotel, but they had left previous to the time of his departure. He was unable to determine what their business was. This may be of interest in connection with other data

⁷⁹Albert Niblack, Confidential Memorandum, December 20, 1919, Papers as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, box 2, "Official Files, Naval Department: I General," Franklin D. Roosevelt Library; quoted in Christopher Andrew, For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 79.

which may perhaps be in your files.⁸⁰

In 1919, the MID was concerned that Japan was "pushing her efforts towards industrial expansion in Mexico." A large purchase of henequen by Japanese merchants and the expected arrival of Japanese ships at the port of Manzanillo were considered "forerunners of a closer business relation between Mexico and Japan." The immigration of 6,000 Japanese into Lower California was also touted as being of "economic significance." It was theorized that an "extensive colonization scheme on the west coast is indicated also by the reports concerning the purchase of land in this section of the country by Japanese syndicates." It was also reported by the Mexican press that Japan was attempting "to obtain, at any cost, oil grants which will allow her to convert her ships into oil-burners and to use oil as a motive power for her industrial machinery."⁸¹

At the end of 1920, a report was produced by the District Intelligence Office in Nogales, Arizona, regarding Japanese activities on the West Coast. An ongoing investigation had been conducted for three years with a

⁸⁰R.B. Woodruff, Major, General Staff, to Major Barnes, May 19, 1919; File 1766-1049/1; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA. In a handwritten note at the bottom of the memo, Woodruff indicated that "The M.A. Mexico City has not been notified of these facts."

⁸¹Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 7, Weekly Summary for April 5, 1919, 778-779.

series of reports having been generated on this subject. The 1920 report stated that "R-1 of this office reports the presence of a large number of Japanese in Sonora and Sinaloa, scattered over considerable territory." The report went on to say that parties of Japanese were engaged in "mapping expeditions." It was also reported that the Japanese had been granted "practically unlimited concessions on the West Coast," especially in the area of fishing agreements. The report concluded with the names with short biographical comments of eight Japanese individuals.⁸²

The activities of Germans were also closely monitored by the MID. Information gleaned from Mexican newspapers revealed that large numbers of Germans were migrating to Mexico from Europe. In addition, "thousands of wealthy German-Americans are preparing to move into Mexico and become Mexican citizens, ten thousand intending to go from Texas alone."⁸³

Arms and munitions shipped from Germany to Mexico were another concern. In March, 1920, a Japanese vessel carrying German arms was observed leaving Hamburg bound for Mexico. That same month, German "bombardment aeroplanes of

⁸²District Intelligence Office, Nogales, Arizona, to A.C. of S. for M.I., Hdq. 8th Corps Area, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, December 21, 1920; File 1766-0-38/1; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁸³Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 9, Weekly Summary for September 13, 1919, 1777.

the Gotha type" were alleged to have been shipped from Germany to Spain and then to Mexico. Supposedly, twenty German pilots accompanied the shipment in order to serve as pilots and instructors."⁸⁴ Later during the same year, it came to light that the "Deums News Agency of Germany in September offered government officials and newspapers free press service, with the intention of introducing German propaganda into Mexico."⁸⁵

The economic situation in Mexico relative to oil production was assessed in 1919. It was reported that during the month of January, 1919, oil production had increased fifty percent over January of the previous year. In terms of the issue of nationalization and royalties, it was stated that "It is evident that the attitude of the Mexican authorities toward the exaction of royalties is not yet established." Commenting on the military situation in the oil fields, it was remarked that conditions "have not changed materially for the last three years." Theft, murder, and forced loans were common. As far as the rebels themselves, "When the rebels are in power, they are paid \$50,000 a month for protection, and thus better order is maintained than when the federals are campaigning against

⁸⁴Ibid., vol. 12, April 9, 1920, 3444.

⁸⁵Ibid., vol. 15, October 9, 1920, 5532. It was claimed that "some of the papers have already accepted this offer."

the rebels."⁸⁶

The political and military situation in Mexico was analyzed in the fall of 1920 with several intelligence reports originating in Mexico. Commenting on Obregón and de la Huerta, a November 23, 1920 report stated:

The political attitude of Obregon and De La Huerta is commented upon in two ways by the public in general. The radicals claim that they will support Morones and Felipe Carrillo and will initiate a movement of Bolsheviki characteristics that will attract the laboring element and prevent a real "social revolution." Merchants, manufacturers, and business people in general say: "Obregon sees that he will be unable to obtain recognition from the U.S. unless he can dominate the radical element - not believing this possible he has decided to aid them in order to get their support and present a solid front against an American invasion - which is regarded as imminent." They consider this the only possible means of uniting the radical element with the Government and people.⁸⁷

The same report also commented on the military situation in Mexico. The report observed that "The military element is equally uneasy, they claim they are being made to work without pay." The report goes on to explain that those soldiers who have not yet deserted state "that their chiefs are awaiting a favorable opportunity to go to Chiapas and join Basave y Pina, head of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas."⁸⁸

⁸⁶Ibid., vol. 7, April 12, 1919, 800.

⁸⁷Report No. 2021 from Mexico to Military Intelligence, November 23, 1920; File 10058-0-3/132; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁸⁸Ibid. Apparently, at some posts soldiers had gone a month without pay. It was also heard among some soldiers

A different picture of Mexico was painted by Arthur Constantine in a September 10, 1919, article in The Outlook, which found its way into the MID files. According to Constantine:

Always fascinating Mexico makes another picture entirely when you take the trouble to check up the headlines and the old residents with the accurately gathered and compiled official information of our own Government organizations. The truth is, as the returns demonstrate beyond argument, that Mexico is already so far along the comeback path that commercially the landmarks of the often-referred-to other epochs of that country's history have been left behind the horizon....

Mexico's export trade with the United States is thus shown to have increased both in quantity and in value more than one hundred per cent since 1914....

In the light of the foregoing easily available official data about things Mexican, it is a test of one's intelligence to be expected to take seriously the generalities that pass current for truth about the conditions in that country.⁸⁹

Abductions and attacks upon Americans were monitored by both the press and the MID. The weekly report for October 27, 1919, from the military attaché in Mexico City commented on the abduction of the American Consular Agent in Puebla, William O. Jenkins. On the night of October 20th, "three masked individuals," abducted him from his factory "after obliging him to open his safe and deliver

and junior officers that they hoped "for another revolution in order that they might have a chance to better their fortune."

⁸⁹Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 9, Weekly Summary for September 20, 1919, 1847-1849. For statistical information see David E. Lorey, ed., United States-Mexico Border Statistics Since 1900 (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1990).

them the money on hand, which amounted to something like 70,000 Pesos, and for whose return they demanded a ransom of 300,000 Pesos."⁹⁰

The Jenkins "Case" would continue over the course of the next fourteen months, be made into "a cause célèbre," and bring "the two nations to the brink of war," according to one historian. This same historian also argues that the Jenkins case "demonstrates the frightening ease with which a relatively unimportant incident achieves major proportions during a period of international tension."⁹¹ According to Alvaro Torre Díaz, Mexican ambassador to the U.S., "If it had not been for measures taken by Pres. Wilson, intervention would have been a fact."⁹²

⁹⁰Weekly Report from the Office of the Military Attaché, Mexico City, October 27, 1919; No. 1320; Registers of Communications Received from Military Attachés and Other Intelligence Officers (Dispatch Lists), 1889-1941; Military Intelligence Division; (University Publications of America Microfilm, roll 1, frame 109); Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Record Group 165; National Archives, Washington, DC. Consular agents at this time were part-time employees of the Foreign service and were usually businessmen representing American commercial interests.

⁹¹Charles C. Cumberland, "The Jenkins Case and Mexican-American Relations," The Hispanic American Historical Review 31, no. 4 (November 1951): 586, 606.

⁹²Alvaro Torre Díaz, Washington, to A. de la Huerta, Mexico City, June 23, 1920; Part 21, Box 12, Doc. No. 2454; Yardley File; MI-8; RG 457; NA.

DOWNSIZING IN THE TWENTIES

Institutional History

The activities and attitudes of the MID underwent another transformation during the period from 1921 to 1927. The number of MID personnel dropped almost in half from 1920 to 1921. By 1921, there were now 24 officers (79 in 1920), four enlisted men (5 in 1920), 107 civilians (150 in 1920), for a total staff of 135 men. Contingency appropriations dropped to \$300,000 in 1921, compared to \$400,000 in 1920. This downsizing trend continued every year through 1927. In 1927, there were 25 officers, no enlisted men, and 50 civilians, for a total staff of 75. Contingency appropriations were \$61,520 for the year 1927.⁹³

One of the areas that concerned MID during this time was that of the military attaché system. Effective July 1, 1922, the entire military attaché system was supervised by one officer and three civilian clerks. At this point, there were "30 Military Attachés, stationed within the same number of different countries, and assisted by 14 line and 6 air officers." By 1926, only twenty-two posts remained

⁹³Bidwell, Military Intelligence Division, 258. Although Bidwell points out that the MID experienced a steady decline of resources between the world wars, he also sees "constructive progress." Bidwell argues that MID officials "actually did manage to achieve a great deal of material progress despite the severe handicaps resulting from personnel and fund limitations."

filled. However, forty-five countries were covered to some extent due to the use of "dual accreditation procedures."⁹⁴

A major issue impeding the efficiency of the military attaché system was the inability to secure "adequate expense allowances for its personnel." Officers on foreign duty were forced to use their own personal funds for "official representation purposes." Bidwell explains that:

Because the governmental allowances designed to cover such disbursements were so completely insufficient, the selection of officers for military attaché assignment had soon narrowed down to a choice from among those who were fortunate enough to enjoy a considerable outside income.

It was apparently this unfavorable feature of officer procurement, more than anything else, which gave the American military attaché system its admittedly poor reputation during most of the peacetime period.⁹⁵

In addition to reviewing the activities and staffing levels of the Military Intelligence Division, one must also look at the attitudes and perceptions of the MID in operation at this time. In the words of one historian, "the attitudes of M.I. simply reflected broader, prevailing

⁹⁴Ibid., 380.

⁹⁵Ibid., 381. The end result was that the system became filled with personnel "used to living on a comparatively expensive scale." Bidwell points out that the "resultant show of ostentation not only caused a hostile reaction to smoulder within the Army itself but also adversely affected the opinion of many influential members of Congress, executive officials of the government and even much of the public at large." Consequently, funding requests to increase the representation allowances for attachés tended to encounter fierce opposition.

American cultural attitudes in the twenties."⁹⁶ Describing the attitudes of the 1920s, one historian has remarked that it was a period when "Klan membership soared into the millions, and nativists wrote their prejudices into the statute books."⁹⁷ Another historian has stated that the "bigotry engendered by contemporary attitudes led ... to view Latin Americans as inferior people."⁹⁸ In terms of attitudes toward the military, one historian argues that "there is no question that the political and intellectual atmosphere in the United States during the twenties opposed large-scale military and naval expenditures."⁹⁹

Objects of Investigation

Despite negative attitudes toward military expenditures, however, U.S. military planners "continued to draft and update unilateral plans for intervention and invasion of key Latin American countries if cooperative

⁹⁶Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, xi.

⁹⁷Howard Zinn, The Politics of History, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 103.

⁹⁸Benjamin T. Harrison, "The Business of America is Business - Except in Mexico: Chandler Anderson's Lobby Efforts in the 1920's," Mid-America 68, no. 2 (April-July 1986): 82. Chandler Anderson wrote to the newly appointed Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, concerning business in Latin America and stating that "we should now recognize the necessity for the cooperation of all America and Europe to resist the encroachment of the colored races." Anderson also enclosed a copy of Theodor Stoddard's The Rising Tide of Color Against the White World-Supremacy (1920) as quoted in Harrison, 82.

⁹⁹John Braeman, "Power and Diplomacy: The 1920's Reappraised," The Review of Politics 44 (July 1982): 345.

approaches should fail."¹⁰⁰ The war plans developed for Mexico utilized the color code "Green" and were "the most detailed and highly developed of all the hemisphere Color plans."¹⁰¹

Although detailed military plans were developed for Mexico, it was Japan that military planners were most concerned about in the 1920s.¹⁰² While the Navy focused on developing plans to counter the Japanese in the Pacific, the Army was concerned with Japanese activities in Mexico.

Japanese activities in Mexico were closely monitored. A number of reports were submitted to Washington regarding the business activities in Mexico of a Mr. M. Matsumoto of Japan, particularly the matter of oil concessions in Lower

¹⁰⁰John Child, "From Color to Rainbow: U.S. Strategic Planning for Latin America, 1919-1945," Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs 21, no. 2 (May 1979): 233. "Special Plan Green" was the color plan for military operations against Mexico, updated from the 1920s through 1940. Special Plan Green was based upon the earlier "General Mexican War Plan" of 1919.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 240. According to Child, "the final version of 1940 is over eight inches thick and has detailed instructions for all supporting and subordinate military units as small as separate detachments and as far away geographically as Vermont and Massachusetts."

¹⁰²Gerald E. Wheeler, "National Policy Planning Between the World Wars: Conflict Between Ends and Means," Naval War College Review 21 (February 1969): 55. For an analysis of the military perspective of national policy during this time, see Fred Greene, "The Military View of American National Policy, 1904-1940," American Historical Review (1961): 354-377.

California.¹⁰³ During the following year, a report was submitted from the Department Intelligence Officer at Fort Sam Houston to the War Department in Washington based upon the observations of an informant by the name of J.W.:

Have from good source that the Japs have virtually secured control of all lands available in and about Acapulco on the Pacific coast and one of the finest ports of same; by air line it is six hours trip to Mexico City.¹⁰⁴

In 1924, several reports were filed from the Military Attaché in Mexico City regarding Japanese activities. In April of that year it was reported that a colonization project involving the Mexican states of Colima, Nayarit, Sonora, Sinaloa, and Jalisco could include up to 32,000 Japanese. In October, it was reported that 20,000 Japanese would colonize Lower California. In November, "four prominent Japanese" were interviewed by the Mexican newspaper El Democrata. The four were on a tour of "study and observation" of various Central and South American

¹⁰³Japanese Oil Concessions in Mexico (Service Report), January 27, 1921; File 1766-0-39/7; Harvey Miller, Acting Military Attaché, to Director, Military Intelligence Division, Washington, DC, February 18, 1921; File 1766-0-39/8; Japanese Activities on the West Coast of Mexico, August 27, 1921; File 1766-0-39/17; W.H. Cowles, Chief, M.I. 4, to W.L. Hurley, Office of the Under Secretary, Department of State, September 28, 1921; File 1766-0-39/23; Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Washington, DC, October 3, 1921; File 1766-0-39/24; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

¹⁰⁴Acapulco & Vicinity, January 9, 1922; File 1766-0-39/25; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA.

countries. ¹⁰⁵ Also occurring this same year was the signing of a treaty of "Amity, Commerce and Navigation" between Japan and Mexico. Among other clauses and conditions, the treaty stipulated:

that nationals of either country may, in accordance with the laws of the country, travel, rent, purchase, and, in general, devote themselves to commerce, industry, etc., in the territory of the other.¹⁰⁶

The United States was concerned about the stability of Mexico, both externally and internally. Obviously, intrigue or perceived intrigue by foreign nationals and agents operating within Mexico was monitored by military intelligence. However, it was the internal stability (or perceived lack thereof) that most concerned the United States. For example, a great deal of attention was focused by military intelligence upon the political and military situation in Mexico.

National elections and the intrigue surrounding those elections were of significant interest to the Military Intelligence Division because of the potential for

¹⁰⁵G-2 Report, Japanese Colonists from California to Mexico, April 15, 1924; File 2064-446; G-2 Report, Japanese Activities in Mexico, October 24, 1924; File 2064-446/3; G-2 Report, Emigration and Immigration - Japanese, November 5, 1924; File 2064-446/4; Dispatch Lists; MID; RG 165; NA. A comment at the bottom of the last report stated: "As yet, the only information which this office has regarding the object of these visitors is contained in the above press reports. The matter is being carefully watched and developments will be promptly reported."

¹⁰⁶G-2 Report, Japanese Activities in Mexico, October 9, 1924; File 4974; M.I. Reports, Mexico, 1919-1941: (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frame 478); RG 165; NA.

rebellion against the national government of Mexico and the resulting insecurity for American interests. In 1926 the Military Attaché in Mexico City submitted a report to Washington detailing the latest developments in "pre-election intrigue," related to the upcoming 1928 presidential elections. In his report, Lt. Col. Edward Davis identified the "outstanding personalities" in the current pre-election intrigue as being: President Calles; Former President Obregón; Secretary of Industry, Commerce and Labor Luis N. Morones; General of Division Arnulfo R. Gómez; and General of Division Francisco R. Serrano. Davis drew the following conclusions:

The political psychology of Mexico is a startling re-production of that of the Near and Middle East. To predict is to confess that one has learned nothing. Only very general conclusion may safely be drawn....¹⁰⁷

Predictions and analysis of the presidential candidates continued throughout 1926 and 1927. Major Harold Thompson, Acting Military Attaché in Mexico City, submitted a report in April of 1927 in which he listed the top three presidential candidates. Thompson listed the candidates "in order of their estimated strength and in their chances for being elected." The three were: Alvaro Obregón, Francisco Serrano, and Arnulfo Gómez. Thompson

¹⁰⁷G-2 Report, National Elections, April 23, 1926; File 2657-g-622/2; M.I. Reports, Mexico, 1919-1941; (UPA Microfilm, roll 3, frame 124); RG 165; NA. The source for Davis' report was a "study of all available information."

based his analysis on information gathered from the following sources: the press, records of the Military Attaché's Office, confidential informants, and a study of the situation.¹⁰⁸

The last presidential analysis appearing in the 1927 MID Weekly Summaries was for the period July 23 to August 5. This summary report points out that "Obregon is the Administration's choice for the presidency in 1928." The report states that all three candidates are proponents of foreign capital investment, however:

Obregon makes a distinction between "honest" American capital and "Wall Street" which, he states, "seeks to promote crises and conflicts in and with Mexico."

In analyzing the "manifestos" of the three candidates, military intelligence tended to look most favorably upon Serrano's manifesto because it constituted:

a most enlightened statement of the political situation in Mexico and of the importance of cordial international relations, particularly between the United States and Mexico, in the development of the national life of Mexico.¹⁰⁹

According to the MID analysis, the real issues of the 1928 presidential election "are not so much those of

¹⁰⁸G-2 Report, National Elections, April 22, 1927; File 1490; M.I. Reports, Mexico, 1919-1941; (UPA Microfilm, roll 3, frames 144-145); RG 165; NA. Although Obregón was considered the top candidate at this point in time, Obregón himself did not openly declare his candidacy. Even Serrano and Gómez limited themselves to only making general statements about the election.

¹⁰⁹Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 26, Weekly Summary for July 23 to August 5, 1927, 11752-11753.

principles, but of personalities and the corresponding strength of the personal following of the different candidates." In the end, the report concluded that:

The possibilities of the situation are numerous, but it is well to bear in mind that the most important factor in the ultimate outcome is the loyalty of the army, and next to that in significance is the attitude of Obregon. A compromise on Obregon's part may afford a happy and peaceful solution to a situation otherwise fraught with grave dangers.¹¹⁰

Another aspect of the political realm for MID purposes was the stability of the national government in Mexico City, specifically, control of the countryside and containment of the various rebel movements. The United States was concerned about the possible spread of radical movements, as well as potential threats against property and investment interests.

A military intelligence weekly summary prepared for the week of March 12, 1921 reported upon the growing unrest of the Yaqui Indians; dispersement of bandits in Sonora; plots for an insurrection in Northern Mexico; railway strikers wrecking a train near Monterey; federal troops preventing a revolt in Tampico; and labor unrest spreading in Tampico.¹¹¹ By the following year, revolutionary

¹¹⁰Ibid., 11753-11754. It is also interesting to note the MID's understanding of the term "suffrage," as used by the Mexicans. "Effective suffrage, in the Mexican understanding of the term, is not free suffrage, but a suffrage resulting from the imposition of the Executive will, by force of arms, if necessary."

¹¹¹Ibid., vol. 17, March 12, 1921, 7430-7432.

movements in Northern Baja California and Northern Sonora had failed. In fact, the Military Intelligence Division was indicating that the lack of success "appears to have attended all other revolutionary movements against the present Government so far attempted in other parts of the Republic." The MID concluded that "the Government seems to have anticipated the outbreaks and to have acted promptly and vigorously in repressing them."¹¹²

Francisco Villa was assassinated in July, 1923. An intercepted cipher message from General Eugenio Martínez, Commanding General of the 5th Jefatura (Headquarters Chihuahua) to the Mexican War and Navy Department, indicated that a large cache of carbines, rifles, ammunition, hand grenades, and bombs had been found at Canutillo (Villa's hacienda). A confidential informant reported that the arms and munitions had been supplied to Villa by Adolfo de la Huerta. This informant maintained that Villa and de la Huerta had been conspiring against the Obregón government in order to advance de la Huerta's ambitions to become President. This same informant also stated:

that it was the current belief in Mexican military

¹¹²Ibid, vol. 21, January 14, 1922, 9224. The MID acknowledged the existence of "much discontent and disaffection" in Mexico, but "no evidence that the various disaffected elements are sufficiently organized, united in a common cause, equipped or provided with leaders to an extent seriously threatening, for the present, the continuance in power of the Obregon administration."

circles that both General Obregon and General Calles were informed of Villa's apparent preparations for active opposition and had agreed as to the necessity of eliminating him in some way.¹¹³

By the end of 1923, it was being reported by the Military Intelligence Division that Mexico was "again in the throes of a revolution of such serious proportions as to threaten the overthrow of the existing government." According to the MID, although it occurred suddenly, this revolutionary activity was not totally unexpected because of the "approaching presidential campaign." The chief factions involved in this activity included General Plutarco Elías Calles and Adolfo de la Huerta, "the two principal opposing candidates for the presidency in the 1924 campaign." The full extent of rebellious activity was unclear at this point and predictions regarding the outcome could not be made. It was concluded, however, that the "controlling factor rests entirely on the loyalty or disloyalty of the Federal military forces."¹¹⁴

The MID drew the following conclusions about Mexico based upon events that occurred during the year 1926:

Internal and external political conditions have steadily grown much worse during the year. Economic

¹¹³G-2 Report, Political-Military Situation (Also Assassination of Francisco Villa), July 28, 1923; File 4065; M.I. Reports, Mexico, 1919-1941; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frames 272-273); RG 165; NA.

¹¹⁴Ibid., vol. 22, December 15-28, 1923, 9974-9977. Military operations were characterized "by much maneuvering on both sides combined with a manifest disinclination for decisive battle."

conditions show a similar deterioration, industry being paralyzed and agriculture being carried on haltingly in the face of rural anarchy owing to the maladministration, or lack of any administration, of the agrarian laws. Armed uprisings and banditry have greatly increased. The year has proved to everyone, except the Administration, that social-economic reforms, however promising in phraseology, always fail when there is no appropriate competent class of society to carry them out; no effective medium for their practical execution.¹¹⁵

Rebellion continued throughout the year of 1927. In May of that year, the Military Intelligence Division reported that:

The armed rebellion in northern Colima, in all parts of Jalisco, in southern Zacatecas, in southern San Luis Potosi, in all of Guanajuato, and in Guerrero maintains its intensity, but has not spread in extent.¹¹⁶

This same report also warned that the greatest danger to the administration "would appear to be in that region where rebel activities have thus far been least noticeable, namely, in the states along the northern frontier." The report went to theorize that if rebellion did break out and spread in the north, then the "present military situation in the center of the Republic would immediately become acute and the loyalty of prominent military leaders might be doubtful." A reliable source reported that "symptoms of trouble in the north are beginning to develop" and that

¹¹⁵Ibid., vol. 26, January 8-21, 1927, 11476.

¹¹⁶Ibid., vol. 26, May 14-27, 1927, 11656. This same report remarked that "a curve representing the stability of the present administration in Mexico, during the year 1927, would present a steady decline from January 1st to May 1st."

this development in the north had the character of "the last straw."¹¹⁷

In July of 1927, the Military Intelligence Division identified five areas throughout the world that were either "existing" or "potential areas of unrest." Mexico was cited as one of the five danger spots. In its analysis of the situation in Mexico, the MID stated:

But this is true not so much because of the magnitude of present rebel activities in that country, though these have grown to significant proportions during the past year, as because of the potentialities for serious conflict which lie in its discordant international relationships and unfavorable domestic situation.¹¹⁸

Much of the rebel activity during this time centered around Church-State relations and the Cristero Rebellion of 1926-1929. The Cristero Rebellion ignited after the February 1926 press interview of Archbishop José Mora y del Rio, in which the archbishop reacted strongly against President Calles' enforcement of the anticlerical articles of the Constitution, which had been ignored by earlier presidents.¹¹⁹ Violence continued unabated throughout the

¹¹⁷Ibid., 11656-11657. However, in its summary, the report did state that "a diagnosis of the current situation reveals no symptom which is an immediate certain threat."

¹¹⁸Ibid., vol. 26, July 9-22, 1927, 11720. This report concluded that if the United States "were to withdraw recognition of the present regime or raise the embargo on arms to Mexico, a serious crisis would result."

¹¹⁹Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman, The Course of Mexican History, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 587. After the press interview, Calles stepped up the enforcement of the anticlerical articles.

rebellion. On April 20, 1927, "the Cristeros dynamited a Mexico City-Guadalajara train, killing over a hundred innocent civilians." In retaliation, "government troops tried to kill a priest for every dead teacher."¹²⁰

Commenting on the April 20th train assault, the MID reported that the government "charged the Episcopate with directly instigating the attack and ordered the immediate arrest of the leading archbishops and bishops."¹²¹ By April 23, eight bishops were deported to Laredo, Texas. The MID concluded that:

There is no evidence to show, directly or indirectly, that the Episcopate directed the attack referred to, and the act of expulsion, preceded by General Alvarez's charges, is believed to be the Government's effort to throw the responsibility for the train outrage on the Catholic church and its leaders. It is believed that this action of the Calles Government will be followed by reprisals in a more violent form.¹²²

A critical area of concern for military intelligence

In an unprecedented move, the archbishop declared a strike on July 31, 1926. The strike would last for the next three years. The situation degenerated into violence and atrocities were committed by both sides.

¹²⁰Ibid., 588.

¹²¹G-2 Report, Religion, Freedom of Religious Belief and Practice, Persecution of Clergy, Arrest and Expulsion of the Bishops, April 26, 1927; File 1498; M.I. Reports, Mexico, 1919-1941; (UPA Microfilm, roll 2, frames 773-774); RG 165; NA. The bishops came from the States of Mexico, Michoacan, Puebla, Huejutla, Aguascalientes, Saltillo, Cuernavaca, and Chiapas.

¹²²Ibid. This particular report was submitted by Major Harold Thompson, Acting Military Attaché, Mexico City, and was based upon information gathered from confidential informants, the press, and consular reports.

during the twenties included the topic of U.S.-Mexican relations, especially as that related to the possible intervention by the United States into the internal affairs of Mexico. Specific issues of contention included American property rights, the extent of Mexican nationalism, Mexican anticlericalism, rebel activities, radicalism, the recognition of Mexico by the U.S., and the Nicaraguan crisis.

In a weekly intelligence summary prepared in May 1921, the MID included a report from an "observer" analyzing the general Mexican situation, who stated that:

It is true that the introduction of American labor into the Tampico fields has caused trouble there. The Tampico situation is really the center of the whirlpool, as the oil interests are the ones most vitally affected by Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917, and even though President Obregon has repeatedly stated that he would like to see the Constitution so interpreted as to do away with most of the objectionable features, nevertheless, no actual steps have been taken to accomplish this, and in the meantime the oil companies are paying excessive taxation and do not know just what their rights are.¹²³

This same observer went on to comment about the possibility of American intervention in Mexico:

The question of American intervention is the one now uppermost in the minds of the Mexican people and in private conversations great numbers will state that they really do desire and would welcome intervention, but of course cannot make such statements in public.

It is certain that at present the Mexican people have not within themselves the elements of government

¹²³Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 17, Weekly Summary for May 2, 1921, 7826.

and that some strong outside force must eventually take hold of the country in order to save it for the good of humanity.¹²⁴

On June 12, 1925, Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg released a statement to the press addressing the attitude of the United States toward Mexico. This press release came on the heels of a series of conferences between Ambassador James R. Sheffield and the Mexican government. In his conclusion, Kellogg stated:

The Government of Mexico is now on trial before the world. We have the greatest interest in the stability, prosperity and independence of Mexico. We have been patient and realize, of course, that it takes time to bring about a stable government but we cannot countenance violations of her obligations and failure to protect American citizens.¹²⁵

It is interesting to note the reaction by the MID to Kellogg's press release: "Secretary Kellogg's statement to the press of the 12th instant concerning the relations of the United States and Mexico, came as a complete surprise to G-2."¹²⁶ In analyzing Secretary Kellogg's comments, MID made the following inference:

the United States Government has definitely discarded the old policy of "watchful waiting" and, in pursuing a more energetic course of action, is ready to go to any extreme in order that American and other foreign rights and interests in Mexico be adequately protected and the international engagements and

¹²⁴Ibid., 7829.

¹²⁵G-2 Report, The State Department's Announcement of Policy Toward the Present Mexican Situation, June 23, 1925; File 2657-G-569; M.I. Reports, Mexico, 1919-1941; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frames 742-748); RG 165; NA.

¹²⁶Ibid.

obligations of the Mexican government be met.¹²⁷

Analyzing the situation in Mexico as it pertained to church-state relations during 1926, the Military Intelligence Division concluded that the enforcement of the anticlerical articles of the Mexican constitution was a "constitutional function of the Executive branch of the government." As the situation related to possible intervention, it was observed that:

In the performance of these duties the Mexican government is sovereign and subject to no outside interference by foreign governments, unless the rights of their nationals are interfered with. The question itself is therefore a purely Mexican one and apt to remain such unless the rights of foreigners are flagrantly violated.¹²⁸

At the beginning of 1927, a military intelligence summary was produced highlighting the events of 1926 in Mexico. On the issue of U.S.-Mexican relations, it was concluded that "among the people at large the feeling toward the United States has very probably grown more cordial, while in the group which rules the country that feeling has grown more hostile."¹²⁹

A tense situation developed in 1927 when the Calles government turned over approximately 350 documents stolen

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 25, Weekly Summary for July 24 to August 6, 1926, 11233. This particular report did not contain, nor did it reference, any definition of what constituted flagrant violation of the rights of foreigners (i.e., U.S. citizens).

¹²⁹Ibid., vol. 26, January 8-21, 1927, 11476.

from the U.S. embassy in Mexico City. The collection of documents included "official correspondence between the ambassador and the secretary of state, consular dispatches, reports of the military attaché, and apparently some forgeries."¹³⁰ One of the military attaché reports included the following comments:

That the white man is somewhat disliked is natural but if the Mexican people are ever so fortunate as to be blessed with American intervention and administration this alleged bitter hatred of Americans will be proved a fake of the thinnest type ... The year has proved that Mexico has little if any hope of developing into a self-supporting, respectable member of the community of Nations unless she received from the outside something she has never really had, that is to say extended training in actual self-government combined with education for the masses and proper economic development.¹³¹

Although the situation was both tense and embarrassing, the historian James Horn concludes: "After an exhaustive search, this author has been unable to find any evidence in state department, military, or naval files that intervention had ever been contemplated."¹³²

¹³⁰James J. Horn, "Did the United States Plan an Invasion of Mexico in 1927," Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs 15 (November 1973): 458. The documents were examined by the State Department and Military Intelligence to assess damage control and implications.

¹³¹Ibid., 459-460. Although there was some press coverage of this episode, Horn maintains that "neither the Mexican nor American people ever learned the whole story."

¹³²Ibid., 464. Horn also quotes from an article in a 1927 issue of The Economist in which the correspondent refers to the probability of intervention: "...that our intentions are pacific seems certain. In fact, part of the

During 1927 the Military Intelligence Division also produced a series of articles on "Important Treaties and International Agreements." One of the articles was entitled "Important Aspects of Latin-American Relationships and International Agreements." Among other issues, this particular article discussed U.S.-Mexican relations and stated that "the attitude of the United States toward Mexico to-day is essentially as stated by President Buchanan in his second annual message to Congress in 1858:"

The northern boundary of Mexico is coincident with our own southern boundary from ocean to ocean, and we must necessarily feel a deep interest in all that concerns the well-being and fate of so near a neighbor. We have always cherished the kindest wishes for the success of that Republic, and have indulged the hope that it might at last, after all its trials, enjoy peace and prosperity, under a free and stable government. We have never hitherto interfered directly or indirectly, with its internal affairs, and it is a duty which we owe to ourselves to protect the integrity of its territory against the hostile interference of any other Power. Our geographical position, our direct interest in all that concerns Mexico, and our well-settled policy in regard to the North American continent render this an indispensable duty.¹³³

The year 1927 ended with Dwight W. Morrow in place as the American Ambassador to Mexico, the Nicaraguan crisis had cooled, and the petroleum industry in Mexico entered into a period of decline. Despite a great deal of rhetoric

difficulty may arise from Mexican appreciation of the fact that there is very little sentiment favourable to intervention in this country."

¹³³Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 26, Weekly Summary for November 12-25, 1927, 11868.

and posturing, the United States did not intervene militarily in Mexico during the twenties. However, the U.S. did maintain its economic dominance over that country. For the Military Intelligence Division, it was successful in maintaining its watchful presence in Mexico, alert to any possible danger to the United States.

CHAPTER III

U.S. MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN MEXICO: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this quantitative analysis is to identify the focus and priorities of the U.S. Military Intelligence Division relative to Mexico during the years 1917-1927, by calculating the amount of coverage given to various topics (i.e., military operations, politics, economics, foreign relations). Although limited in scope (MID records contained in the National Archives are extensive), the results of this quantitative analysis should serve as a fair indicator of the emphasis placed by the MID on various components of its surveillance of Mexico.¹ The documents and reports generated by the MID during this time helped to shape and define the U.S. government's perspective and concept of the reality of Mexico.²

¹Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, xii. Record Group 165 alone consists of over 4,200 boxes of documents and records for just the period 1919-1939. There are also other record groups that contain military intelligence reports.

²Ibid., vi. The daily and weekly summaries produced by the MID were circulated to the Chief of Staff, Department of State, and the President.

It is important to demonstrate the priorities of military intelligence in order to gain a fuller understanding of the context within which it was operating. The Military Intelligence Division was concerned with national security and the possibility of threats emanating from Mexico. Those threats could take the form of German espionage and sabotage against the United States, Japanese commercial dominance or military invasion, Mexican revolutionary activity that might endanger American business interests in Mexico, or the spread of labor agitation or radicalism into the United States. The MID was focused on Mexico (despite other hot spots in the world) because of its common border with the United States.

A quantitative analysis is used in this study in order to provide statistical evidence on which to draw appropriate conclusions. In addition, this type of analysis connotes a degree of scientific objectivity, as well as providing a vivid picture of the content of a large number of documents. The term quantitative analysis as used in this particular study is based upon the following definition: "quantitative content analysis ... substitutes controlled observation and systematic counting for impressionistic ways of observing frequencies of occurrence."³ Basically, the intent of this quantitative

³Alexander L. George, "Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches to Content Analysis," in Ithiel de Sola Pool, ed., Trends in Content Analysis (Urbana: University of

analysis is to identify and tabulate the various topic categories contained within the selected military intelligence reports and documents. The frequency and percentage of the various topic categories are tabulated for each time era described in the previous chapter: 1917-1918; 1919-1920; 1921-1927.

The quantitative analysis in this study used a sample of documents drawn from the following primary sources: 1) Richard Challener's thirty volume collection containing twenty-six volumes of weekly intelligence summaries and four volumes of daily summaries for the period 1917-1927; 2) Dale Reynolds' microfilm collection containing approximately 9,000 pages of documents for the period 1919-1941; and 3) a sample of documents from the National Archives in Washington, D.C., selected by this researcher. All documents are copies of military intelligence reports contained in the National Archives, specifically Record Group 165, War Department General Staff, Military Intelligence Division.

The sample drawn for this quantitative analysis utilized all 254 weekly and thirty-nine daily summaries (100%) relating to Mexico contained within the Challener collection covering the years 1917-1927. The Reynolds'

Illinois Press, 1959), 8; quoted in Richard E. Beringer, Historical Analysis: Contemporary Approaches to Clio's Craft (New York: Wiley, 1978; reprint, Malabar, FL: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1986), 221.

collection contained 272 documents for the years 1919-1927. The 182 documents (67%) used from the Reynolds' collection were selected based upon the readability of printed microfilm copies (the quality of some of the microfilm frames, as well as the quality of the microfilm printer available to the researcher left something to be desired).

This researcher had the opportunity to make two trips to Washington, D.C., in connection with professional association activities. Several visits were made to the National Archives to conduct research on this topic. Originally, I was conducting research for a seminar paper, so I randomly selected documents covering the period 1910-1940. During my second visit, the focus was narrowed to the period 1917-1927. In all, I was able to secure copies of seventy-six documents from Record Group 165 for the period of this study.

Thus, the comprehensive sample drawn for this study reflects a plausible and systematic approach toward securing a representative sample of documents. The number of documents selected from the microfilm collection and the National Archives was limited due to time constraints, access to archive materials, readability of microfilm records, and cost considerations. The intent of this study is to provide a model of analysis that can be used by other researchers for more extensive studies.

THE WAR YEARS, 1917-1918

The first set of documents to be analyzed are the weekly summaries for the two years 1917-1918. The weekly summaries were not started until June, 1917, thus the first year contains only six months of coverage. The format, structure, and content of the summaries changed over time, so that consistency of analysis by researchers is made more challenging. For the most part, I have used the same topic headings as contained in the summaries, in some cases I have grouped topics under headings that make more sense to me. The results of my survey of the weekly summaries for the 1917-18 years are contained in Table I.

TABLE I
WEEKLY SUMMARIES
1917-1918

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Foreign Relations/Nationals	33	23.7%
German Activities in Mexico	18	
Relations with U.S.	4	
Japanese Activities in Mexico	3	
Relations with Japan	3	
Relations with other Countries	3	
Relations with Germany	2	
General/Internal Situation	30	21.6%
Military	30	21.6%
Rebel Forces/Activities	16	
Yaqui Indians	4	

TABLE I
WEEKLY SUMMARIES
1917-1918
(continued)

Villa/Villistas		4	
Federal Forces		3	
Equipment/Munitions		2	
Aviation		1	
Political	19		13.7%
National Government		9	
Regional/Local Government		5	
Political Parties		2	
Political Situation		1	
Exiles		1	
Social Conditions		1	
Economic	15		10.8%
Oil		6	
Railroads		2	
Finance		2	
Trade		2	
Mining		1	
IWW		1	
Transportation		1	
Communication	12		8.6%
Wireless Stations		5	
Propaganda		4	
Press		2	
Mail Censorship		1	
	Total	139	100%

Total Number of Weekly Summaries = 62

Since we are looking at what the Military Intelligence Division reported during the war years, it is not surprising to see that the top three topic categories, comprising seventy percent of the individual topic reports, deal with foreign relations, military operations, and the

internal stability of Mexico.⁴ It must be remembered that the U.S. Army, under the guise of Pershing's Punitive Expedition, had just pulled out of Mexico early in 1917. Thus, the U.S. government was sensitive about the possibility of armed bands of rebels or revolutionary movements along the border. The war also heightened the anxiety level of American citizens and the military regarding the possibility of German spies and saboteurs crossing the border from Mexico into the United States.

From the results of this first table, it appears that the Military Intelligence Division (understandably jittery during the war) placed a high priority on national security when conducting surveillance of Mexico. Whether a potential haven for German spies or a Mexican revolution that might spill violently over into the U.S. or even the possibility of a Japanese invasion from Mexico into the U.S., Mexico could not be trusted alone without the watchful eyes of the MID standing guard over her.

In the next table, we see the results from the daily summaries for the year 1918. Table II is composed of all

⁴The MID used the topic category of "General Situation" or "Internal Situation" as a general update on conditions within Mexico during that reporting period. Under this general heading would be information on rebel activities, military operations, public opinion, stability of the national government, economic conditions, and a whole host of related topics. The whole section could easily have been divided into more specific topic categories. This may be a reflection of the experience levels (or lack thereof) of the early intelligence officers.

twenty-eight daily summary reports contained in volumes 27-29 in the Challenger collection.

TABLE II
DAILY SUMMARIES
1918

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Military	34	34.7%
Rebel Forces/Activities	12	
Federal Forces	11	
Villa/Villistas	6	
Yaqui Indians	3	
Aviation	1	
Equipment/Munitions	1	
Economic	20	20.4%
Oil	7	
Economic Situation	4	
Mining	4	
Railroads	2	
Disease	1	
Finance	1	
IWW	1	
Political	19	19.4%
Regional/Local Government	15	
National Government	2	
Political Situation	2	
Communication	13	13.3%
Press	6	
Propaganda	5	
Mail Censorship	1	
Wireless Stations	1	
Foreign Relations/Nationals	12	12.2%
Relations with U.S.	8	
Relations with Germany	2	
German Activities in Mexico	1	
Relations with other Countries	1	
Total	98	100%

Total Number of Daily Summaries = 28

One of the unanswered questions regarding Table II is whether the twenty-eight daily summaries contained here represent the total number produced on Mexico for 1918 or whether they represent a sample of reports for the year? Acknowledging that unanswered question, I will still make several points concerning Table II. First, military affairs top the list of concerns, with emphasis on both rebel activities and federal forces. As stated earlier, this is not surprising since the war was raging in Europe throughout the year. Second, the next three areas (economic, political, and communication) are separated from the number one topic by approximately the same percentage points as in Table I. Third, the real surprise is the low emphasis given to foreign relations/nationals as compared to the results of Table I. In addition, the emphasis on foreign relations is focused on relations with the U.S., rather than German activities.

The final set of documents centering on the war years of 1917-18 are composed of documents selected by this researcher from the National Archives. Table III summarizes the results from the forty-seven documents used in this sample.

TABLE III

ARCHIVES
1917-1918

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Foreign Relations/Nationals	29	61.7%
Relations with U.S.	13	
Enemy Individuals/Firms	5	
German Activities in Mexico	5	
American Deserters/Slackers	3	
Japanese Activities in Mexico	3	
Political	6	12.8%
Regional/Local Government	5	
Political Attitudes	1	
Communication	4	8.5%
Propaganda	2	
Wireless Stations	2	
General Situation	4	8.5%
Military	4	8.5%
U.S. War Plans/Mexico	4	
Total	47	100%

Total Number of Archive Documents = 47

Although this sample of documents from the National Archives was not scientifically drawn, it does resemble the first two tables in some aspects. Like Table I, the number one topic category shown in Table III is that of foreign relations/nationals. The difference between the two tables, however, is that the emphasis in Table I is on German activities in Mexico, while Table III (like Table II) focuses on relations between the U.S. and Mexico. Similar to the other two tables, Table III has the

political situation and communication in the middle. Another surprise though, is that military affairs is at the bottom of Table III, unlike the other two tables.

What can be said about these three sets of documents generated by military intelligence during the years of World War One? In all three cases, the number one topic was either military affairs or foreign relations. In light of the war, this does not appear surprising. Taken together, military affairs and foreign relations constituted 45.3 percent of the topics in Table I, 46.9 percent of the topics in Table II, and 70.2 percent of the topics in Table III.

The internal political and economic situation of Mexico was not given the same degree of emphasis as the military and foreign situation. Taken together, political and economic concerns constituted 24.5 percent of the topics in Table I, 39.8 percent of the topics in Table II, and 12.8 percent of the topics in Table III.

The topic area of communication could be interchanged with the military heading of psychological. This is an amorphous category that touches upon such tenuous subjects as attitudes, morale, psychological warfare, persuasion, opinions, and espionage. Communication deals with both internal and external conditions, as well as military matters. Taken alone, this topic ranges between a low of 8.5 percent of the topics in Table III to a high of 13.3

percent of the topics in Table II.

Another topic that is difficult to define is that of the general/internal situation in Mexico. In some reports, separate headings for military, political, or economic concerns were not given. Instead, a general update of conditions existing for that time period was given. Taken alone, this topic ranges from zero in Table II to a high of 21.6 percent in Table I.

The results of these tables provide critical evidence that the Military Intelligence Division focused more attention and placed greater emphasis upon military operations, foreign affairs, rebel activities, and border events, rather than the internal political, economic, and social structures of Mexico. I would argue that these internal structures and cultural processes could have gone a long way toward providing critical insight into the intentions and stability of the Mexican state during World War One. It appears that the MID, in its zeal to protect the United States from foreign threats, overestimated the potential for danger to the U.S. from Mexico. Consequently, the relationship between these two countries suffered from heightened levels of anxiety and antagonism, which extended beyond the years of this study.

IMMEDIATE POSTWAR YEARS, 1919-1920

The next three tables focus on the immediate postwar

years of 1919-20. Like the three previous tables, these next three were drawn from the same primary sources, with the addition of the microfilm collection combined with the National Archive sample.

In Table IV, we go back to the weekly summaries found in the Challenger collection, but for the years 1919-20. During this particular time period, there were a total of 100 weekly summaries generated by the MID that were concerned with Mexico.

TABLE IV
WEEKLY SUMMARIES
1919-1920

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Political/Industrial/Economic	215	43.3%
Regional/Local Government	39	
Political/Industrial/Economic	34	
National Government	32	
Labor Activities	25	
Bolshevists/Radicals/IWW	16	
Railroads	14	
Political Situation	12	
Finance/Banking	10	
Mining	8	
Disease	7	
Oil	6	
Elections	5	
Agriculture	3	
Catholics	1	
Education	1	
Industry	1	
Shipping	1	
Military	189	38.1%
Federal Forces	55	
Rebel Forces/Activities	51	
Army/Rebels/Bandits	33	
Villa/Villistas	17	

TABLE IV
WEEKLY SUMMARIES
1919-1920
(continued)

Military Situation/Operations		12	
Yaqui Indians		12	
Equipment/Munitions		4	
Aviation		3	
Navy		2	
Foreign Relations/Nationals	33		6.6%
Relations with other Countries		14	
Japanese Activities in Mexico		8	
Relations with U.S.		4	
German Activities in Mexico		3	
Chinese Activities in Mexico		2	
Relations with Germany		1	
Relations with Japan		1	
Communication	30		6.0%
Press		21	
Propaganda		5	
Wireless Stations		3	
Mail Censorship		1	
Recent Developments/Events	23		4.6%
Future Possibilities	6		1.4%
Total	496		100%

Total Number of Weekly Summaries = 100

It is interesting to note that this time period of 1919-1920 contains the largest number of weekly summaries pertaining to Mexico in the Challenger collection. In terms of Mexican surveillance, the Military Intelligence Division was busy indeed. In contrast to the preceding war years, Table IV demonstrates that the largest topic category during 1919-1920 was the internal political/industrial/economic situation with 43.3 percent

of the topic reports. Unlike other years, during 1919-20 the political and economic areas were lumped together rather than kept as separate topics. However, this broad category was closely followed by the military category with 38.1 percent. A distant third was the foreign relations area with 6.6 percent.

Why this shift in emphasis from the war years? One possibility might lie in the sweeping hysteria gripping the United States at this time, with alarm over the perceived worldwide spread of Bolshevism, radicalism, labor movements, and the instability of national governments in the wake of World War One. The MID saw in Mexico a reflection of their own concern with the possible instability of the United States relative to the views and actions of various radical and labor groups.

Table V contains the smallest number of reports in this analysis. There were eleven daily summaries pertaining to Mexico produced by the MID, reflecting the time period January through April, 1919. These are contained in volume 30 of the Challenger collection.

TABLE V
DAILY SUMMARIES
1919

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Economic	24	36.9%
Railroads	6	
Finance	3	
Industry	3	
Labor Activities	3	
Mining	3	
Oil	3	
Agriculture	1	
Disease	1	
Shipping	1	
Military	19	29.2%
Federal Forces	6	
Rebel Forces/Activities	5	
Villa/Villistas	5	
Aviation	2	
Equipment/Munitions	1	
Foreign Relations/Nationals	10	15.4%
Japanese Activities in Mexico	4	
Relations with Japan	2	
Arms Limitation Conference	1	
German Activities in Mexico	1	
Relations with Germany	1	
Relations with U.S.	1	
Political	7	10.8%
Regional/Local Government	5	
Elections	1	
National Government	1	
Communication	5	7.7%
Propaganda	2	
Wireless Stations	2	
Press	1	
Total	65	100%

Total Number of Daily Summaries = 11

Since Table V represents the results of only eleven

summary reports and only four months of the year, its significance is somewhat limited. The largest category is the internal economic situation with 36.9 percent of the topic reports, followed closely by the military situation with 29.2 percent. Actually, the results of Table V are very close to those of Table IV. The political and economic category for Table IV is 43.3 percent, in Table V it is 47.7 percent. In combining the military and foreign relations topic areas, the result for Table IV is 44.7 percent and the result for Table V is 44.6 percent. Although limited in sample size, the results of Table V tend to reinforce and support the results of Table IV.

The final table for the 1919-1920 era is Table VI, which makes use of reports from both the National Archives sample and from the Reynolds' microfilm collection of documents. Although the actual number of reports is relatively small, a total of twenty-seven, each one contains a great deal of information.

TABLE VI
MICROFILM & ARCHIVES
1919-1920

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Military	101	42.3%
Territorial	31	
Morale/Discipline/Sentiment	20	
Efficiency/Training	11	
Commanders/Personnel	10	
Organization/Distribution/Bases/Reserves	9	

TABLE VI
 MICROFILM & ARCHIVES
 1919-1920
 (continued)

Communications	8	
Transport	5	
Equipment	4	
Rebels	2	
Invasion	1	
Political	58	24.3%
Executive/Leaders/Personages	13	
Subordinates/Councilors/Advisers	9	
Political Situation	8	
Revolutionary	6	
Telegrams/Government	6	
Labor	3	
Political Opposition	3	
Prejudice	3	
Characteristics/Ethics/Religious	3	
Domestic Policies	2	
Bolshevists/IWW	2	
Economic	45	18.8%
Money/Finance/Revenue/Banking	15	
Railroads/Highways/Shipping/Aviation	9	
Mineral/Vegetable	5	
Factories/Industry	3	
Disease	3	
Quantitative/Concepts	3	
Domestic Policies	2	
Leaders/Political	2	
Radio/Telegraph	2	
Prejudice	1	
Foreign Relations/Nationals	20	8.4%
Psychological	13	5.4%
Special Reports	2	0.8%
Total	239	100%

Total Number of Archive & Microfilm Reports = 27

The overall results of Table VI are similar to those found in Tables IV and V, although the individual rankings

are different. Unlike the other two tables, the results of Table VI demonstrate that military matters are ranked first, as opposed to the internal political and economic situations. However, like the other two tables, the military category combined with foreign relations/nationals is equal to 50.7 percent, which is similar to the 44.7 percent of Table IV and 44.6 percent of Table V. Likewise, the combination of the political and economic categories for Table VI is 43.1 percent, compared to 43.3 percent for Table IV and 47.7 percent for Table V.

The results of Tables IV through VI demonstrate a differing trend from that found in Tables I through III. The second set of tables (IV-VI) show an equalization of emphasis on the internal political and economic situation, along with the military and foreign relations realm. One explanation for this phenomenon could be the ending of hostilities in Europe. Another explanation might be the growing concern over the worldwide increase in radical and labor activities that could negatively impact national governments and political stability. A third explanation might be the growing sophistication of military intelligence reporting and analysis, attempting to provide a better balance of perspective. Whatever the explanation, real differences in reporting emphasis do exist for these two periods of time.

However, are these differences in emphasis or

priorities significant or superficial? I would argue that for these two time periods, 1917-18 and 1919-20, the differences are superficial. They are superficial because the MID continued to focus on external activities and quantitative measurements, as opposed to the internal structure and culture of Mexico. The priority and the emphasis continued to be on federal troop movements, rebel leaders and activities, military operations, political leaders, radical and labor activities, revenues, and various economic indicators.

THE TWENTIES, 1921-1927

The next two tables reflect a longer period of time than seen in the first six tables. Although there was still a great deal of activity taking place in 1921, it is during this six year period that the Military Intelligence Division experienced a significant downturn in personnel and resources. This fact is reflected in the number of intelligence reports generated by the MID. By the late fall of 1921, the MID abandoned its practice of producing worldwide weekly summaries and adopted a biweekly format.⁵

Table VII contains the results drawn from a total number of ninety-two weekly and biweekly summaries concerning Mexico produced during the 1921-1927 period. Nearly half (45) of the summaries were produced during 1921

⁵Challener, Military Intelligence, Vol. 21, v.

alone, while there were only four summaries produced during 1925.

TABLE VII
WEEKLY SUMMARIES
1921-1927

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Military	192	35.6%
Rebel Forces/Activity	74	
Federal Forces	64	
Yaqui Indians	16	
Equipment/Munitions	14	
Aviation	11	
Villa/Villistas	10	
Navy	3	
Political	183	33.9%
Regional/Local Government	59	
Radicals/Communists/Socialists	38	
Political Leaders	29	
National Government	22	
Political Conditions	17	
Elections	7	
Catholics/Church-State Relations	5	
Constitution	5	
Social Conditions	1	
Economic	90	16.7%
Oil	24	
Labor/Strikes	20	
Finance	19	
Economic Situation	11	
Agrarian Policy	7	
Industry	6	
Railroads	2	
Mining	1	
Foreign Relations/Nationals	69	12.8%
Relations with U.S.	34	
Relations with other Countries	25	
Relations with Japan	3	
Chinese Activities in Mexico	2	
German Activities in Mexico	2	
Japanese Activities in Mexico	1	
Russian Activities in Mexico	1	

TABLE VII

WEEKLY SUMMARIES
1921-1927
(continued)

Relations with Germany		1	
Communication	6		1.0%
Wireless Stations		4	
Mail Censorship		1	
Press		1	
	Total	540	100%

Total Number of Weekly Summaries = 92

The results from Table VII reinforce the trend that began during the 1919-1920 years, where the combination of the military and foreign relations categories are roughly equal to the combination of the political and economic categories. Although there is not much difference in the emphasis placed upon individual topics within the military category compared to previous years, there are some real differences relative to the other categories.

In the political area, it is interesting to see the heavy emphasis placed on regional and local governments, as well as on radical groups during the twenties as opposed to the earlier years. This might be a reflection of the growing stability of the national government during the twenties compared to the violence of earlier years.

In the economic arena, Table VII reflects the growing importance being placed upon oil production and labor relations by industrial countries like the United States.

The U.S. was very much concerned with the possible nationalization of oil companies as mandated by the Mexican Constitution of 1917.

In the area of foreign relations, Table VII points to the growing relationship and interdependence between the United States and Mexico. It is during the twenties that the relationship between the U.S. and Mexico began to take on new dimensions relative to economic and diplomatic matters, for example, the issues of trade agreements and official recognition of Mexico by the United States, as opposed to threats of direct military intervention.

The last table to be displayed in this quantitative analysis is Table VIII. This table is composed of documents drawn from both the National Archives and the Reynolds' microfilm collection for the years 1921-1927. There are 164 microfilm reports and 20 archive reports represented in this table. There are microfilm reports for each year (1921-27), but the archive reports cover only the years 1921, 1922, and 1924.

TABLE VIII
ARCHIVES & MICROFILM
1921-1927

Topic	Frequency	Percent
Military	98	44.0%
Rebel Forces/Activities	67	
Organization/Distribution of Troops	24	
Villa/Villistas	2	

TABLE VIII
ARCHIVES & MICROFILM
1921-1927
(continued)

U.S. War Dept. Plans		2	
Secret Service/Col. James Ryan		2	
Operations		1	
Political	84		37.7%
Elections/Suffrage		23	
Stability of Government		13	
National Government		12	
Regional/Local Government		9	
Religion		9	
Political Leaders		6	
Political Conditions		5	
Travel Report/Intelligence Summary		4	
Political Parties/Revolution		2	
Press		1	
Foreign Relations/Nationals	34		15.2%
Relations with U.S.		13	
Relations with Japan		10	
Japanese Activities in Mexico		10	
Relations with other Countries		1	
Economic	7		3.1%
General Economic Situation		4	
Oil		2	
National Income		1	
Total	223		100%

Total Number of Archive & Microfilm Reports = 184

The results of Table VIII do differ from those of Table VII. Although military concerns are the number one topic of both tables, in Table VIII the military constitutes 44.0 percent of the topic reports, while in Table VII the military constitutes 35.6 percent of the reports. The political and foreign relations topic categories are relatively close, but a major difference

exists in the economic area. In Table VII, the economic area comprises 16.7 percent, but in Table VIII it only comprises 3.1 percent. This discrepancy might be the result of document sample selection, as opposed to significant differences in actual priorities.

Throughout the 1921-1927 period, as demonstrated by the above tables, the Military Intelligence Division continued to focus on external events and activities in all realms: military, political, economic, foreign relations, and communications. The MID tended to place priority on "what" happened, as opposed to "why did it happen?" Again, it is the external features, rather than the internal and cultural structures that formed the basis of the Mexican reality as created and perceived by the MID.

SUMMARY

I would argue that this quantitative analysis of military intelligence is a reliable indicator of what the priorities of the Military Intelligence Division were during the period 1917-1927. In terms of the military surveillance of Mexico, I think that the key priorities included: the monitoring and tracking of military forces, rebel activities, actual and potential leaders, levels of violence, political stability, economic potential, activities along the Mexican-U.S. border, and the relationship between Mexico and foreign powers.

Little attention was devoted to describing and understanding the internal structure of Mexico or the inner workings of Mexican life and culture. Scant data was produced that might provide a historical, anthropological, or sociological understanding of the Mexican peoples. Intelligence reports did include information about education, religion, customs, and society, but it tended to be obscured in ethnocentric language and disconnected from the importance attached to the bureaucratic world of the military and the political state. For example, military intelligence misunderstood the concept of revolutionary nationalism and the Mexican yearning for national sovereignty.

According to one historian, speaking on the issue of intelligence theories and describing various causes of intelligence failure, "the most obvious reason for intelligence failure is lack of knowledge." This lack of knowledge:

may take the form of absence of elementary information about a certain country or a certain problem from lack of interest, or for other reasons. Vital information may not be forthcoming because of wrong priorities. A nation preoccupied with internal problems may not be curious about foreign affairs and might regard them as unwelcomed intrusions on its main concerns. Between the two world wars, America lacked an intelligence service; its policy makers derived their knowledge about the outside world from the dispatches of ambassadors and, of course, the daily press.⁶

⁶Walter Laqueur, A World of Secrets: The Uses and Limits of Intelligence, (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 281.

I would agree with the assessment that intelligence failure can come from an "absence of elementary information" or "wrong priorities." I do disagree with the statement that "America lacked an intelligence service." The United States did have an active intelligence service between the two world wars, although a small one, as described in the previous chapter. The point to be made here is that in the case of Mexico, the Military Intelligence Division lacked sufficient information about the Mexican state and its people. This resulted from the fact that its priorities about Mexico were wrong. Thus, the U.S. perspective of the reality of Mexico was distorted.

CHAPTER IV

U.S. MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN MEXICO: A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The theoretical framework for this chapter is based upon the results of several studies dealing with culture and international relations. Specifically, I have utilized the findings of Edward Said, Akira Iriye, Edward Stewart and Milton Bennett. Although their studies do not address Mexico itself, I believe that the cross-cultural perspectives of Said, Iriye, Stewart and Bennett can be appropriately applied to the relationship between Mexico and the United States. Ranging from the theoretical to the pragmatic, these cross-cultural perspectives will inform the reader concerning the Military Intelligence Division mindset relative to the surveillance of Mexico.

For purposes of this chapter, I am using Richard Beringer's definition of literary analysis as a definition for textual analysis: "it involves reading source material and deriving evidence from that material to be used in supporting a point of view or thesis."¹ I am using the term "textual" rather than "literary" because the source

¹Beringer, Historical Analysis, 18.

material involves intelligence reports and documents rather than works of literature. However, the methodology is the same. The methodology employed in this chapter includes the identification of themes, discussion, and the support of conclusions through the use of examples.

The textual analysis used in this chapter was performed on selected documents utilized in the quantitative analysis of the previous chapter. This textual analysis demonstrates more clearly the prevailing attitudes, perspectives, and world views of the Military Intelligence Division toward the Mexican state and its peoples. This chapter provides evidence that the ethnocentrism of the MID got in the way of painting an accurate portrait of the reality of Mexico during the years from 1917 to 1927.

How did cultural differences influence the content of military intelligence in respect to Mexico? This critical and essential question will be addressed by analyzing the words, concepts, paradigms, and patterns of examination found within the selected intelligence reports. The cultural themes explored include: action and doing, quantification and facts, materialism, competition and measurable achievements, focus on individuals, future orientation, mindset, and ethnocentrism.

ACTION AND DOING

According to Stewart and Bennett, it is easy for foreign visitors to the United States to conclude that "doing is the dominant activity for Americans." They also state that "all aspects of American life are affected by the predominance of doing."² This American orientation toward action is composed of several elements: decision making, problem solving, causes, individuals and choice.³

The following military intelligence report is a good example of the American orientation toward action and doing. For the week ending June 9, 1917, the Military Intelligence Division reported that "in 28 of the 31 states and territories of Mexico, rebel forces are at the present writing more or less active." In the same report, it was stated that "as a result of the vigorous campaign carried on against Villa beginning in April and lasting through May, his forces are nearing disintegration." This same report estimated the total number of rebel forces at between 65,000 and 85,000 at the end of January. Still later in the report, the political situation in Mexico is described:

The Carranza Government appears to be meeting with less opposition than formerly. Relations with the United States are improving. Our vigorous action in preparing for war and in providing men and money has

²Stewart and Bennett, American Cultural Patterns, 69.

³Ibid., 62-69.

made a deep impression in Mexico.⁴

The focus of the above report is on action and doing, specifically on the activities of the rebels in opposition to the Carranza government. The desire to identify active decision making and problem solving is reflected by the report's notice of a "vigorous campaign" against Villa. In reality, the MID was premature in predicting Villa's demise at this time and the described actions were not interpreted.

Another element of the action orientation is that of cause. Every action must have a cause. In this case, the improved relations between the United States and Mexico was caused by "our vigorous action in preparing for war and in providing men and money." According to the MID, this massive military build-up made a "deep impression in Mexico."

The following excerpt, with a focus on action, comes from a MID weekly summary that was based on a New York Times article from August 23, 1919 that reported on the "possibility of American intervention in Mexico." In turn, the Times article was based on an article appearing in the ABC newspaper of Mexico City, "which is said to have created something of a sensation in the southern Republic." The original article pointed out seven ways in which the

⁴Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, Weekly Summary for June 9, 1917, 11-12.

United States might intervene in Mexico and discusses each at length. The seven types of intervention listed were:

[1] Complete invasion, which the paper admits would result in victory for the United States.

[2] Partial invasion by seizure of frontier posts and customs houses, which it said would weaken the Carranza Government, causing a spreading of the rebellion, dishearten the Constitutionals, and cause "Carranza and his system to topple like a pack of cards."

[3] Aiding or recognizing some rebel group.

[4] Naming of a group of Mexicans and assisting them in the formation of a government.

[5] Withdrawal of recognition from the present Government, which the paper said would be tantamount to recognition of the rebels.

[6] Presenting an ultimatum to the Government requiring assurances that the rebellion would be ended within a definite period, payment of foreign claims within a prescribed time, resumption of foreign debt service, and final disposition of the petroleum question. The paper said the present Government could not give these guarantees.

[7] Acting as arbiter between the contending Mexican factions. Nothing could come of arbitration, the paper said, adding that the present Government would "deem it beneath its dignity to enter into any negotiations with its enemy."⁵

The cultural emphasis here is on the possible actions that could be undertaken by the United States to intervene in Mexico, not the reality in the Mexican field. It is evident from this report that the MID was clearly interested in the topic of intervention by the United States in Mexico. In addition, the MID assessed a number of options, all of which included some form of action by the United States.

The following report addresses the question of

⁵Ibid., vol. 9, September 6, 1919, 1714.

official recognition of Mexico by the United States. This complicated issue was a constant source of tension between the two countries. For the United States, the problem was intimately linked to the actions of Mexican government. The recognition question is addressed in the following MID weekly summary:

There is a noticeable change in the attitude of the Mexican Government toward recognition by the United States in that there now appears for the first time evidence of a serious intention to comply, at least outwardly, with the American requirement that the good will of the present government be demonstrated in deeds rather than words. Until recently all effort seemed to be directed toward forcing a modification of the requirements for American recognition through an extensive campaign of propaganda.⁶

In the above example, the MID predilection for action is demonstrated through the expression "deeds rather than words." The Mexican government is praised for making a choice between propaganda and action. It is clearly evident that actions by the Mexican government would make a much greater impact upon the United States as opposed to futile attempts at propaganda. In terms of power and authority relationships, this example points out the much stronger bargaining position of the United States over that of Mexico.

Throughout the entire period of 1917-1927, the Military Intelligence Division never turned its attention away from the revolutionary movements and rebel activities

⁶Ibid., vol. 21, September 1922, 9527.

occurring in Mexico. Again, the cultural paradigm of action and doing is tied to these revolutionary movements and rebel activities. The following weekly summary from 1923 addresses this issue:

Mexico is again in the throes of a revolution of such serious proportions as to threaten the overthrow of the existing government...

The chief political figures involved are General Plutarco Elias Calles and Adolfo de la Huerta, the two principal opposing candidates for the presidency in the 1924 campaign...

It is too early to attempt a forecast of what proportions the present rebel movement may assume or what the ultimate outcome may be. The controlling factor rests entirely on the loyalty or disloyalty of the Federal military forces...

Military operations thus far have been characterized by much maneuvering on both sides combined with a manifest disinclination for decisive battle...⁷

The above report focuses on both rebel activities and the relative position of the two leading political contenders in the upcoming elections. As in other intelligence reports, this report follows the same trend of placing greater priority on military operations (action and doing), as opposed to exploring the reasons behind all the revolutionary activity. The primary emphasis is on the various actions, not reasons, causes, or interpretations.

QUANTIFICATION AND FACTS

According to Stewart and Bennett, "the American conception of facts," as well as the quantification and

⁷Ibid., vol. 22, December 15-28, 1923, 9974-9977.

uses of facts are not universal across cultures. Stewart and Bennett explain that the American concept of fact contains the following elements:

First, facts possess perceptual content; they are empirical, observable, and measurable. Second, facts are reliable so that different observers will agree about them. Third, facts are objective and therefore valid....Fourth, both the reliability and validity of facts are associated with measurements using coordinates of time and space, leading Americans to speak of "historical" but not "future" facts.⁸

Also, facts are "impersonal and exist separately from perceptual processes and from observers. In American thinking, facts exist in the external world and not inside the mind."⁹

The following intelligence report attempted to explain in a factual manner why large numbers of Mexicans were leaving the United States in order to return to Mexico:

It is reported from El Paso that the exodus of Mexicans from the United States continues.

There are many causes to which this may be attributed.

- (1) The United States is at war with a foreign country.
- (2) The high cost of living in the United States.
- (3) The fact that free transportation is being given to Mexicans from Juarez to Chihuahua.
- (4) German propaganda on the same subject.
- (5) The fact that conditions in Mexico are more peaceful today than they have been for some time past, and every Mexican desires to return to his

⁸Stewart and Bennett, American Cultural Patterns, 31-32.

⁹Ibid., 32.

native land.¹⁰

The above report attempted to present factual information on the border situation as it existed during 1917, but it failed to paint a complete picture of reality because it neglected to mention the wartime realities that actually existed along the Mexican-U.S. border. The reality was that, along the border, as in other parts of the United States, there was a resurgence of nativism and hysteria that brought down "the wrath and hatred of wartime America" upon aliens and others suspected of anti-Americanism, Bolshevism, radicalism, or espionage.¹¹ The reality along the border consisted of discrimination, racism, and violence. No wonder people wanted to leave. The MID failed to mention this particular version of reality in its assessment of the facts. The MID "factualized" a complex situation into non-emotional, tangible paradigms.

In 1918, as in other years, the Military Intelligence Division reported on the question of American military intervention in Mexico. In the following report, the rationale for U.S. intervention was linked to countering German activity in Mexico, rather than chasing Mexican bandits. In an intelligence report for the week ending

¹⁰Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, Weekly Summary for June 23, 1917, 15.

¹¹Raat, Revoltosos, 256-258.

February 9, 1918, it was stated:

According to an observer recently in Sonora, it is stated that the conviction is growing that the United States is merely awaiting a favorable opportunity to spring upon the Mexicans. All well informed Mexicans believe that a conflict with the United States is inevitable and among some the conviction is growing that Mexico should strike first.¹²

In the above report, we see that conclusions are drawn by the MID concerning the attitudes and convictions of "all well informed Mexicans." These conclusions are considered legitimate because they are based upon facts generated by the observer. There appears to be no hint of questioning the validity of the conclusions that are drawn, even though the reliability of the observer is not made known and generalizations about the attitudes of an ill-defined population are treated as fact. It appears that the MID belief in "facts" was stronger than reality.

The emphasis upon facts is reflected in the following comments from a 1918 intelligence report. During the previous year, a number of intelligence reports had made mention about the "peacefulness" being observed in Mexico and the control being maintained by President Carranza over Mexico. However, we see that in 1918 the situation had somehow changed: "Mexico is more generally restless than it has been for some time." The Military Intelligence Division reported that Jalisco and Michoacán "are

¹²Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 3, Weekly Summary for February 9, 1918, 13.

practically controlled by anti-Carrancistas;" and that in Vera Cruz, Felix Díaz "is keeping the country in turmoil, apparently in order to be able to take advantage of any collapse of the Government."¹³

It is interesting to note that in the above comments, the MID did not attempt to explain nor try to understand the underlying reasons for the increased fact of rebel activity taking place at this time. Although the MID was attempting to provide an objective assessment of the Mexican situation, there appears to be a hint of hysteria in these comments regarding the possible gains being made by the rebels. The facts are never questioned.

The following report is a striking example of the American preference for quantification and facts. In this particular instance, the discussion takes place early in 1919 and is centered on the possibility of U.S. intervention in Mexico. In this intelligence report, the MID had the following to say:

An increasingly large native element in Mexico is beginning to look forward to foreign intervention in a spirit of hopeful anticipation, or, at worst, of resignation. Postal censorship extracts from social correspondence since the signing of the armistice furnish striking evidence of this. Apparently the conviction is growing in the southern Republic that there can be no hope of relief from within and that conditions, which are with the greatest frequency described as "intolerable," will not be remedied unless assistance be given by the United States, acting alone or in conjunction with some of the European powers which have great material interests

¹³Ibid., March 9, 1918, 38.

in Mexico.

Testimony continues to accumulate in contradiction to the widely theory that foreign intervention can be accomplished in Mexico only by breaking the resistance of a united and bitterly hostile people.¹⁴

In the above example, intelligence "fact" comes in the form of "postal censorship extracts." By intercepting a number of pieces of mail, the American orientation toward quantification gave statistical validity to social correspondence. According to Stewart and Bennett, "when human behavior is also quantified, it becomes objective and can be treated like other controllable environmental forces."¹⁵ The second source of intelligence "fact" in this example comes in the form of "testimony." This too is quantified and becomes objective fact. Thus, the facts override any consideration that might be given to the cultural differences between the United States and Mexico, let alone the cultural differences between and among the various populations existing within Mexico.

The American fascination for numbers is reflected in the following excerpt from a 1920 intelligence report. In this particular report, a "confidential informant" provided information concerning the number of airplanes in Mexico. The informant indicated that there was a total of "fifty" planes throughout the whole of Mexico. It is significant

¹⁴Ibid., vol. 6, January 4, 1919, 397.

¹⁵Stewart and Bennett, Cultural Patterns, 127.

to note that the MID did not reconcile the discrepancy in the numbers because at the conclusion of the report, it was noted that:

Information on file in the M.I.D. gives the total number of airplanes now in combat service in Mexico as fourteen. There are several planes being used for training purposes at the Balbuena airdrome.¹⁶

In 1920 the Military Intelligence Division attempted to analyze the dynamic nature of Mexican politics by providing a written summary based upon historical facts. The following report provides a typical MID analysis of Mexican politics:

Politics as they exist in Mexico to-day is the outgrowth of the May and April revolution, which resulted in the overthrow of Carranza, his subsequent death, and of the establishment of a provisional government with de la Huerta as Provisional President.

To understand this movement one must go back to last July....¹⁷

This particular example demonstrates the lack of any long-term historical perspective and understanding of the Mexican state or Mexican politics. Instead, it focuses on immediate events that can be quantified and tied in a linear fashion to the present. In terms of root causes for the revolution, the report assigns chief blame to Obregón, but offers no analysis based upon historical factors.

The following intelligence report is from the

¹⁶Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 12, Weekly Summary for March 6, 1920, 3217.

¹⁷Ibid., vol. 14, July 21, 1920, 5116-5120.

military attaché in Mexico City. This particular report summarizes the provisions of the "Ley de Patente" (License Law) which was recently passed in the state of Puebla resulting in a number of civil disturbances. Among other issues, the report states:

It is obvious that any executive having discretionary power under the law to fix the monthly tax of a company at any sum between \$50. Pesos and \$25,000 Pesos, has wide potentialities for arbitrary action, if he should see fit to exercise them...

In further illustration of conditions prevailing in Puebla under the present administration, the following facts received at first hand from a reliable source are given:¹⁸

Again, the word "fact" is used in order to obscure the impossibility of being specific about the tax situation.

For a number of years, the Military Intelligence Division had expressed concern over Japanese activities in Mexico and the possibility of an alliance between Japan and Mexico. In the following example, conclusions were based upon evidence that was deemed factual according the standards of the MID:

There are several indications that point to the possibility of an alliance between Japan and Mexico. In addition to the individuals already reported as being here for the purpose of obtaining oil concessions in Oaxaca and the Commission now believed on its way for the purpose of investigating colonization possibilities, there are, in addition, two Australians (?), representing a Japanese newspaper in the City...A reliable informant states that the Japanese have a concession in the San Luis

¹⁸G-2 Report: Political Information, November 18, 1921; File No. 2711; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frames 135-137); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA.

Valley, Lower California, not far from Magdalena Bay. The advantages to the Japanese of striking oil in this locality are obvious.

It has been noted that the Japanese are very punctilious in their attendance at all official functions. While it is presumed that the Japanese diplomatic representation make a special point of attending these functions, this practice is very pronounced here at present. It is perhaps not too much to interpret it as an indication of their desire to be on the best possible terms with the Mexicans.¹⁹

The above report is a good example of the MID basing its conclusions upon disparate facts. Giving credit to the investigative abilities of the MID, Japan and Mexico did sign a treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation on October 8, 1924. However, it was only a commercial treaty which superseded a previous one signed November 30, 1888.²⁰ It was not the military alliance which some had feared. The MID reached conclusions based upon "facts" without understanding the cultural dynamics taking place between the Japanese and the Mexicans in this situation.

The following report reflects the concern of the Military Intelligence Division during 1927 regarding the level of military action and rebellion taking place in Mexico. As shown in earlier examples, the following report

¹⁹G-2 Report: Foreign Relations - Japan, September 23, 1924; File No. 4933; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frame 475); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA.

²⁰G-2 Report: Foreign Relations - Japanese Activities in Mexico: Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation, October 9, 1924; File No. 4974; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frames 478-494); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA.

demonstrates the emphasis placed on statistics and facts. This particular report was submitted by Major Harold Thompson, Acting Military Attaché in Mexico City, and was based on information from several sources: consular reports, the press, and confidential informants. Thompson states:

Since the date of last report..., there have been 42 encounters and skirmishes between the rebels and Federal forces with new centers of rebellion noted in Chihuahua, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, and San Luis Potosi. The War Department of date of April 4th officially announced that rebellion actually exists in the States of Sonora, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Colima and Guerrero...

The preceding indicates that the rebellion is spreading very slowly, with the Government hard put to find additional troops to control the situation in the affected sectors. A strong leader, able to control the various groups in Jalisco - Guanajuato-Colima region - and direct their operations, would really set the ball rolling.²¹

The above report is typical of the Military Intelligence Division at this time, in that it places emphasis on quantification and facts. The focus of this particular report was on troop movements and military operations, as opposed to any type of in-depth analysis of underlying issues. Thus, the American orientation toward quantification and facts centered on the activities taking place, rather than asking why these developments were taking place.

²¹G-2 Report: Distribution of Troops - Campaign Against Rebels, April 19, 1927; File No. 1483; (UPA Microfilm, roll 2, frames 173-175); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA.

MATERIALISM

Generally speaking, Americans have a bent toward materialism and tend to project this value system onto other peoples. Addressing the topic of materialism, Stewart and Bennett explain that:

The American stress on material things is associated with a belief in the inviolacy of private property, a value commonly asserted to be at the root of the Constitution and the American conception of democracy. The popular assumption that private property is inviolate has frequently led to friction between Americans and the citizens or bureaucracies of other nations, with subsequent repercussions at the highest levels of government. U.S. relations with Latin American countries have often been strained over the issue of private property, and danger to property is usually reason enough for American intervention or threats to use force.²²

In 1917 the Military Intelligence Division felt that spending money on propaganda was the key to success in winning the psychological war against Germany in Mexico. This attitude tends to reflect the American orientation toward materialism and the use of money as an antidote for almost any problem. This materialistic focus of the MID is clearly reflected in the following report:

We are advised that the Germans and German Agents are spending large sums of money on newspaper propaganda in Mexico, and though it may have no appreciable effect upon the better educated, the people are undoubtedly affected by it....

It is alleged that we are not carrying on an adequate publicity and propaganda campaign, and that in Mexico, Americans are continuing friendly with the Germans.

²²Stewart and Bennett, American Cultural Patterns, 118.

We are informed that some American firms are soliciting business and even quoting prices to Germans of articles on the contraband list.²³

This report indicates that the MID was concerned with American business behavior in Mexico and blamed the problem on the lack of American spending on propaganda.

The naiveté of the Military Intelligence Division is reflected in the following comments in which it is assumed that a few million dollars would allow the dictating of terms to the Mexican government. This particular example demonstrates a complete failure to understand the internal structure of Mexico, its culture, and the power of nationalism. By April 27, 1918, it was being reported that "the Mexican Government is financially bankrupt and on the verge of complete annihilation." In this same report it was suggested that:

a few million dollars in American or English money would do much towards temporarily restoring its power, and anyone who could supply this sum would be able to dictate what policy the Mexican Government should pursue.²⁴

This is a typical example of the American mindset toward money and its alleged power to solve complex problems.

The issue of materialism surfaces again in the following report concerning the purchase of Lower California by the United States. This report was contained

²³Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 2, Weekly Summary for November 3, 1917, 20-21.

²⁴Ibid., vol. 4, April 27, 1918, 33.

in the weekly summary for the week ending February 1, 1919:

The Ashurst resolution and the discussion in the United States Senate of the proposal to purchase Lower California has naturally attracted much attention in Mexico, particularly in the territory concerned and along the border. Observers on the ground report that a considerable number of Mexicans and ranchers of the better class would favor a transfer of allegiance, possibly because they have lost faith in their own country's ability to establish good and stable government, and would be willing to come under the authority of the United States, in order to enjoy greater security for life and property, and, perhaps lower taxes. On the other hand, military authorities and the civilian office-holders, receive the proposal with indignation.²⁵

The materialistic theme continues later in the same report by mentioning the continued influx of Japanese into Lower California for the purpose of agricultural colonizing and fishing. In addition, there were proposals for a concession to be granted to a Japanese syndicate to provide steamship service for Japanese-Mexican trade that could undercut the Americans.²⁶ This was significant because of the possible commercial competition from the Japanese.

The above report offers an interesting look at the attitudes of the MID from a materialistic perspective. We see that particular individuals (Mexicans and ranchers of the better class) are looked upon favorably because of their desire for materialism and property (life, property, and lower taxes). These Mexican elites are alleged to transcend nationalistic tendencies in favor of class

²⁵Ibid., vol. 6, February 1, 1919, 520.

²⁶Ibid., 521.

interests and an international outlook. The next group of individuals (military authorities and civilian office-holders) are looked down upon because they seem to reject the materialistic possibilities offered by the United States (received the proposal with indignation). In the same vein, the report sounds the alarm against the possible commercial threat from the Japanese who could be moving in to undercut the Americans.

The following report addresses the issue of materialism from the perspective of property losses due to rebel activity. In this particular report, the writer assigns blame for rebel atrocities to the leaders of the present government:

The leaders of the present Government in their revolution against Huerta taught the people how to sack cities, loot ranches, destroy property and dynamite trains, killing innocent travellers. These people have proven themselves apt pupils; so much so that now it is almost impossible to stop them. To my knowledge they offered the soldiers the loot of towns to induce them to take them. This is a terrible instance of "Curses coming home to roost."²⁷

It appears that the gravest concern of the intelligence source quoted above is the threat posed to the safety of property, rather than lives. Another interesting assumption made in this report is that the possibility of monetary reward is the driving force behind rebel activity, as opposed to other considerations (i.e. political ideology, survival, or revenge).

²⁷Ibid., vol. 7, May 3, 1919, 857.

ACHIEVEMENT AND COMPETITION

Describing the American orientation for achievement, Stewart and Bennett remark that "achievement is given a material meaning, which leads to an emphasis on technology and on publicity - making accomplishments measurable and visible."²⁸

In regards to competition, Stewart and Bennett explain that:

Competition is the primary method among Americans for motivating members of groups. Americans, with their orientation toward individualism and achievement, respond well to this technique. But when a competitive approach is applied to members of another culture who do not hold the same values, the effort may be ineffective at best and may produce undesirable consequences.²⁹

The issue of achievement and competition, or the lack thereof, is reflected in the following report. A daily intelligence summary for December 31, 1918, reported the following:

An experienced observer, after a residence of two years in Mexico City, writes: "Under present conditions there never will be order in the Republic, for the military leaders would lose their means of gaining a livelihood. The Carrancista generals get a shipment of ammunition from the government, sell part of it to the rebels at good prices, arrange for a bit of a skirmish, (regarding which they make glowing reports), draw more supplies for those reported destroyed in the fight, then wait for a chance to draw more ammunition and repeat the performance. There must be, it seems to me, some sort of outside

²⁸ Stewart and Bennett, American Cultural Patterns, 78.

²⁹ Ibid., 79.

aid; if not military intervention, then economic."³⁰

The observer quoted above was correct in describing the "objective" situation that was taking place between the federal army and the rebels, but he failed to notice or appreciate the "ritual" that was taking place. For centuries, the central government in Mexico City (whether Indian, Spanish, or Mexican) had never been able to completely subdue or control the entire country. Likewise, the regions had never been totally successful in pressing their demands upon Mexico City. Consequently, there was a constant ebb and flow between Mexico City and the regions. This ebb and flow dynamic was played out through the manifestation of encounters between the federal army and the rebels. No amount of intervention would alter this type of reality from continuing in the future, nor would the contending parties be motivated by competitive incentives.

During the year 1925, a series of memorandums were generated within the Military Intelligence Division discussing the subject of U.S.-Mexican relations. These memorandums provide a clue about the working relationship or competition between the MID and the State Department, as evidenced by the following comment: "Secretary Kellogg's statement to the press of the 12th instant concerning the

³⁰Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 29, Daily Summary for December 31, 1918, 292.

relations of the United States and Mexico, came as a complete surprise to G-2."³¹ The memo goes on to state:

The developments in the international situation during this short period, resulting in Secretary Kellogg's pronouncement of the 12th instant, is believed without precedent in the relations of the United States with Mexico, and so far as can be determined were not due to any notable change in Mexican conditions during that time, but rather to a very marked change of public policy on the part of the United States.

This very radical change in policy toward Mexico, and the public manner of its promulgation, has beyond doubt mystified the American people as to its portent and the basic reasons therefor;....

The reaction of other Latin American countries to this pronounced change of attitude and method toward Mexico by the United States will be watched with interest.³²

The above comments point out that the bureaucratic competition and infighting between the MID and the State Department resulted in a policy change by the United States toward Mexico that completely caught the MID off guard. Actually, it was the MID, not just the American people, who were "mystified" by the "very radical change in policy" and by the "public manner of its promulgation."

FUTURE ORIENTATION

Time orientation varies according to culture.

³¹Memo: U.S. Policy and the Mexican Situation, June 23, 1925; File No. G-2/2657-G-569; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frames 742-748); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA. This memo was sent by Major J.J. Burleigh, Chief of Military Intelligence, General Staff, to the Military Attaché in Mexico City.

³²Ibid.

According to Stewart and Bennett:

People orient themselves and direct their actions according to where their culture places emphasis along the continuum of time orientations. For example, orientation to the present is characteristic in Latin Americans. In other societies, people are oriented to the past and consequently turn to traditions for guidance. The most abstract temporal orientation is toward the future - the dominant American value.³³

This American orientation "toward the discernible future and the high value placed on action yield the principle that one can improve upon the present."³⁴

The following report provides an example of the optimistic American orientation for the future. The Military Intelligence Division, in its optimistic fashion, made the following comments regarding the relationship between the United States and Mexico:

Recent reports from various parts of Mexico agree in noting an improved feeling toward the United States, and a decline of German influence. Among the factors mentioned as contributing to this change are President Wilson's address of June 6th to the Mexican editors, his address of July 4th, the order of July 10th lifting the embargo on corn and other commodities in favor of Mexico, our successes in the field in France, the revelation of our ever increasing military power, and lastly, the visible demonstration of Mexico's present economic dependence on us by the operation of the "Trading with the Enemy Act" (black list) against individuals resident in Mexico.³⁵

During 1920 the Military Intelligence Division began

³³Stewart and Bennett, American Cultural Patterns, 74.

³⁴Ibid., 75.

³⁵Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 4, Weekly Summary for August 3, 1918, 27.

to include a section on "Future Possibilities" within their weekly intelligence summaries. For the week ending May 15, 1920, it was reported:

From an economic standpoint the immediate effects of the revolution will be disastrous. Credit operations will be suspended, money and goods will be hoarded and all new projects will be held in abeyance until public confidence is restored and the economic policy of the new government clearly defined. It is fortunate that the currency is on a metallic basis. However, silver and gold will be hoarded, rendering business transactions even more difficult. Even if political events take a more favorable turn than it is reasonable to expect, conditions will be upset for months. If the revolution degenerates into a fight for power between military chiefs a reversion to the anarchical conditions prevailing in 1915 will follow.³⁶

The above report is a good example of the American temporal orientation toward the future, as opposed to the characteristic Latin American orientation to the past and present. In this report, future is understood as near future: of a few months, not years (short-term time cycles).

The following weekly summary from 1925 provides an update on the improving conditions in Mexico, at least in regards to American interests. It also attempts to look optimistically toward the future. Several excerpts are provided:

While the situation in Mexico is not clearly defined, and the future can not be viewed with any measure of assurance, in certain respects improvement can be noted.

During the months which have intervened since

³⁶Ibid., vol. 13, May 15, 1920, 3660-3661.

Secretary Kellogg informed the public of the unsatisfactory conditions obtaining with reference to American interests in Mexico, the tension has relaxed sufficiently to permit conciliatory efforts to be directed toward the settlement of several cases involving American interests...

There is also a disposition on the part of Government officials to hold in check the restless labor elements, and to avoid where possible further difficulties of this nature...

The trend of events generally has been toward removing as many as possible of the causes of complaint against the Mexican Government, before the return of Ambassador Sheffield to his post at Mexico City...³⁷

At issue in the above report is the regaining of recognition of Mexico by the United States. The MID focused on the future impact that these improvements would have on American interests, as opposed to the long-term effect upon Mexico or how American interests might impact Mexico. It is interesting to note that this report does not address the issues surrounding the "restless labor elements," even though American businesses relied on Mexican labor.

INDIVIDUALISM

The theme of rugged individualism is quite persuasive throughout the history of the United States. Stewart and Bennett define individualism as "the perception of the self as the cultural quantum in society." They explain that "the self acts as the operational unit in action and as the

³⁷Ibid., vol. 24, September 19 to October 2, 1925, 10843-10845.

locus of control for behavior."³⁸ However, the individual does not operate entirely without restraint. Stewart and Bennett argue that:

Social control and even a form of social coercion are found in the nebulous but imperative expectation that the individual will choose as everyone else wants him or her to.³⁹

A classic case of the individual being pressured to conform is presented below. A Military Intelligence Division memorandum prepared for the Chief of Staff regarding the activities in Mexico of a Colonel James A. Ryan, USA, Retired, stated: "What action should be taken in regard to the alleged questionable activities in Mexico of Colonel James A. Ryan, U.S. Army, retired." Apparently, Colonel Ryan retired in 1919 after thirty years of service. Ryan had been detailed as a Military Aide to General Obregón in 1918 and had developed a personal friendship with him. After retiring, Ryan was employed as a lobbyist by American business concerns in Mexico. The MID memo stated the following:

While it is highly probable that Colonel Ryan has been and is at the present time engaged in activities of a questionable character and inconsistent with his status as a retired American Army Officer, there is not sufficient evidence at hand to establish this as a fact. The allegations contained in the accompanying papers cannot be used as evidence in

³⁸Stewart and Bennett, American Cultural Patterns, 134.

³⁹Ibid., 135.

their present form.⁴⁰

It is significant to note that the MID was acting upon mere "allegations," as opposed to investigating further the actual facts of the case.

The action recommended in this case was that the Adjutant General should send a warning letter to Ryan, alerting him to stay away from "any participation in politics in Mexico." The warning letter was also to state:

It is not the intention or desire of the War Department to interfere with you in the legitimate pursuit of any civil activities in which you may be interested, but it must be borne in mind that it is impossible for an officer of the Army, active or retired, to so completely divorce himself from his status that his actions in a foreign country, especially Mexico, will not be misconstrued if of a political character; the continuance of such activities whether misconstrued or reprehensible in fact can very readily be accepted as having the tacit consent of the War Department or even of the Government itself.⁴¹

The above scenario has been played out by other military and government officials over the years. In this case, it is interesting to note the War Department's sensitivity over the fact that this situation was taking place in Mexico, as opposed to another country.

⁴⁰Memo: Activities in Mexico of Colonel James A. Ryan, U.S.A., Retired, December 26, 1923; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frames 145-157); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁴¹Ibid.

MINDSET OF THE MID

The term "mindset" is defined here to mean the attitudes, perceptions, constructs, and paradigms held by the Military Intelligence Division. For example, the MID maintained a detached and isolated existence following the First World War which served to affect relations with other organizations and possibly had a psychological impact upon staff:

This unfortunate feeling of detachment not only tended to draw military intelligence further and further away from the remainder of the Army but also was soon sharply aggravated through the adoption of overzealous security policies on the part of the G-2 officials. By insisting that practically all MID actions, many of which were not even remotely connected with confidential military intelligence techniques or procedures, should be habitually regarded as highly classified, these officials rendered their own just cause more ultimate harm than good. Besides, after they had chosen to surround themselves with such an unnecessary aura of mysterious isolation, it became almost impossible for any outsider to gauge accurately the true worth of the military intelligence effort or to comprehend properly its legitimate place in the total scheme of national defense.⁴²

The following report is an attempt by the Military Intelligence Division to describe the attitudes of Mexicans (by social class) toward the war in Europe:

We are informed from a reliable source that the great mass of the Mexicans are stated to be quite unconcerned about the war which affects them little. The partially educated class are anti-foreign and particularly anti-American.

⁴²Bidwell, Military Intelligence Division, 409.

The upper class are, in a large majority, pro-Ally, though there are among them a great many rabid pro-Germans.

It is stated that the propaganda of the pro-German Mexicans is very disproportionate to their number, and it is believed that a great majority of the cultured Mexicans are pro-Ally.⁴³

The above report provides some insight into the mindset of American military intelligence. First, a "reliable source," without mention of expertise or credentials, provided some generalizations and opinions about the attitudes of Mexicans toward the war in Europe. Second, the information provided by the source is taken as fact. And third, social stereotyping of the Mexican people is implied by classifying them in terms like: great mass, partially educated, upper class, and cultured Mexicans.

The following report touches on the concern of the Military Intelligence Division toward relations between the United States and Mexico, especially in the military arena:

Recent reports to hand indicate that Mexico will in the future give little trouble to the United States, owing to the fact that it is so greatly impressed by the extent of our military preparation.

There may be internal troubles, but there will be no united action against this country.⁴⁴

The above report is a good example of the MID emphasis and focus on external or foreign affairs, as opposed to the internal situation in Mexico. In addition, it assumes an air of superiority, smugness, and arrogance

⁴³Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 1, Weekly Summary for June 30, 1917, 16-17.

⁴⁴Ibid., September 15, 1917, 24.

toward Mexico concerning the "fact" that Mexico is "so greatly impressed" with U.S. military capability and would not consider actions against the U.S. on that basis alone. The MID did not consider the possibility that Mexico might have other reasons, concerns, interests, and historical perspectives that would mitigate against the possibility of Mexican military action against the United States.

The following article from the New York Times provides an interesting perspective on the issue of American intervention in Mexico. This particular article was also picked up by military intelligence and included in the weekly summary, as it discusses the border perspective on the issue of intervention:

Taking notes on the Texas side of the border, a correspondent of the New York Times, who has interviewed men of many callings, learns that war with Mexico is not desired by any community nor by any person whose opinion is worth recording; that, in fact, there is practical unanimity for a peaceful settlement of differences with Mexico. If the people of border States can live as neighbors with the Mexicans without demanding intervention, there is no reason why the people of the other forty-five States should get excited, advocate war, and declare for occupation. The border sentiment, the border judgment, point to the true solution. What may be called firm reasonableness should be the policy of the Government at Washington. While supporting American rights, it should be fair to the Mexicans and considerate of their real interests.⁴⁵

Although the above article was not written by MID personnel, it is interesting because of the contradictions that it presents which tend to reflect the approach taken

⁴⁵Ibid., vol. 11, January 24, 1920, 2871.

by the MID, as well as representing the MID mindset. First, it talks about how the people of the border states get along with their Mexican neighbors, but fails to mention the numerous vigilante actions taken against Mexicans living along the border. Second, the article fails to mention the numerous border incidents involving violence or threats of violence that had taken place over the years. Third, there is no reference to the many calls for intervention by the various governors of border states over the years. Fourth, the sources for this article included only those people "whose opinion is worth recording." There appears to be a glaring lack of Mexican sources and a complete failure to appreciate or understand the Mexican perspective. And finally, the correspondent tried to quantify his results by "taking notes" and interviewing men "of many callings."

After a number of years, international relations in Mexico had taken another turn. This time the Military Intelligence Division analyzed Article 27 of the Mexican constitution to assess its negative impact upon the United States. The following comments come from a 1926 weekly summary:

Once more the Mexican Government appears about to sacrifice cordial international relations, in order to further the economic and social reforms embodied in her program of domestic administration.

The reform principles have been the source of international friction almost continuously since their embodiment in the Constitution of 1917...

Now, at length, in the recent enactment of the land

and petroleum laws, regulating a part of Article 27, infringement of the vested rights of foreigners seems virtually certain, if the measures are made effective in their present form. The American Government, therefore, has made formal representation to the Mexican Government against certain features of these laws, and similar action is reported to have been taken by Great Britain...

The question of importance involved in the present situation is: Will the trend of the immediate future in Mexico be toward carrying out the radical policies predicated on these two laws and others of a similar nature, or will there be a conservative reaction in the administration attended by modification of the provisions to which the American Government has found objection?⁴⁶

The above report provides insight to the MID mindset from several angles. First, the MID is concerned strictly about the possible implementation of Article 27 and how that would impact American interests. No mention is made about Mexican interests nor Mexican rights in this situation. Second, sole blame for disrupting "cordial" international relations is laid at the feet of Mexico. No mention is made of the internal economic and social conditions existing in Mexico which might have a bearing on the situation. Third, the American government is strengthened in its position because Great Britain is also protesting against the implementation of Article 27. There is not the slightest hint nor acknowledgment that the United States and Great Britain are involved in imperialistic actions. And finally, the MID position is centered on the immediate future, as opposed to any kind of

⁴⁶Ibid., vol. 25, January 9-22, 1926, 10986-10988.

analysis of the long-term future.

ETHNOCENTRISM

Stewart and Bennett define ethnocentrism as "centrality of culture."⁴⁷ Ethnocentrism tends to create a number of problems and implications when encountering cultural differences, as the Military Intelligence Division did in Mexico. Stewart and Bennett describe the implications for those with an ethnocentric world view:

First, ethnocentric beliefs about one's own culture shape a social sense of identity which is narrow and defensive. Second, ethnocentrism normally involves the perception of members of other cultures in terms of stereotypes. Third, the dynamic of ethnocentrism is such that comparative judgments are made between one's own culture and other cultures under the assumption that one's own is normal and natural. As a consequence, ethnocentric judgments usually involve invidious comparisons that ennoble one's own culture while degrading those of others.⁴⁸

The following intelligence report provides a glimpse of the ethnocentric approach of the Military Intelligence Division. In this case, "one of our Consuls in Lower California" provided the intelligence data. The consul reported on the issue of U.S. intervention in Mexico:

Mexicans in Lower California believe that intervention by the United States in the affairs of Mexico is imminent. Governor Cantu has issued orders for disposition of his military forces with a view to appropriate action in case of intervention. The small detachments are to be so disposed that there

⁴⁷Stewart and Bennett, American Cultural Patterns, 161.

⁴⁸Ibid.

will be no collision between them and United States troops and so that after a few days they may capitulate without firing a shot. In a moving picture show on July 4th pictures of a German General and his staff were lustily applauded by the Mexican audience, whereupon one of Governor Cantu's confidential secretaries arose and severely reproached the audience, reminding them that the Americans were the friends of the Mexicans and the only friends they had in the world.⁴⁹

In the above example, we see an American consul using subtle language to cover his stereotypical descriptions of Mexican people as being sensual (lustily applauded) and childlike (severely reproached the audience). The consul describes how the Mexican troops would be deployed in order to avoid confrontation with U.S. troops, but he does not offer any explanation for the motivation behind this behavior. The consul does not attempt to describe the existing conditions in Lower California which might provide some insight into the internal situation of the region.

The following excerpts are drawn from a Special Feature Section for "A Review of the Mexican Situation as it Exists Today," contained within a 1921 weekly summary report:

Yet one who has made a close study of the Mexican situation cannot be misled by these several material improvements. It must be realized that during the past seventy years of Mexican political life, as many governments have come and gone, the causes of which rest in the very psychology of the Mexican people. As an individual, the Mexican has absolutely no conception of abstract principle. The issue at hand must be concretely represented in order to apply to

⁴⁹Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 9, Weekly Summary for August 9, 1919, 1496.

him. The average Mexican follows an individual and is not led by the principle of patriotism. Primarily in political faith he is not a Mexican, but rather an Obregonista, a Carrancista, or some other "ista." The national idea is always submerged in the man of the hour. The health of one man makes all the difference in Mexican affairs. The old satire, used by the Mexican himself, "Come get your gun and let's vote," is a commentary on the political idea of the Mexican.⁵⁰

The above political commentary is a good example of the American perspective or orientation of superiority over other cultures and races. A number of causes are given for the problems being encountered in Mexico: the psychology of the Mexican people is to blame for the instability of their governments; the Mexican is portrayed as being incapable of abstract thinking; and Mexicans are considered to be incapable of patriotism and nationalism.

Major E.L.N. Glass, Assistant Military Attaché in Mexico City, submitted a report of travel early in 1924. He traveled from Mexico City to Tampico, Tamaulipas, then to San Antonio, Texas, and back. Although the focus of the report is on rebel military activities, Glass does touch upon the subject of "public sentiment." According to Glass:

Public sentiment in Tampico is all pro-rebel. Taxation burdens imposed by the Federal Gov't. have served to alienate all support from the merchant class, while the inability of the Federal Gov't. to extend military protection to the oil companies has worked to make these pro-rebel. The greatest factor, however, working to spread the pro-rebel doctrine is the attitude of the United States in taking part, (at

⁵⁰Ibid., vol. 17, April 9, 1921, 7652.

least, according to the sensitive Mexican mind it appears that the U.S. is meddling) in the present revolution.

Should the rebels win, the penalties to be suffered by American companies are liable to be heavy.⁵¹

The above report is indicative of the MID fascination with connecting public attitudes (pro-rebel) to various external facts (taxes, lack of military protection, and U.S. actions), without exploring other possibilities. In addition, this report uses the euphemism "sensitive Mexican mind" to cover racist, or at least condescending, attitudes toward the Mexican perspective regarding U.S. involvement in Mexico.

An assessment of the political situation in Mexico was made by Lieut. Colonel Edward Davis, Military Attaché in Mexico City, after the congressional elections of 1926. Davis observes that the elections were "marked by indifference" as evidenced by the fact that "there was much less disorder than usual and a smaller number of political murders." He goes on to say:

There was, of course, no expression of the public will, in this election, for, as is well known by all who know Mexico, many generations must pass before elections in Mexico can possibly express the public will.⁵²

The above report is a good example of how U.S.

⁵¹Report: Travel to Pro-Rebel Tampico, January 25, 1924; File No. 4418; (UPA Microfilm, roll 1, frames 285-286); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA.

⁵²G-2 Report: Congressional Elections, July 9, 1926; File No. 2657-G-622; (UPA Microfilm, roll 3, frame 128); Mexico, 1919-1941; MID; RG 165; NA.

observers in Mexico attempted to compare the political election process between the United States and Mexico. Davis takes a condescending attitude toward Mexican politics, especially in regard to measuring the "public will" and suggesting that it would take "many generations" before this could occur. This report implies that the term "election" means the same thing in Mexico as it does in the United States.

The following remarks concern a confidential analysis of the Mexican army contained in a weekly summary for 1927. The analysis was brief in length (8 pages), but comprehensive in scope, covering a wide variety of topics (history, policy, personnel, training, tactics, etc.). For the most part, the analysis was objective, but cryptic comments can still be found. Speaking on the topic of military policy, the report read:

Mexico cannot hope to assume successfully an aggressive attitude toward the United States nor be permitted by the latter to give effect to any such attitude against her weaker southern neighbors.⁵³

In regards to the topic of personnel the following remarks were made:

The officers of the "Old Army" under Diaz were well educated and possessed some social refinement...

The present personnel were inherited from the revolutionary period, ...the lack of even a fair academic education, which applies to the great majority, is naturally restrictive of any real grasp of the higher military knowledge that is essential...

⁵³Challener, Military Intelligence, vol. 26, Weekly Summary for August 6-19, 1927, 2.

The Mexican soldier is merely an Indian recruited from the lowest and roughest classes of the country and therefore, as may be expected, takes no great interest or pride in his personal appearance, his carriage, or his dress; nor does he show any greater interest or pride in the care of his arms and equipment.⁵⁴

The following comments were made regarding the topic of training and morale:

The professional deficiencies of the officers, general neglect of modern field training, defects of racial origin and social conditions at large combine to give a low ratio of fighting value...In no sense is it trained or otherwise prepared for combat operations against well trained troops.⁵⁵

The above excerpts are interesting from several perspectives. First, the Military Intelligence Division is concerned about national security and makes a logical comparison between U.S. and Mexican forces, while attempting to assess the potential threat against the United States. Obviously, the MID indicates that the Mexican army is no match for the superior U.S. army. It is ironic that the quality and effectiveness of U.S. military forces were being criticized in the United States at this same time because of downsizing and neglect. Second, a comparison is made between the "Old Army" under Díaz and the current revolutionary forces, with a favorable nod going to the old army because of education and social refinement. Yet the reality was that the old army was

⁵⁴Ibid., 5.

⁵⁵Ibid., 7.

ineffective in putting down the rebellion in the first place. Third, racial bias is evident in describing the Mexican soldier as "merely an Indian" and that the fighting value of the army is low, due to "defects of racial origin," among other factors.

SUMMARY

The textual analysis of this chapter brings to light the fact that the Military Intelligence Division was deficient in its analysis of Mexico. In spite of the evidence at hand, erroneous conclusions were drawn. Several factors were involved in this state of affairs. First, the MID assumed that the "facts" would speak for themselves. The problem was that the facts were not placed into context, nor were they interpreted. Instead, the MID focused on quantifiable, tangible situations. Second, the MID did not reconcile the contradictions, nor debate the ambiguities that were evident in the vast store of information supplied to them. Third, by failing to deal with the gray areas of Mexico, a black and white picture of the Mexican Revolution emerged that was not related to reality. And finally, the MID did not ask the right questions that might lead to developing a different picture of Mexico. Similar to what would happen in Vietnam years later, the MID did not grasp the nature of Mexico and its peoples.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The history of the Military Intelligence Division is very much intertwined with the history of the relations between Mexico and the United States. The MID's involvement in Mexico both predates and postdates the period of time analyzed by this study. Throughout the ten years of this study, 1917-1927, we see a number of recurring themes relating to the surveillance of Mexico by U.S. military intelligence.

One theme seen throughout this study is the lack of quality intelligence analysis or production. Although there was a great deal of raw data and information collected from the field, the actual processing or analysis of the data left something to be desired. On the eve of World War One, much of the information sent to Washington did not find its way into War Department files. The official historian for the Military Intelligence Division even admitted that the status of the agency was worse than dismal. The rapid and unplanned expansion of the MID during the war led to a great deal of confusion and inefficiency in the handling of intelligence analysis. After the war, downsizing of the central staff and

insufficient resources led to the curtailment or reduction of intelligence functions. The value or the quality of the intelligence that was actually produced (quality of writing, detailed observations, insight, etc.) did not always demonstrate high levels of expertise nor professionalism.

A second theme, which is closely related to the first, is the quality of personnel selected for intelligence work. Intelligence had a reputation, which resulted in a self-fulfilling prophecy, for attracting officers not wanted for command positions due to the question of professional competence. One historian has pointed out that: "Regular army officers discovered that intelligence was not a viable career field, and according to one author, G-2 became a kind of dumping ground for incompetents."¹

Another aspect touching on the personnel theme was the problem of compensation for military attachés. Regular army pay was not adequate to meet the needs for official representation functions, thus, only those with outside incomes could realistically serve in these positions. The result of course, was that a number of qualified individuals with no outside incomes, did not even consider

¹Charles D. Ameringer, U.S. Foreign Intelligence: The Secret Side of American History, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990), 113.

themselves for these positions.

A third theme was the emotional hysteria directed toward Mexico during this era. During the war, there was the fear of German spies and saboteurs crossing into the United States from Mexico. Immediately after the war, there was the fear of Bolshevists and radicals spreading their propaganda into the United States from Mexico. Throughout this period, the stability of the Mexican government was constantly called into question. There was concern that violence emanating from the revolution would endanger American business interests in Mexico, or might even spread into the United States.

A final theme is that of the cultural differences between Mexico and the United States. Granted, the level of awareness of cultural differences is quite distinct between then and now. However, the assumptions that the MID made concerning Mexico were certainly driven by cultural differences and these assumptions did impact the way in which intelligence from Mexico was analyzed. Thus, the official policy decisions and perspectives of the United States regarding Mexico were definitely impacted by the way in which military intelligence was generated, processed, and analyzed.

The quantitative analysis portion of this study demonstrates that the priorities and attitudes of the United States toward Mexico did not really change much

during the period of 1917-1927 as a result of the military intelligence surveillance of Mexico. The priorities of the Military Intelligence Division, as shown by the quantitative analysis, remained focused on the monitoring and tracking of military forces, rebel activities, actual and potential leaders, levels of violence, political stability, economic potential, activities along the Mexican-U.S. border, and the relationship between Mexico and foreign powers, especially Germany and Japan.

The priorities demonstrated by the Military Intelligence Division did not really change because of the American cultural orientation, as articulated by Stewart and Bennett, toward: action, individual achievement, quantification, facts, and materialism. This cultural orientation allowed military intelligence to remain focused on the monitoring of external military and political activities that could be tabulated and considered factual. These external activities were a priority because they could be used to explain the conditions existing in Mexico that might endanger American life or property, thus creating the justification for intervention. Since there was a great deal of "activity" taking place at this time, priorities did not change.

The Military Intelligence Division clearly followed a "doing" and "action" orientation in constructing a framework for an analysis of Mexico. This analysis

centered on the externals of life. Little attention was devoted to describing and understanding the internal structure of Mexico or the inner workings of Mexican life and culture. Intelligence reports did include information about education, religion, customs, and society, but this type of information tended to be obscured in ethnocentric language and disconnected from the importance attached to the bureaucratic world of the military and the political state. It is debatable as to whether the Military Intelligence Division truly understood the meaning of the Mexican Revolution or the Mexican yearning for national sovereignty or the Mexican resentment of American intervention (in its myriad guises).

The textual analysis portion of this study provides a demonstration of the problems inherent in cross-cultural exchanges. The quality of information contained in many of the selected intelligence reports point out the failure of the Military Intelligence Division to appreciate the cultural differences between Mexico and the United States. There are numerous examples of biased, erroneous, or even fictional accounts of what was actually taking place in Mexico. Part of the problem resided in the integrity of the sources themselves. Part of the problem resided in the interpretation of that data provided. And finally, part of the problem was the fact that the MID failed to ask the right questions.

The attitudes and assumptions of U.S. government officials toward Mexico did not really change during the years 1917-1927. A significant reason for this was that military intelligence reports, with a cultural bias built into them, did not enlighten nor educate American officials concerning the reality of Mexico. It appears that there was no notion nor understanding on the part of the MID that there could be other factors at play (history, culture, ritual, race, etc.) that might influence their analysis of Mexico. These intelligence reports failed to grasp the significance of what was taking place in Mexico. Without an accurate intelligence picture of Mexico, American officials had no frame of reference on which to base their attitudes and actions toward Mexico.

I would argue that American cultural orientations and ethnocentrism hampered the effectiveness and accuracy of military intelligence in relation to Mexico. It appears that a great deal of time and psychic energy was expended by the MID chasing after phantoms in Mexico. Unfortunately, no one really questioned whether or not the United States had the ability or the right to attempt to influence the events taking place in Mexico during the years 1917-1927.

The thesis question raised in this study was whether the Mexican reality as viewed through the eyes of the U.S. Military Intelligence Division was accurate and complete.

Based upon the results of the quantitative analysis and textual analysis of this study, I maintain that the Mexican reality as viewed through the eyes of the U.S. Military Intelligence Division was both inaccurate and incomplete. The MID perspective was colored by cultural bias, ignorance, and misunderstanding. Basically, the Military Intelligence Division failed to grasp the reality of Mexico because it failed to ask the right questions. Thus, the MID misunderstood the nature of Mexico and its peoples, especially in its relationship with the United States.

IMPLICATIONS

The three part model of analysis (historical overview, quantitative analysis, and textual analysis) employed in this study lends itself to the possibility of further research in the area of international history and cross-cultural studies. Obviously, this study was restricted in scope, but larger research projects can be undertaken using the same techniques. The use of multiple analysis techniques enhances the quality of the study and provides for a more comprehensive picture of the various factors involved that influenced historical events.

In his study of culture and international history, Akira Iriye states that:

Nations, like individuals, sometimes use force to protect themselves and often engage in selfish pursuits to enrich themselves but they also develop

visions, dreams, and prejudices about themselves and the world that influence their relationships.²

It is the myriad "manifestations of human consciousness" on a national level that form the basis for a cultural approach to international history.³ As a result, this study used a cultural approach to analyze the Military Intelligence Division's surveillance of and interaction with Mexico. According to Iriye, the cultural approach is both fascinating and frustrating because:

it forces the historian to recognize simultaneously qualitative differences among cultural traditions and vocabularies and determine whether some universal "structures of meaning" (to use Clifford Geertz's phrase) might result from direct or indirect contact among the representatives of different cultures.⁴

The relationship between Mexico and the United States certainly affords ample opportunities for the study of both direct and indirect contact between representatives of these two cultures.

Although this study takes a cultural approach to analyze the Military Intelligence Division's role in Mexico, it must be understood that other factors, such as power, economics, and military strategy also played a major part in this unique relationship. Edward Said makes clear that "ideas, cultures, and histories cannot seriously be

²Iriye, "Culture and International History," 215.

³Ibid., 214.

⁴Ibid., 216.

understood or studied without their force, or more precisely their configurations of power, also being studied."⁵ Said also points out that the relationship "between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony."⁶ I would argue that the relationship between Mexico and the United States is similar. In addition to the cultural differences, it was the unequal balance of power between Mexico and the United States that also influenced the attitudes and perceptions of the MID toward Mexico.

⁵Said, Orientalism, 5.

⁶Ibid.

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