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THE RED SCARE AND MEXICAN-UNITED
STATES RELATIONS: 1919-1930

By

Gary D. Williams

B.A., University of Montana, 1970

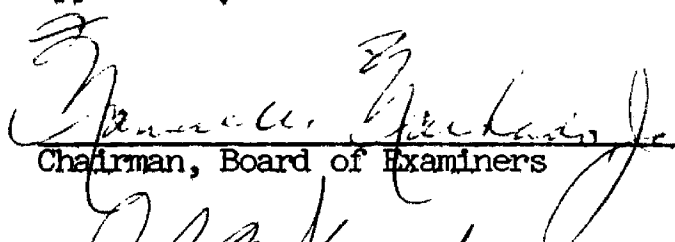
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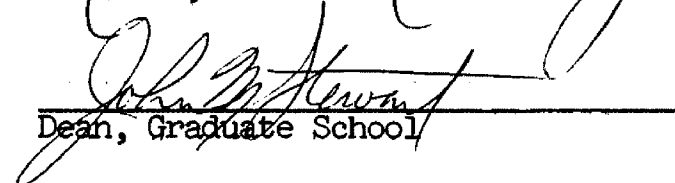
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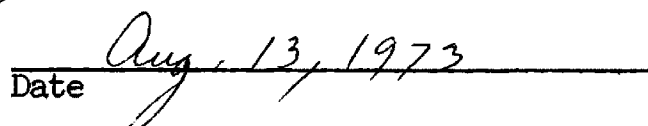
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PREFACE

Although Communism has captured the attention of many historians, it did not receive sufficient attention in Latin American studies until Fidel Castro brought the Communist ideology into power in Cuba. The Cold War opened a new front so close to the United States that Americans were forced to re-evaluate their position in Latin America. Actually, the Cold War polemic hit Latin America long before Castro declared himself a Communist. Those nations below the Río Grande faced the dilemma of trying to develop industrially without compromising their sovereignty to obtain the foreign capital necessary for development. If it appeared that a Latin American government gave too many concessions to obtain aid from the United States, the Communists appealed to the strong sense of nationalism in Latin America. At the same time, Latin American governments had to consider popular demands for a higher standard of living. To encourage the investment of foreign capital needed for development, some concessions became necessary. Latin American governments strove for a balance between economic necessity and sovereignty. Pressure from foreign capitalists and Communists made that position difficult to maintain. In order to obtain desired influence, both the United States and the Soviet Union had to determine how far they could go in pushing their respective interests without violating national pride in Latin America.

Mexico during the 1920's served as an ideal example of the potential

conflict between economic and nationalistic goals. In that period Mexico's new revolutionary government encountered severe opposition from United States capitalists and Communists of both the foreign and domestic brands. While trying to diminish the United States strong economic and political influence, the Mexican government defended Mexican sovereignty from the machinations of Communists working under directives from Moscow. The Mexicans were willing to take United States capital if it could be obtained without sacrificing sovereignty. They were not willing to accept a foreign ideology such as Communism when they had fought so hard to establish a national creed under the Mexican Constitution of 1917, the fruit of a bloody revolution that began in 1910.

Other authors have studied the conflict between Communism and Mexican nationalism to show cause for the Communist failure in Mexico during the 1920's. In the process, they usually touch upon the effect Communism had on Mexican-United States relations. What impact did Communism and anti-Communist sentiment have on the ties between the two countries? Communism and anti-Communist sentiment had such an important effect on United States-Mexican relations between 1919 and 1930 that they merit a separate analysis. Those years saw the beginning of the Third Communist International (Comintern), attempts by that body to infiltrate Latin America and specifically Mexico, and the renascent nationalism of a Mexican nation at the apogee of revolutionary fervor. As it corresponded to the 'Red Scare' era in the United States, this period offers much information on Communist activity in Mexico and the influence that particular ideology may have had on the Mexican govern-

ment and the United States State Department. This paper will attempt to trace the impact of the Red Scare on diplomatic and economic intercourse between Mexico and the United States in that period.

Fears held by the State Department and the reactive, overly sensitive nationalism of Mexico's revolutionary regimes in the 1920's hindered the restoration of amiable relations. As a consequence, mistrust and suspicion remained a constant in the relations between the two nations. The intrusion of Comintern agents probably hindered the resumption of harmonious diplomatic and commercial intercourse between Mexico and the United States.

After establishing the strength of Communism in Mexico, it is possible to discuss American charges against Mexican radicalism, charges that may have confused Communism and indigenous Mexican nationalist ideology. This study shall focus on those charges as they affected Mexican-United States affairs. Officials in the United States generally exaggerated Communist strength in Mexico during the 1920's. At the same time, Communist officials misinterpreted the Mexican Revolution much as the capitalists did. In the long run the United States benefited by changing its hostile attitude toward the Mexican Revolution and dropping its allegations of Communist control in Mexico. The Communists, by trying to push their own political ideas, destroyed diplomatic channels that may have left them with greater influence in Mexico. The United States government learned from a decade of near disaster that respect for Mexican sovereignty accomplished more than diplomacy by threat. United States charges against alleged Communist control in Mexico, however, had enormous potential for bringing the United States

and Mexico into an armed conflict in the decade of the first 'Red Scare' in the United States. Who used those allegations? Toward what ends did they use them? How valid were the charges? What were the implications? The paper will attempt to answer those questions.

The scope of this study was severely limited by the availability of sources. The National Archives' microfilm series on State Department reports on internal affairs of Mexico and diplomatic dispatches on United States-Mexican relations filled in much of the background. The New York Times gave much detail not to be found elsewhere. The newspaper reported Mexican-United States relations quite comprehensively and gave special attention to the influence of Communism in Mexico. One could practically trace the importance of the 'Red Scare' in Mexican-United States relations following the pages of The New York Times and noting the amount of coverage and location. Another particularly valuable source was International Press Correspondence (Inprecorr), the official publication of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Inprecorr allows one to gain insight into the Comintern's policy while aiding with substantial information on the Mexican Communist Party. Inprecorr's bias is usually so obvious that the careful researcher can sort the fact from the fiction without much problem. It could usually be checked against other sources such as The New York Times. Mexican sources were especially hard to obtain. For official responses to charges of Bolshevism that came from the United States, Stephen Clissold's Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1918-1968: A Documentary Survey, was an invaluable aid. Here again The New York Times carried most official Mexican reactions. Though the sources were

limited, they provided enough variation to complete this short study while offering checks against each other. A more thorough study of the Mexican government's concern over Communism must wait until new materials are made available.

The secondary literature generally agrees that Mexican nationalism defeated Communism in Mexico. Arthur Whitaker and David Jordan's Nationalism in Contemporary Latin America gave a general view of Communist failure in Latin America while Robert Freeman Smith's The United States and Revolutionary Nationalism in Mexico, 1916-1930 dealt in part with Communism's influence on Mexican relations with the United States. Robert Alexander's Communism in Latin America was perhaps the best source for a description of the Communist failure in Mexico. Additional information but no new interpretation was offered by Rollie Poppino in International Communism in Latin America. Victor Alba covered much the same ground as Alexander and Poppino in his Politics and the Labor Movement in Latin America. He also agreed that Mexicans rejected Communism out of a desire to keep their movement a national one without foreign directions. Alba's concern, however, was with all types of radicalism as it related to the labor movement and like the others neglected the role Communism had in Mexico's relations with the United States. Karl M. Schmitt's Communism in Mexico outlined the structure of the Communist Party in Mexico for the 1920's while underlining the Party's failure in that period. My study of Communism in United States-Mexican affairs could not have been conducted without much of the solid groundwork laid through the research of those authors mentioned above.

I gratefully acknowledge the kindness, patience, and encouragement from the people around me in the course of the reasearch and writing for this project. The errors and omissions are, of course, my own. The staff of the University of Montana library and especially the inter-library personnel were especially courteous in catering to my many needs, while my wife-typist provided much of the needed energy to get the paper done. I give special thanks to my friend and mentor Dr. Manuel Machado for valued cirticism and guidance that made the study so challenging and enjoyable. It is hoped that the paper will be as rewarding for the reader as it has been for the author.

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CHAPTER I

RADICALISM AND THE 1917 MEXICAN CONSTITUTION

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 initiated a tumultuous upheaval that supporters justified with nationalistic terms. Xenophobia constituted a basic part of that nationalism and was directed most specifically at the United States which had strengthened economic ties in the period of Mexican President Porfirio Díaz (1877-1911). Opposition to foreign investment and alleged exploitation fostered the background in which Mexicans adopted the Constitution of 1917. That document included several articles which appeared radical to the United States investors and Americans in general during the 1920's. United States reactions to the Constitution of 1917 analogized the Mexican Revolution with the spread of radicalism at home and abroad.

The violent Soviet takeover in Russia in 1917 further complicated the situation. Creating a "Red Scare" in the United States, the Russian Revolution helped to obscure the indigeneous development of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 and the true nature of Mexico's desire for social reform. Mexico's was a national revolution and not an element of an international one. The Mexicans would not forget their Revolution began in 1910, and even their Constitution preceded the Russian revolt. Neither would they forget that Russians were just as much foreigners as the Americans.

To clarify why many could have seen the Mexican Revolution and the 1917 Constitution as Communistic and, therefore, part of an international plot, it is necessary to look at those allegedly radical segments of the Constitution and their development. Similarity did exist, but the Mexican Constitution could be justified by national circumstances involving economics, politics, and social conditions. Although not imported from Russia, the Mexican revolutionary ideology did find some European thought applicable to providing solutions for Mexican problems. Mexican Constitution writers applied those ideas in their own ways and without foreign guidance.

Whatever the origins of the 1917 Constitution, some American investors with Mexican interests formed their own views in the context of events at the time. William F. Buckley, an American with extensive property interests in Mexico, presented his view of the radical nature of the 1917 Constitution when he appeared before the Senate Committee investigating Mexican affairs in 1919. He stated the following:

The Carranza [Mexican President 1917-1920] leaders took every precaution in order that there might be no obstacle to putting through the program outlined in the constitution.... Thus has Carranza accomplished three of the great bolshevist objects of the revolution--the abolition of private property, the crippling of the church, and the expulsion of the foreigner.¹

Buckley's comment referred specifically to articles 3, 27, and 123. The most significant of those Constitutional provisions, as far as influencing

¹United States Senate, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, Report and Hearing Before a Sub-Committee on Foreign Relations, Senator Albert Bacon Fall, Presiding, Pursuant to Senate Resolution 106, Senate Document No. 285 (2 vols., Washington, D. C., 1919-1920), p. 829. Hereafter referred to as Fall Committee.

United States relations and fears of Communism, was Article 27. The following summary of that article was given in Survey of International Affairs in 1925.

The ownership of lands and waters in Mexico was vested in the nation which could and did transmit its title to private persons but under what limitations it pleased. Direct ownership of all subsoil was vested in the nation. Only Mexican citizens might own land or obtain concessions to exploit the subsoil; or if foreigners received the same right they must agree to be considered Mexicans in respect of such property and not to invoke the protection of their government in respect of the same. Religious institutions had no power to acquire real property. All places of public worship were the property of the nation. The surface of the land was to be disposed of for the public good, expropriated owners receiving compensation. All measures passed since 1856 alienating communal lands were to be null and void.²

This revolutionary article did not quite live up to Mr. Buckley's claim that the intent was to abolish all private property. It is true, however, that the Mexican Government had a weapon in the clause "Private property shall not be expropriated except for cause of the public utility and by means of indemnification."³ United States property owners in Mexico justifiably felt frightened by the implications of that statement.

United States oil and land investors in Mexico also protested a section of Article 27 which called for revision and possible nullification of "contracts and concessions made by former governments from and after the year 1876 which shall have resulted in the monopoly of lands, waters, and natural resources of the nation by a single individual or

²In Robert Freeman Smith, The United States and Revolutionary Nationalism in Mexico, 1916-1923 (Chicago, Illinois: Chicago University Press, 1972), pp. 73-74. Cited hereafter as Smith, Revolutionary Nationalism. See Appendix for Article 27.

³Fall Committee, p. 3126.

corporation"⁴ That clause was aimed at the period during which Porfirio Díaz ruled Mexico. It was also a period during which Americans invested heavily in Mexico by purchasing land and oil rights. Americans, including William F. Buckley, stood to lose a fortune in Mexico under Article 27. By 1912 American investment in Mexico exceeded \$1,500,000,000.⁵

Secretary of State Robert Lansing (1915-1920) championed the protection of United States economic interests in Mexico. It appeared in 1917 that Carranza supported the Querétaro Convention's decision on confiscation under Article 27. Secretary Lansing stated that the "...American Government cannot acquiesce in any direct confiscation of foreign-owned properties in Mexico or indirect confiscation."⁶ Although President Woodrow Wilson did not favor armed protection for American investors abroad, at least one other member of his cabinet agreed with Lansing's hard line in dealing with Mexico. That was Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane who wrote Lansing the following on December 1, 1919:

I wish somehow that you could be given a free hand in this matter. I know it would be a stiff hand, and that is what those people need. They are naughty children who are exercising all the privileges and rights of grown-ups. They have the right of self-determination, and that is self-will—nothing new. They are the creatures of all the mixed philosophies of the past century—wilful children told by Jefferson that all men were born equal, by Marx that private property is robbery, and by Wilson that each nation is a law unto itself.... They need... to be told where to get off.⁷

⁴Fall Committee, p. 3129.

⁵James Morton Callahan, American Foreign Policy in Mexican Relations (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1932), p. 519.

⁶Fall Committee, p. 3122.

⁷Papers of the Department of State relating to Political Relations with Mexico, Record Group 59, 711.12/224 1/2. Secretary Lane to Lansing, December 1, 1919. Hereafter cited as R. G. 59, 711.12/document number, author recipient date.

Article 27 did have a tenuous tie with the philosophies mentioned by Secretary Lane, but it also represented a Mexican attempt to salve popular resentment in Mexico over too much land in too few hands. While most of the 1917 Constitution was merely a revised form of the 1857 Mexican Constitution, Article 27 was one of those new, revolutionary articles. It was partially influenced by the ideas of the Mexican Liberal Party (PLM). While in exile for opposition to Porfirio Díaz, the organizing Committee of the PLM issued a program on July 1, 1906. It denounced the hacienda system and declared in favor of land reform for the peasantry. All of these suggestions were motivated by nationalism, but they also reflected the influence of the European socialist ideology which inspired many PLM leaders.⁸

Carranza later incorporated PLM ideas into his revolutionary decrees as a means for obtaining peasant and labor support. Land redistribution was a basic part of his decree of January 6, 1915, which remained law under the 1917 Constitution. Carranza, however, was not a socialist. The radical elements of the 1917 Constitution were offered as a compromise with little intent to implement them except as popular pressure demanded. There had been only one Marxist at the Convention which drew up the Constitution, and he had little influence with Carranza or the Querétaro Convention.⁹

⁸Frank E. Spencer, "Revolution and Article 27: A Survey of Nationalistic Conflict" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Montana, 1971), pp. 4-5.

⁹Rollie E. Poppino, International Communism in Latin America: A History of the Movement 1917-1963 (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 61. The Marxist was Luis G. Monzon, a Sonoran school teacher. See James Cockcroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 1900-1913 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), passim, for nationalistic aspects of the PLM's plans.

Article 27's Section II forbade church ownership of real estate and made places of worship national property. Meant as a slap at the Catholic Church for its large holdings and secular involvement, the attack led many to assume it was part of an atheistic plot. When President Plutarco Elías Calles' troubles with the Church erupted into open warfare in the 1920's, many claimed Communist involvement and sought sympathy from United States Christians, especially the Catholics.

The attack on Church property in Article 27 followed Article 3's removal of public instruction from the Church's hands. In combination, the two articles placed severe restrictions on Church operations. The Mexican Government finally enforced those provisions, but not before a bloody struggle in the 1920's and a compromise on the Church's functions.

Labor agitation was another element of the 1920's. The radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) added to the fear of Bolshevism in the United States. Even less radical, reformist unions raised tensions as the masses of workers sought to unionize and to better conditions for the laborer. Mexico faced a similar surge of labor discontent in the same period. The Revolution embodied that movement, and Article 123 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 reflected the desire for labor reform. Advanced in comparison to United States labor reforms, Article 123 also looked like a concession to radicalism.

Howard F. Cline summed up Article 123 as follows:

... [It] enjoined on the state the fostering of a strong Mexican labor movement and gave the state powers to regulate it. It recognized labor unions as 'moral persons' with a long list of duties and responsibilities. It voiced the need for social security legislation and provided a set of Utopian norms for the conditions and remuneration of Mexican labor. The basic principle of Article 123 was that labor was a status,

a way of life, for which the minimum essentials were now constitutionally guaranteed, rather than an economic commodity subject to the market vagaries of supply and demand.¹⁰

When the Communists arrived in Mexico, the Mexican proletariat already had a symbol for their cause and a legal guarantee of their rights. Article 123 meant that the Mexican worker possessed a legal, national solution. He did not have to look for a foreign doctrine. To achieve satisfactory working conditions, the laborer only needed implementation of the 1917 Constitution. With a strong man government, especially that of 'First Chief' Carranza up to 1920, implementation proved an ideal to be attained rather than a reality already achieved.

A significant amount of labor agitation occurred prior to the Querétaro Convention which ultimately adopted the 1917 Constitution. Some agitation continued throughout the 1920's and gave the Communists a following in Mexico, an arrangement the Communist International actively sought. A diversity, however, appeared in the labor movement from the very beginning in Mexico. It was a diversity that kept labor elements from dominating the Revolution. It also represented schisms so deep that the Communists were unable to bring about their desired massive proletarian uprising.

One of the first strong labor organizations in Mexico was the Casa del Obrero Mundial (House of the World Workers). A number of smaller labor unions came together during the early stages of the Revolution when Francisco Madero was struggling to keep the reigns on the revolt he had initiated against Porfirio Díaz. In 1914 they joined General Alvaro

¹⁰Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (New York: Atheneum, 1971), p. 169. See also Fall Committee, pp. 3146-3148. See Appendix B.

Obregón and Carranza in battling Emiliano Zapata's agrarian legions in Morelos.¹¹ By providing 'red battalions' to Obregón the Casa del Obrero Mundial alienated itself from the agrarian movement. Luis Morones, later to become head of the Confederación Regional Obrero Mexicano (CROM or Mexican Regional Federation of Labor), influenced the World Workers' decision in favor of joining Obregón and Carranza. Anarchist in doctrine, the World Workers never had a strong influence on the political system. They represented, however, the first major labor organization in Mexico.¹²

The Casa del Obrero Mundial gave way to the Mexican Regional Federation of Labor in 1917. Directed by Luis Morones, CROM subjugated anarchist tendencies and decided upon a nationalist course. The class struggle still entered the organization's rhetoric, but the group worked with the government to achieve labor reform.¹³

Unrevolutionary in nature, Morones' organization joined in one revolt before siding with the government completely. CROM supported Obregón against Carranza in the 1920 election and obtained some favor when it aided Obregón's successful revolt shortly after. A year before, CROM had joined with the American Federation of Labor in forming the Pan American Federation of Labor. The Federation never reached the desired success in Latin America. Part of that failure may have related to the way CROM allied itself with the Mexican Government and looked after its

¹¹Victor Alba, The Mexicans: The Making of a Nation (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), p. 115.

¹²Ibid., p. 128.

¹³Ibid., p. 133.

own interests at the expense of non-CROM laborers.¹⁴ Numerous smaller organizations took in workers who were dissatisfied with CROM. Among those smaller groups were the Grupo Marxista Rojo (Red Marxist Group), a socialist group; the Partido Socialista del Sureste (Southeastern Socialist Party), led by Salvador Alvarado of Yucatan; and the Ligas de Resistencia (Resistance Leagues), headed by Felipe Carrillo Puerto of Yucatan. Each of these groups, at some time or another, was seen by various elements in the United States as part of the great international Communist plot. Emerging at the same time as the Mexican Communist Party, they may have had some contact, but the Mexicans preferred their own solutions to Mexican labor problems.¹⁵

Concern with labor problems preceded the Mexican Revolution. Solutions to those problems became a part of the larger scheme of national sovereignty when the socialists got Article 123 incorporated into the 1917 Constitution. Though President Carranza may have objected, he realized the necessity for compromise with the workers. With their demands already incorporated in the Constitution, the workers looked toward the day when they would be implemented. There was no need to accept a foreign ideology when Mexican solutions were available in the highest law of the land.

Carranza's unwillingness to act on Article 123 and 27 led to dissatisfaction among the workers. Mexico proved fertile ground for the American radicals in the IWW. That organization sent representatives

¹⁴Alba, The Mexicans, pp. 150-151.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 151-152.

into Mexico to stir up strikes and armed resistance to capitalistic exploitation. Here again as will be shown, some Americans saw the influence of 'bolshevism.'

Bolshevism meant many things in the early 1920's. Anything or anyone viewed as radical encountered hostility due to the fear of international action by Communists. Some persons refused to see the important differences among radical elements. One such man was T. William Gates, an avid anti-Communist who appeared before a Senate investigating committee on May 8, 1920. Mr. Gates stated that Carranza allied formally in offensive and defensive manner with "that organization of international opposition to democratic and free institutions ... known now in various countries as Bolshevists, Syndicalists, Spartacides, IWW and ... Casa del Obrero Mundial."¹⁶

The differences among radical organizations was important. It created headaches for the Communist organizers. At various times in the 1920's the Communists under the direction of the Communist International tried to discredit anarchists, trade-unionists, and reformist elements. Those groups were a serious threat to Communist dominance in the labor movement. Together with the fact that the Mexican Revolution preceded the Russian Revolution, the active involvement of those groups in Mexico kept Communist membership to a minimum.

As will be shown, the Communist role in Mexico during the 1920's was small, but American oil interests and American land holders tried to suggest otherwise. During the height of the Red Scare of the early

¹⁶Fall Committee, p. 2841.

1920's the accusation of Communism was a useful propaganda ploy for special interests. The Mexican Constitution of 1917 was radical enough that some persons compared it to the Soviet movement in Russia. Those who alleged that Communists controlled Mexican politics may have done so to protect their investments in Mexico or out of the sincere conviction that the United States and a particular way of life were threatened by an international plot. Whatever their motives may have been, those behind the allegations hindered the resumption of friendly relations between Mexico and the United States and heightened tensions that nearly brought about war between the two countries in the 1920's.

CHAPTER II

THE COMINTERN AND MEXICAN COMMUNISM: WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM AMERICAN FRIENDS

From the outset, the Communists' adherence to the Marxist-Leninist directives from Moscow encountered the problems that were to plague their attempts to control and direct labor and peasant discontent in Mexico. The same type of factionalism that prevented concerted action by labor before and during the first stages of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 continued into the Twenties. Anarchists, socialists, anarchosyndicalists, or even mild reformists claimed allegiance among the laborers and caused divisiveness among workers' groups. Though Comintern agents infiltrated many of these groups and even took control in some instances, they failed to bring the different factions together under the Comintern's banner.

Another problem the Communists faced was the Mexican Revolution itself. It was an indigenous, social revolution incorporating labor and agrarian reforms as radical as Mexicans cared to possess. The first Mexican Presidents under the 1917 Constitution shied away from radical elements of that document as much as possible but enforced its provisions as popular pressure demanded. Mexicans could identify their own revolution as the guide to socio-economic reform.

Nationalism was one of the strongest motivating forces in the Mexican Revolution. After rejecting United States paternalism and economic

exploitation, the Mexicans frowned upon attempts by other foreigners to fill the vacuum. The growing anti-foreignism resulting from the violent break with Spanish colonial rule, the war with the United States, the French intervention, and the foreign economic infiltration of Mexico was more than Russian-directed Communists could overcome in the Twenties or beyond.

The Communist attempt to gain control was significant in Mexico's dealings with the United States. The mere presence of Communist elements in Mexico during the period that corresponded with the 'Red Scare' in the United States created a sensation. It affected Mexican-United States relations which were strained already by the conflict over the radical sections of the 1917 Constitution and hardships suffered by Americans in economic or personal ways during the violence of the Mexican Revolution.

The two key figures in the formation of the first Communist party in Mexico were both foreigners; Linn Gale, an American, and Manabendra Nath Roy from India. The conflict and subsequent split between these two symbolized the factionalism faced by Communist organizational attempts.

Linn A. E. Gale had served as an index clerk in the New York State Senate in 1913. From that position he moved into reporting for the Albany Times Union, published by former New York Governor Martin H. Glynn. By 1916 he was working for the State's Democratic Party newspaper. Levelling attacks at State military training and backing the promotion of able Democrats over those with corporate affiliations, Gale came into conflict with his superiors. His move toward radicalism increased with the start of World War I, and he fled to Mexico in order to

avoid military service.¹⁷

Arriving in Mexico City, Gale launched verbal attacks on the United States government and published a paper in October of 1918.¹⁸ Mexico City authorities incarcerated Gale for his radical statements, but he was spared by President Venustiano Carranza. Carranza evidently took a liking to Gale and his antagonistic view of the American political system. The First Chief, as Carranza was called, suspended deportation proceedings against Gale and released him from jail. There was even some evidence that Carranza may have provided funding for Gale to continue his anti-American publication.¹⁹

In June, 1919, Linn Gale made the front page of The New York Times. At the height of the "Red Scare" in the United States, New York officials raided the office of the Russian Soviet Bureau in New York City. Operated by a man named Martens who called himself the representative of Soviet Russia, the 'Bureau' files disclosed correspondence between that agency and Linn Gale in Mexico City. The New York Times said Martens refused to grant Gale's request for \$19,000 to support Bolshevik propaganda in the form of Gale's Magazine—Journal of the New Civilization. Martens refused because he believed the draft-evader was either a government agent or, at best, an 'adventurer.'²⁰ The incident, although bringing Gale to public attention, indicated a severe lack of coordination by alleged Communists in this hemisphere.

Gale's Magazine became the official organ of the Mexican Socialist

¹⁷The New York Times, Dec. 26, 1919, p. 6.

¹⁸Ibid., Dec. 26, 1919, p. 6.

¹⁹Ibid., Sept. 3, 1920, p. 9.

²⁰Ibid., June 20, 1919, p. 1.

Party. Gale joined that small organization and entered its leadership by 1919. It was within this group that Manabendra Nath Roy challenged Gale and isolated the American from the mainstream of the radical movement.²¹

Manabendra Nath Roy opposed British colonial rule in India and participated in uprisings there. He was forced to flee to Mexico with his American wife.²² The 'Hindu', as Rodrigo García Treviño referred to Manabendra Nath Roy, made use of a newspaper called El Socialista to further his radical ambitions. Through that media he called together a National Socialist Congress on September 25, 1919. At that meeting of various Mexican socialist groups, he explained his theory of the proletarian masses, the need to destroy capitalism and to establish a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' as the first stage to the Communist society.²³ Nath Roy, who financed the Congress, argued with Gale over seating labor leader Luis Morones. Nath Roy won the struggle, and Morones entered the organization. Gale thereby withdrew with his following to form the Communist Party of Mexico.²⁴

The Communist Party of Mexico possessed a small following. The executive committee consisted of José Refugio Rodrigues, Secretary General and Treasurer; Timoteo García, organizer for agriculture and

²¹Robert J. Alexander, Communism in Latin America (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1957), p. 319.

²²R. G. 59, 812.00b/1, Summerlin to Secretary of State, June 15, 1920.

²³Rodrigo García Treviño, La ingerencia rusa en Mexico y Sudamerica (Mexico: Editorial, 1959), pp. 29-30.

²⁴Karl M. Schmitt, Communism in Mexico: A Study in Political Frustration (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1965), pp. 5-6.

fishery workers; C. F. Tabler (a naturalized American, born German) organizer for the mining industry; Vicente Ortega, railway workers; Francisco Cervantes López, industrial workers; Maclovio Pacheca, building workers; and Linn A. E. Gale, publicity.²⁵

When United States authorities asked Mexico to extradite American draft evaders, the Mexicans were at first slow to respond. General Alvaro Obregón in the spring of 1920 received such requests but refused to commit himself. The United States officials placed Linn Gale at the top of the list of those they sought to have returned from Mexico. Gale was especially wanted because of his activities with 'Bolshevik propaganda'. Deportation, according to the government agents, would improve relations between Mexico and the United States and create a friendlier attitude, especially among members of the American Legion who had asked that more decisive action be taken against Mexico.²⁶

In September, 1920, the United States prevailed. Earlier in that year Obregón revolted and overthrew Carranza, eliminating Gale's protector. Adolfo de la Huerta became Provisional President. Gale's Communist Party of Mexico circulated pamphlets among Mexican soldiers slated for release. The pamphlets called upon the army to overthrow the Mexican Government. Provisional President De la Huerta was informed that the pamphlets were designed by Gale, Tabler, and Cervantes López. De la Huerta immediately began deportation proceedings.²⁷

²⁵The New York Times, Sept. 3, 1920, p. 9.

²⁶Ibid., June 7, 1920, p. 9.

²⁷Ibid., Sept. 3, 1920, p. 9.

Linn Gale, his wife, and C. F. Tabler were charged with illegal entry and with spreading Communist propoganda in the form of Gale's Magazine.²⁸ They were deported and turned over to United States agents. From a United States jail in 1921 Gale allegedly recanted his radical views and severed all relations with organizations representing radicalism.²⁹

In the meantime, Manabendra Nath Roy capitalized upon his influence among the socialists. Michael Borodin, an agent for the Communist International, befriended Manabendra and converted him to the Soviet Communist's cause.³⁰ Joining the Comintern in 1919, Nath Roy organized the Mexican office of the Panamerican Agency of the Communist International. By the end of 1919 the Mexican segment had taken the name Partido Comunista Mexicano (PCM). With Comintern money, the PCM established an executive committee consisting of José C. Valadés, M. Paley, and Felipe Lejia Paz. The PCM thereby supplanted the old "Marxist Red Group" that had been led by Francisco Cervantes, Mauro Tabón, and Nicolás Cano.³¹

Noting the small size of the Partido Comunista Mexicano, Rodrigo García Treviño commented that according to Moscow standards at the time, it took only two members to achieve that classification.³² In 1920

²⁸The New York Times, Sept. 1, 1920, p. 17.

²⁹Alexander, Communism, p. 320 (as reported from New York Call, Sept. 17, 1921.)

³⁰G. P. Bhattacharjee, Evolution of Political Philosophy of M. N. Roy (Calcutta, India: Minerva Associated, 1971), p. 26.

³¹Salvador de Madariaga, Latin America Between the Eagle and the Bear (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), p. 136. See also García, Ingerencia, p. 30.

³²García, Ingerencia, p. 30.

Manabendra N. Roy and the American Charles Phillips represented Mexico at the Communist International Congress in Moscow. While attending The Comintern Congress Manabendra challenged Lenin's thesis on strategy and tactics for colonial countries. The Comintern finally adopted a revision of Roy's plan and gave him a position on its Central Asian Bureau.³³ Due to the reassignment Roy did not return to Mexico, but Phillips, another draft evader, impressed Lenin and Comintern officials with his reports on success in Mexico. Phillips returned to Mexico as head of the PCM.³⁴

Things were not going well for the Comintern's Mexican agency in 1921. At a Convention of Radical Reds in Mexico on February 15, the PCM was rejected for its ties with Russia and spying activities. The Convention published a manifesto by Manuel Peño Briseño, Porfirio Arenas, and José H. Rodríguez. The manifesto condemned activities of Manabendra Nath Roy along with Frank Seaman, José Allen, M. Paley, Martin Brewster, Irwin Granich and F. Groseberg.³⁵ The last three mentioned were Americans being watched by the United States State Department for their alleged 'Bolshevik' affiliations.³⁶

Members of The 1921 Convention formed the Confederación General de Trabajadores (CGT or General Workers' Confederation). While working

³³Mohan Ram, Indian Communism: Split within a Split (New Delhi, India: Vikas Publications, 1969), pp. 3-4.

³⁴Alexander, Communism, p. 321.

³⁵García, Ingerencia, p. 33.

³⁶R. G. 59, 812.00B/1, Summerlin to Secretary of State, June 15, 1920.

toward Communist principles, the CGT rejected Russian direction and espionage.³⁷ The CGT broke all ties with the Comintern.

Some success was reflected when Francisco Múgica, Governor of Michoacán, and Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Governor of Yucatán joined the PCM. As Rollie Poppino points out, however, the two joined only for the "political potential of the organization" and not for doctrinal reasons. According to Poppino, "Felipe Carrillo's abysmal ignorance of Marxism and its origins was revealed in his magnanimous offer to employ Marx and Engles on his staff if they should care to come to Yucatán." Though Carrillo headed the Partido Socialista de Yucatán he would not change the name of this organization to fall under the Communist heading.³⁸

Phillips, as director of PCM sent word to Russia that his organization had fifteen hundred members. With that information the Comintern decided the Mexicans could use some professional guidance. The Comintern director Zinoviev dispatched Sen Katayama and Luis Fraina to direct affairs. Their policy was to get the Party active in national elections and eliminate anarchist tendencies within the group. Katayama was a Japanese member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. Fraina was active in the American Communist Party.³⁹

The Mexican Communists received Comintern funds to participate in the 1923 Mexican elections. They gave 'proof' of their participation

³⁷García, Ingerencia, p. 45.

³⁸Rollie E. Poppino, International Communism in Latin America (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 63.

³⁹Poppino, p. 62.

by providing fake campaign evidence to Fraina. Their deception apparently worked, and they received money to conduct Party affairs in other directions. When the fraud was discovered, Fraina was removed from the United States Communist Party. Katayma left Mexico after only a few months.⁴⁰

In 1922 Mexican artists Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros joined the Communist Party. They produced El Machete as the official organ for the PCM and edged out the old Executive Committee in 1923.⁴¹ Although recent converts, the artists were tolerated by the Comintern because of the prestigious look they gave to the PCM and the opportunity they provided for making contact with Mexico's higher social strata.⁴²

The artists on the Executive Committee were saved from a potential disaster when American Communist Party member Bertram Wolfe went to Mexico in 1923. Working as a school teacher while actively participating in Mexican Communist affairs, Wolfe argued against backing Adolfo de la Huerta in the Contest with Plutarco Elías Calles for the Presidency. Wolfe feared De la Huerta's conservative backing would alienate him from the supporters of the ongoing Mexican Revolution. As it turned out, Wolfe proved correct. Calles won the struggle, and De la Huerta went into exile. When De la Huerta revolted, the Communists actively sided with President Obregón and Calles.⁴³

⁴⁰Alexander, Communism, pp. 321-322.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 322.

⁴²Poppino, p. 64.

⁴³Alexander, Communism, pp. 322-323.

In this instance the PCM displayed its adaptability and political pragmatism. As Minister of Finance under Obregón, De la Huerta had been attracted by the Communists' agrarian reform policy. He provided a subsidy to the Party which would have helped command some allegiance for him had Wolfe not interfered. The experience taught Wolfe to reject government subsidies.⁴⁴

Bertram Wolfe's wisdom in the De la Huerta affair brought him a position on PCM's Executive Committee with its reorganization in April 1924. Only Rafael Carrillo remained of the old group and was named Executive Secretary. Wolfe was selected to represent the Party's one thousand members at the Fifth Congress of the International later in 1924.⁴⁵

Shortly after De la Huerta lost in his bid to overturn the Obregón-Calles' control of Mexico in late 1923 and early 1924, the Executive Committee of the Comintern directed its Mexican representatives to oppose the Calles government. Recognizing that the Mexican workers and peasants saw President Calles as a symbol of their own struggle against the bourgeoisie and the institutional Church, the Comintern gave orders to destroy that 'illusion.' Moscow believed that Calles stood for bourgeois dictatorship and would eventually "be obliged to yield to imperialism."⁴⁶

The PCM was obedient. At the April meeting of the Mexican Commu-

⁴⁴Poppino, p. 63

⁴⁵Alexander, Communism, p. 323.

⁴⁶International Press Correspondence, Nov. 8, 1928, p. 1465.

nist Party in 1924, members criticized Calles as an associate of American imperialism, fascism, and intervention. They went one step further by attacking the leaders of the Confederación Regional Obreros Mexicana (CROM or the Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers). It was bad enough to declare opposition to the Revolutionary Government, but the Communists were to suffer more severely from active retaliation by Luis Napoleón Morones, head of CROM and Minister of Industry and Labor in President Calles' Cabinet.⁴⁷

This move against CROM and CGT leadership was part of the Comintern's call for "bolshhevization" of Latin American Communist parties. As adopted by the Comintern's Fifth Congress, this program attempted to steal members from anarchist and union groups. The Communists felt that added support was required in battling the Socialists and Fascists. Victor Alba claims that such a policy failed in Latin America because the Comintern kept its interest directed towards Europe during this period.⁴⁸

A new group was elected to lead the PCM. Rafael Carrillo served as Executive Secretary. Bertram Wolfe, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Carlos Rendón, Xavier Guerres, and Manuel Ramírez made up the rest of the Executive Committee. This new group actively supported the peasant movement and the recently inaugurated Anti-Imperialist League which later came to play an important role in United States-Mexican relations during a dispute over Nicaragua.

Manuel Ramirez and Ursulo Galvan represented the Mexican Communists

⁴⁷Alexander, Communism, p. 324.

⁴⁸Victor Alba, Politics and the Labor Movement in Latin America (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1968), pp. 122-123.

in the Peasant International, another organization directed from Moscow. Galván headed the National Peasant League until the later part of 1929 when the Peasant International dismissed him for allegedly conspiring with the Mexican Government.⁴⁹

While denouncing Galván, the Communists attempted to keep control of the Mexican peasantry. Following directives from Moscow, the PCM issued directions to peasants revolting in Durango in March 1929. By printing those instructions in El Machete, an organ well-watched by the government, the Communists succeeded only in getting a number of their Durango comrades captured and either imprisoned or executed.⁵⁰

At the end of President Calles' term in 1928, the Communists ran Pedro V. Rodríguez against ex-President Alvaro Obregón. When Obregón as President-elect was assassinated, Emilio Portes Gil took office as Provisional President and in March 1929 faced an armed insurrection by Generals Escobar and Aguirre. The Mexican Communists backed the government much to the dismay of the Comintern, which called the revolt a struggle between bourgeois elements backed by America and Britain who should have been allowed to fight it out.⁵¹

The Comintern's disappointment led to a purge of the PCM which eliminated Diego Rivera. He was ousted for allegedly adhering to Trotsky's ideology. He confirmed the accusation by joining the international movement backing Trotsky. Rivera, famed artist and former member of PCM's Executive Committee, later tried to rejoin the Mexican Communist

⁴⁹Alexander, Communism, p. 324.

⁵⁰Alba, Politics, p. 133.

⁵¹Alexander, Communism, p. 327.

Party. He finally managed to become accepted again in 1957, a year before he died.⁵²

Mexico's Communists' problems did not stop there. In late 1929 the more conservative General Pascual Ortiz Rubio replaced Portes Gil as President to serve to the end of Obregón's elected term. Perhaps aware of a Communist decision in July to arm for a confrontation with the government, Portes Gil had already outlawed the Mexican Communist Party.⁵³ President Ortiz Rubio began an active campaign of suppression when he succeeded Portes Gil.

The Mexican Government arrested the leaders of the PCM and officials of the Anti-Imperialist League, Communist trade unions, and the Young Communist League. In all, over three hundred persons were arrested for Communist activities. El Machete was legally abolished along with other Communist news organs as President Ortiz Rubio sought to destroy the pernicious influence of the Soviet-directed radical movement in Mexico.⁵⁴

Three hundred arrests must have put a serious dent in the number of free Communist Party members in Mexico. There is an indication that PCM members in 1928 stood around only one thousand.⁵⁵ By 1929 the Party claimed two thousand active members in Mexico City alone. Victor Alba disputes that figure, since only four hundred Communists appeared among a May Day parade of seventy thousand people. Alba indicated the two

⁵²Alba, Politics, pp. 134-135.

⁵³Jules Dubois, Operation America: The Communist Conspiracy in Latin America (New York: Walker and Co., 1963), p. 330.

⁵⁴Alexander, Communism, p. 329. From Inprecorr, Jan. 23, 1930.

⁵⁵De Madariga, Latin America, p. 137.

thousand figure was probably an exaggeration.⁵⁶

The Communists remained on the outside of Mexico's official circle until Lázaro Cárdenas won the Presidency in 1934. By that time the Comintern had decided it was possible to work within other organizations without the pressure to control them. He legalized the party again in 1935.⁵⁷

During the 1920's then, the Communists were not successful in their ambitious bid to organize all labor and peasant movements under their banner. Though they formed numerous peasant and labor groups, the membership was low. Their most notable success was in infiltrating groups already established, but only in rare instances did they come to dominate those groups.

There are several possible explanations for the Comintern's failure in Mexico. First, as Victor Alba suggests, there was no sincere active interest in Latin America as late as 1929. In that year the Tenth Plenary Meeting of the Comintern's Executive Committee heard one delegate explain that it was time to give real support to the small, struggling Latin American parties instead of merely issuing resolutions.⁵⁸ Only one year before, Bukharin had stated to the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, "South America is for the first time widely entering the orbit of influence of the Communist International."⁵⁹ That was an

⁵⁶Alba, Politics, p. 129.

⁵⁷Alexander, Communism, p. 330.

⁵⁸Alba, Politics, p. 125.

⁵⁹Stephen Clissold, ed., Soviet Relations with Latin America: 1918-1968 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 88. From Inprecorr, July 25, 1929.

admission of failure at least prior to 1928.

Another suggestion as to why the Communists may have had so little success in Mexico was stated by Jules Dubois in Operation America. The Mexicans, according to Dubois, were tired of armed conflict after the bloody decade of the Mexican Revolution.⁶⁰ This was evident when the Communists directed the Durango peasants to mount a mass rebellion in 1929 and received little response.

Probably the most significant cause for the Comintern's failure was the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and the reform-oriented Constitution of 1917. While the Revolution incorporated anti-foreign sentiments directed toward exploitation from any country, including the United States, Great Britain, Spain, or even Russia, it held out the hope for labor and agrarian reform to appease the masses of Mexican poor. Sensitive to intrusions upon their sovereignty, the Mexicans rejected Soviet Russian-directed politics in much the same way that they fought against United States economic and political influence.

The Communists did not control the Mexican Government in the Twenties. They were not even close. Later, in the Thirties, Cárdenas may have used their support and incorporated some of their ideas for reform. After he left the presidency, he openly adhered to Communism. Cárdenas, however, can not be classed with someone like Calles who rejected Cárdenas' extremist views. There is more evidence to suggest the Mexican Government of the Twenties actively fought Soviet influence than that they may have embraced the Communist International's cause.

⁶⁰Dubois, Operation America, p. 230.

In view of accusations in the United States press and by the members of the United States Government in that period, it is necessary to demonstrate the paucity of Communist influence in Mexico. At the same time, the fact that the Comintern's agents were active in Mexico gives some credence to the fear of Communism in the neighboring country.

CHAPTER III

ALBERT FALL AND THE SENATE INVESTIGATION OF MEXICO

As World War I came to a close, Carranza fought what appeared to be a losing battle to restore order in Mexico. United States citizens lost their property and often their lives to roving revolutionaries. Americans with property in Mexico appealed to the United States Senate for aid that the Carranza government was both unwilling and unable to give and which the State Department was too slow to provide. Finally in 1919 the Senate established a special sub-committee of the Foreign Relations Committee to investigate "damages and outrages suffered by citizens of the United States in the Republic of Mexico."⁶¹

Those hearings, which began on August 18, 1919, and lasted until May 28, 1920, covered a wide range of testimony. One idea, however, pervaded the whole spectrum of accusation. Witnesses, ranging from an oil magnate to a Texas Ranger to Chairman Albert Fall himself, claimed that radicalism served as the foundation under the chaos in Mexico. The Committee heard cries of 'Bolshevism' throughout the course of the investigation. Bolshevism was associated sometimes with German intrigue or IWW intervention, but it was used to point up a similarity between conditions in Mexico and Russia. The 'Red Scare' was in full swing in the United States and special interests made use of American fears to appeal for intervention in Mexico.

⁶¹Fall Committee, p. 3.

The Senate sub-committee, known as the Fall Committee for its presiding member, was not without bias. Although testimony before the Committee may have been sincere, it was rather selective and designed to portray rampant Mexican radicalism while embarrassing American non-interventionists. Senator Fall, already known for his interventionist views, possessed financial interests in Mexico, and these, in part, contributed to his view of Mexican policy. Along with other investors, Senator Fall sought to restore the political stability Mexico had known under Porfirio Díaz.⁶²

The Senate saw an opportunity to question the President's Mexican policy of watchful waiting. In 1914 President Woodrow Wilson had employed armed intervention against Victoriano Huerta, Carranza's predecessor, in Mexico. He did it not to protect economic interests but out of a sense of moral obligation to aid Mexico in restoring 'democratic' government. Wilson's disinterest in foreign investors and the poor results of his earlier intervention made him wary of that course. The Republican Senate took up the challenge to the Democratic President's Mexican policy of watchful waiting. They were motivated by their opposition to Wilson's foreign policy as well as concern for American investors and Mexico's friendly attitude toward Germany in World War I. The Senate was inclined to compel Mexico to accept her "international obligations."⁶³

⁶²Michael C. Meyer, "Albert Bacon Fall's Mexican Papers: A Preliminary Investigation," New Mexico Historical Review, XL (April, 1965), p. 166. This article also discusses the many biases and inaccuracies of the Fall Committee hearings and suggests ways to check the validity of information from the volumes.

⁶³Callahan, American Foreign Policy, p. 577.

When accusations of Bolshevism appeared in the testimony before the Fall Committee, Bolshevism was usually ill-defined or associated with differing ideologies without concern for basic differences. Capitalists saw the Mexican nationalists' challenge to their interests as part of an international movement to abolish private property. Eber Cole Byam, a United States citizen who had worked with railroads and lumbering in Mexico, brought some of the associated terms together in the following statement before the Committee.

The Mexican revolutionists have called themselves 'liberals' when in point of fact they are socialists, and we know to-day that socialism does not differ greatly from bolshevism. Socialism is the theory, bolshevism the fact. The Mexican revolutionists ... have sought to establish an atheistic tyranny.⁶⁴

Byam added that the Mexican laborers were really content and only stirred to radicalism by socialist agitators.⁶⁵

When Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 returned ownership of subsoil rights to the Mexican State, American oil investors complained loudly. They formed The Association of Oil Producers in Mexico and joined with a more broadly based group, The National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico (NAPARM). Together, these groups presented their case before the Fall Committee and asked the United States Government for protection.⁶⁶

⁶⁴Fall Committee, p. 2700.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 2688.

⁶⁶See Fall Committee, p. 33 for a list of oil companies in the National Association for the protection of American Rights in Mexico. For NAPARM goals, membership requirements, etc. see Fall Committee, pp. 405-407.

Major John G. McDonnell (retired), as a field representative for the National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico, gave his own view of Bolshevism in Mexico in a newspaper interview in San Francisco. Charles Boynton, head of NAPARM, agreed that Major McDonnell's remarks were 'proper'. According to McDonnell:

Mexico is a haven of refuge to which the IWW, which is an alias for anarchists, were sent to be tutored by German Propagandists. The product of this joint labor of anarchy and Kultur was Bolshevism, which was first put into effect in Mexico in all its details, even to public ownership of women and corruption of children. Bolshevism was transplanted from Mexico to Russia, where it is now bearing its perfect fruit. From its original source in Mexico the evangelists of anarchy hope to introduce it in the United States. They have made no little progress.

Included in Major McDonnell's accusations were the notions that Carranza had paid press agents in the United States who deliberately created false impressions of Mexico; that Mexico could not have free government due to poor education; and that Mexican elections were more a matter of 'deceit, corruption, and personal and political revenge.' Major McDonnell called the Mexican Constitution 'out-and-out Bolshevism in practice' and a step toward ending private property.⁶⁷ To support his contentions Major McDonnell gave a translation of Article 27 of the 1917 Mexican Constitution.

Petroleum interests based their legally obtained rights to subsurface materials on Mexico's Federal Mining Law of November 22, 1884. According to that law, established under Porfirio Díaz, subsoil rights went to the owner of the land.⁶⁸ In direct contradiction, the

⁶⁷Fall Committee, p. 415.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 3271.

Constitution of 1917 reverted back to colonial patterns of subsurface ownership in that the sovereign state ultimately owned all subsurface products. The American oil investors claimed even the old law did not give oil rights to the government and quoted an old Spanish law which referred to 'metals' and not 'minerals.'⁶⁹ They further argued that the Constitution of 1917 was the "supreme law of the land." Article 14 of that Constitution prohibited retroactive application of laws, and, therefore, applied to the Constitution itself.⁷⁰

Individual members of NAPARM went to some length to deny that they published propaganda for armed intervention in Mexico during 1919. They took the stance that others, especially a group called the League of Free Nations, were promoting propaganda favoring Carranza and non-intervention. Although NAPARM denied pressuring for armed intervention, it did not eliminate that event as a course of action for the United States Government. Its members sought any means available to protect American lives and property in Mexico.⁷¹

On September 12, 1919, the Fall Committee heard from Edward L. Doheny, oilman and personal friend of Senator Fall, later to become implicated with Fall in the Teapot Dome oil lease scandal. Doheny said his oil porperties in Mexico produced \$18,500,000 worth of petroleum in 1918. He complained that taxes doubled in Mexico that year and, along with his United States taxes raised for the war, his company was taxed

⁶⁹Fall Committee, p. 3271.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 3272-3273.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 400-600 passim.

60% of its profits or 20% of its gross income. Explaining his problems in dealing with Carranza's Mexico, part of Doheny's testimony was described in the New York Times as follows:

Showing strong feeling for the first time in his testimony, he leaned toward Senators Fall and Brandegee as he declared: 'In my opinion the same Bolshevist influences were and are at work in Mexico as are responsible for the terror in Russia.'⁷²

The New York Sun quoted Doheny as stating that Americans participated in spreading Bolshevism to both Mexico and Russia. He did not, however, identify those involved.⁷³ Doheny cut short his conversation on the topic by expressing the depth of his feeling:

I really should not comment very much on that, because when I go into the subject I get to expressing an opinion; and if I were to express my opinion of some of those who are responsible for the bloodshed in Mexico and the bloodshed in Russia, I might possibly be subject to a charge of libel.⁷⁴

The discussion of Bolshevism actually constituted a small part of Doheny's testimony. Significantly, however, leading papers gave emphasis to that aspect of his statements. Most of his talk related to oil development in Mexico. He insisted that the United States had to encourage its promoters and investors to bring oil production in all the world under American control.⁷⁵

In October, 1919, relations between the United States and Mexico

⁷²The New York Times, Sept. 12, 1919, p. 17.

⁷³The New York Sun, Sept. 12, 1919, from a clipping in the William F. Buckley Papers.

⁷⁴Fall Committee, p. 231.

⁷⁵The New York Sun, Sept. 12, 1919, from a clipping in the William F. Buckley Papers.

underwent a severe strain. In that month a roaming band of revolutionaries captured United States Consular Agent William O. Jenkins in Puebla. The State Department protested to the Carranza Government which remained inactive in the case. When Jenkins was finally released on ransom in November, Carranza had him arrested for acting in concert with the revolutionaries. Again Secretary Lansing protested for the United States, and newspapers in both countries talked about an impending war.⁷⁶

On November 26, 1919, The New York Times carried an article which quoted Senator James E. Watson as saying the Carranza Government was planning to turn Mexico over to a radical element associated with Russian Soviets plotting to invade the United States. That plan allegedly called for a Soviet Government in Colorado aided by an army of 60,000 Reds already in the United States! With that plot scheduled to go off three weeks from the published date, Senator Watson said, "There is no room in the United States for the red flag of socialism or the black flag of anarchy." He claimed the solution was to provide land for every American as such ownership would prevent anarchism.⁷⁷

The editorial staff of The New York Times ridiculed Senator Watson's revelation. In an editorial titled "Saved by a Senator" the newspaper said, "Heaven knows what might have happened if the Senator had not imparted his dread secret to the American Club of Indianapolis. Quick, Watson! The Needle!"⁷⁸

⁷⁶Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 190-191. See also Manuel A. Machado, Jr., and James T. Judge, "Tempest in a Teapot?! The Mexican-United States Intervention Crisis of 1919," Southwestern Historical Quarterly (July, 1970) pp. 1-23.

⁷⁷The New York Times, Nov. 26, 1919, p. 10.

⁷⁸Ibid., Nov. 27, 1919, p. 14.

The Jenkins affair coincided with the accusations of Mexican ties to Bolshevism and with President Wilson's collapse. Pushing for ratification of his program incorporating the League of Nations in a country-wide tour, Wilson was struck by exhaustion on September 25, in Pueblo, Colorado. Upon returning to the White House, he suffered a cerebral thrombosis on October 2. Working from his bed in the White House, President Wilson became the object of suspicion. Many, including United States Senators, feared the President had died or had become totally incapacitated and that his wife and friends gave the directives which emerged from the White House.

On December 2, Senator Fall introduced a resolution in the Senate calling for approval of actions which the State Department might take with reference to Mexico during the Jenkins crisis. He asked that the United States withdraw recognition and sever diplomatic relations with Mexico's Carranza Government.⁷⁹ One of Senator Fall's justifications was that Mexicans had spread Bolshevik propaganda and had attempted to foment revolution in the United States. Senator Fall convinced some Senators that war was the best solution. Many, however, waited for Secretary Lansing's comment.⁸⁰

The Republican Senate took this opportunity to find out whether the President was really alive or capable of making decisions. Secretary Lansing suggested a delay until the President could be informed about the Mexican situation. The Senate voted to send two representatives to President Wilson to provide that needed information. Senator

⁷⁹Fall Committee, p. 843c.

⁸⁰The New York Times, Dec. 4, 1919, pp. 1-2.

Fall was selected as a logical choice since he had been investigating Mexican affairs. Senator Hitchcock was to accompany him to the White House. Armed with Senator Fall's proposed resolution they went to see the President.⁸¹

The Senate representatives found President Wilson alive and in full possession of his faculties. From his bed, the President listened attentively as Senator Fall explained his resolution and spoke about conditions in Mexico. Senator Fall emphasized material relating to Mexican officials and their alleged involvement in propagandizing for the Bolsheviks in the United States. Before the two left, President Wilson asked for a written memo describing the same material the Senators had presented verbally.⁸²

Senator Fall's own view of the situation in Mexico was portrayed by his selective use of material gathered in the hearings of his committee investigating Mexico. He stressed evidence of radicalism and conspiracy in his written message to the President. Among his charges were those that Carranza was in league with 'extreme radical' elements in the United States to propagandize this country, that the 1917 Mexican Constitution was comparable to the doctrine of the Soviet Government in Russia, that Carranza favored the 'Plan of San Diego of 1915' (an alleged plot to secure the independence of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, upper California, paving the way for annexation by Mexico), and that 'extreme agitators and IWW members' planned to overthrow the United States Government while promising territory to Mexico for aid in the

⁸¹Callahan, American Foreign Policy, p. 578.

⁸²The New York Times, Dec. 6, 1919, p. 2 and Fall Committee, p. 8430.

revolt. At that stage Senator Fall said he had done his duty by informing the President and leaving him with the responsibility for action. He decided to continue his investigation into Mexican affairs.⁸³

While Senators Fall and Hitchcock were at the White House, Wilson's physician came in with the dramatic news that Consular Agent Jenkins had been released by Carranza. Later, Senator Fall stated that he would not withdraw his resolution as it did not deal specifically with the Jenkins' case. Some Senators disagreed. They claimed it was now up to the President to conduct affairs with Mexico.⁸⁴

President Wilson had opposed any armed intervention against Mexico in the Jenkins' affair. He was pleased when the consular agent was released. Wilson was not, however, pleased with Secretary Lansing. Lansing had consulted with Fall before the Senator introduced his resolution and had given at least tacit support. Lansing's resignation as Secretary of State in February of 1920 and his replacement by Bainbridge Colby may have been a direct result of the disagreement Lansing had with the President concerning Mexico.⁸⁵

On December 8, 1919, President Wilson replied to Senator Fall. He took objection to the Senators' initiative in the area of foreign affairs claiming that it was not in line with Constitutional practices. On the resolution itself, Wilson wrote that he would be "gravely concerned to see any such resolution pass the Congress."⁸⁶ Upon learning President

⁸³Fall Committee, pp. 834 E, F, G, H, I, J.

⁸⁴The New York Times, Dec. 6, 1919, p. 2.

⁸⁵Callahan, American Foreign Policy, pp. 578-579.

⁸⁶Fall Committee, p. 843 D.

Wilson's attitude, Senator Lodge, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee announced that the Fall resolution was dropped.⁸⁷

The Mexicans were quick to reply when Senator Fall accused them of spreading Bolshevik propoganda in the United States. Mexican Consul General Ramon P. de Negri in New York was first to deny the charge. He said President Carranza desired respect for all foreign countries and their governments. De Negri was backed by Consul General J. Garza Aertuche in San Francisco.⁸⁸ Mexican Ambassador Ygnacio Bonillas in Washington said the Mexican Government opposed anti-social doctrines and denied that his embassy had aided Bolsheviks, IWW's, or anarchists in the United States.⁸⁹ An editorial in The New York Times also denounced Senator Fall's accusations as sensational. The editorial indicated admiration for Ambassador Bonillas and rejected the idea that he had entered into a Bolshevik plot. The paper added that the Senate acted improperly in requesting President Wilson to act on Mexico as that was "entirely the President's business." That arugment backed the position President Wilson actually took in responding to Senator Fall.⁹⁰

The Fall Committee continued to function after the Jenkins' affair. Even while Senate representatives consulted with the White House, the Committee carried on with its job. On December 6, William F. Buckley appeared to testify about Carranza and General Obregón. Mr.

⁸⁷The New York Times, Dec. 9, 1919, p. 1.

⁸⁸Ibid., Dec. 4, 1919, p. 2.

⁸⁹Ibid., Dec. 5, 1919, p. 2.

⁹⁰Ibid., Dec. 5, 1919, p. 4.

Buckley, a dealer in Mexican real estate and oil leases, said the difference between Carranza and the original revolt under Francisco Madero was that Madero favored democratic government while Carranza sought radical social change including elimination of private property and expulsion of Americans from Mexico. Although Carranza was essentially conservative, he did yield to popular pressures.⁹¹ Mr. Buckley was referring to the idea of land as a 'social function' to be used for the well-being of the State when needed. Later in his testimony Buckley said that interpretation was common to "Carranza's Mexico and Trotsky's Russia."⁹² Although Mr. Buckley rejected direct armed intervention, others who favored that violent policy used his same analogy between Russia and Mexico.

Mr. Charles Boynton, head of the National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico, produced a press release that read as follows:

Judging from what has been published about Russia, conditions can hardly be worse there, if, indeed, they are as bad, as in Mexico. And it must not be forgotten that Carranza is the original bolshevist, or perhaps he may have gotten the idea from William Bayard Hale and Lincoln Steffens and their German friends. At least, they had long conferences with him at the outset of Carranza's public career, and they were all very thick.⁹³

It was not the first claim that Bolshevism entered Russia after Mexico. The charges were far-fetched with regard to Hale and Steffens, however.

⁹¹Fall Committee, p. 796. For information of Carranza's conservative attitude see Lorenzo Meyer Cosid, "El Conflicto Petrolero entre Mexico y los Estados Unidos, 1917-1920," Foro Internacional, (April, 1965), passim.

⁹²Ibid., p. 827.

⁹³Ibid., p. 465.

William Bayard Hale had served as President Wilson's official investigator concerned with the diplomatic corps in Mexico in 1913. Lincoln Steffens did cultivate a personal tie with Carranza, but for the purpose of producing 'muckrake' writings on United States policy rather than promoting Bolshevism.⁹⁴

The Fall Committee tried to implicate Mexicans as well as Americans in the Bolshevik conspiracy charges. On January 3, 1920, Emiliano López Figueroa, a Mexican representing Mexican National Railways in New York, appeared before the Committee. Under questioning by committee member Francis Kearful, Figueroa protested that he could not and would not discuss matters relating to his own country or the Jenkins incident. Kearful disclosed Figueroa's association with the magazine De la Raza which had carried an article on Lenin and one on the democratic, humanitarian nature of the 1917 Mexican Constitution. The article called the Mexican Constitution the 'only step toward real liberty' outside of the Soviet Union and favored nationalization of oil properties in Mexico. Though Figueroa denied knowledge of the particular article and claimed no responsibility for editorial judgement, Kearful had made his point.⁹⁵

Investigator Kearful was quite harsh when Figueroa refused to answer questions relating to internal conditions in Mexico and matters of opinion. At one point Kearful told the witness:

You are living in this country under the protection

⁹⁴Lincoln Steffens, The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1931), pp. 731-732.

⁹⁵Fall Committee, pp. 895-899.

of its laws, and you are connected with a magazine which, from an article in the December number, seems to indicate a policy favorable to the Russian Bolsheviki, and you decline to testify to your own convictions in regard to the nationalization of property, which is one of the prime elements of the Russian system.

With that comment, Kearful dismissed Figueroa with a hint that future action would be considered against the witness for his refusal to answer certain questions.⁹⁶

At this time the State Department received an official protest from the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Relations. He claimed the Fall Committee was formed by interventionists seeking to justify armed interference in Mexico. The Mexican Government refused to recognize the authority of that Committee and made it an act of treason for Mexicans who appeared before the Committee to give evidence that could be used against Mexico in any way. The Mexican Government warned its citizens in the United States to allow arrest if necessary to keep from going before the investigators.⁹⁷ Figueroa had good reason to object to questions.

One prominent witness before the Fall Committee had personal reasons for appearing voluntarily to denounce Mexican radicalism and the Revolution. Jahn A. Valls, district attorney for the forty-ninth judicial district of Texas since 1902, gave testimony on January 22. The son of a Spanish-born father who was nationalized during residence in Brownsville, Texas, John Valls had personal feelings for Porfirio Díaz. In 1893 Díaz had offered Valls a job as Mexican

⁹⁶Fall Committee, p. 1200.

⁹⁷F. G., 59, 711.12/253.

consul in Brownsville. Although the job was appealing, Valls turned it down because he had "always been so thoroughly American."⁹⁸

That offer endeared the aging Mexican President to Attorney Valls. When Madero revolted against Díaz, Valls wrote to the Mexican President telling him not to abdicate. Valls said he had developed a 'filial affection for Díaz'.⁹⁹ It was no surprise then that John Valls spoke harshly about Carranza and introduced evidence on a radical plot called the 'Plan of San Diego.'

A copy of the Plan of San Diego, named after the small Texas town where it was signed on January 6, 1915, went into the Committee records. It called for liberty for American Negroes and independence for Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Upper California. Though claiming no aid from the Mexican Government, the Plan suggested the territory gained might go to Mexico through annexation at a later time.

With a red flag as banner, the adherents of the Plan called for the attack to begin on February 20, 1915. Only the old men, the women, and children would escape death sentences according to the document. Adult males, other than the elderly, were to be killed. Although the plot appeared absurd, Attorney Valls took it seriously when a red flag with white diagonal stripe was found after a raid at Webb Station, Texas.¹⁰⁰

Mr. Valls did not associate the Plan of San Diego with Communists,

⁹⁸Fall Committee, p. 1200.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 1200.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 1205-1207.

but others did. Captain W. M. Hanson, a Senior Captain of the Texas Rangers assigned as an aide to the Fall Committee, said extreme radicals issued propaganda against the United States Government as part of the Plan of San Diego as late as March of 1920. Those radicals, according to Captain Hanson, were Communists and members of the IWW.¹⁰¹

One witness before the Committee claimed all the radicalism in Mexico and Russia emanated from Germany. William Gates, a writer with deep concern over Communism in Mexico, said German agents had spread the same 'radical anti-social' doctrines to Mexico and Russia.¹⁰² In fact the Plan of San Diego may have had German origins. It was part of the infamous Zimmerman Telegram which the United States obtained and used as one of the justifications for entering into World War I.¹⁰³ To state that German representatives were responsible for the turmoil in Russia or Mexico, however, is to deny the real indigenous, nationalist background of both the Mexican Revolution and the Russian revolt. Gates also testified that radicals in Mexico were few in number and associated with Carranza and "that Pan-Latin, one big union, bolshevist aggregation."¹⁰⁴

A House of Representatives' committee investigating immigration added to Senator Fall's information on radicalism along the Mexican border. Anthony Caminetti, Director of Immigration, told the investi-

¹⁰¹ Fall Committee, pp. 3241-3242.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 2847.

¹⁰³ Barbara Tuchman, The Zimmerman Telegram (New York: The Viking Press, 1958), pp. 96-97.

¹⁰⁴ Fall Committee, p. 2844.

gators that while the administration looked to Europe hundreds of radicals entered the United States across the Mexican border due to a reduced border patrol. He said radicals saw Mexico as an easy inlet into the United States.¹⁰⁵ At the conclusion of hearings before the House Committee, Chairman Albert Johnson recommended tighter controls to keep 'Russian Reds' from entering through Mexico.¹⁰⁶ Caminetti later said he had ordered immigration officials along the border to forward a report on the threatened invasion from Mexico of fifty Russian Bolsheviki and 150 Mexican IWW's. Caminetti said there was no reason to be aroused as border troops could handle the invasion should it occur.¹⁰⁷

Miss Lucille Wetherell, a writer and lecturer, went before the Fall Committee to suggest President Wilson's policy of 'watchful waiting' aided Communists in Mexico. She said the Mexican Revolution, initiated by Madero, was "simply one link in a great attempt to put the world into internationalism."¹⁰⁸ Calling Mexico a "propagating ground for Bolshevism against the United States," Miss Wetherell criticized President Wilson for abdicating responsibilities under the Monroe Doctrine and giving the Bolsheviks a greater grasp in the western hemisphere.¹⁰⁹ Her testimony supported the Committee's

¹⁰⁵The New York Tribune, Oct. 21, 1919, from a clipping in the William F. Buckley Paper.

¹⁰⁶The New York Times, Nov. 24, 1919, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷The Evening Telegram (New York), Dec. 11, 1919, from a clipping in the William F. Buckley Papers.

¹⁰⁸Fall Committee, p. 1701.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 1703.

critical view of American inaction with regard to Mexico.

Numerous other accusations of Communism in Mexico were made before the Fall Committee in late 1919 and early 1920. They were designed to frighten United States citizenry as the charges appeared in American newspapers and were important for the impact they had on the Committee's final report. They alleged that Carranza and later Mexican Presidents Obregón and Calles were all involved in a Bolshevik conspiracy against Mexico and the United States.¹¹⁰ All three Mexican leaders adhered to the 1917 Mexican Constitution which oil investors and land speculators said was Communistic. When Senator Fall and his colleagues wrote the final report of the Committee on May 28, 1920, charges of Mexican radicalism entered their justifications for actions against Mexico.

When the Committee finished its investigation, Venustiano Carranza was still President. By May 28, 1920, when the report came out, Obregón had successfully revolted and forced Carranza out of power. In the meantime Adolfo de la Huerta was installed as Provisional President. The Committee Report made the following recommendations for dealing with Mexico under De la Huerta: 1. The United States should withhold recognition from De la Huerta until some assurance would be given that Mexico would abide by international law. 2. Article 130 on Missionaries, Article 27 on property and subsoil rights, and Article 33 giving

¹¹⁰For more testimony on the radical actions of Carranza, Obregón, and Calles, see Fall Committee, pp. 2931, 2418, 2099. See also pp. 1943-1945 on charges that Dr. Atl (Gerardo Murillo), Director of the Mexican National Academy of Fine Arts, was a Communist. For information on Linn Gale and Mexican Communism see Fall Committee, p. 1237.

the Mexican President authority to expel foreigners without the judicial process should not apply to American citizens. 3. The United States should maintain the right to refuse recognition unless Mexico would accept the demands of this report. 4. If any further actions threatening American life or property should occur in Mexico under a government that would not accept the demands of this report, the United States would reserve the right to "send a police force" into Mexico to establish order and protect American interests. The report ended by saying the fourth item would be not an act of war and made reference to the Golden Rule. It stated the police action would be designed to give the Mexican people an opportunity to set up a "government of serious, competent, honest and honorable men who will meet the civilized world upon friendly ground and bind themselves to deal with other people as they themselves would be dealt with."¹¹¹

President Wilson rejected the proposal for various reasons. The recommendation espoused for a type of overt moral imperialism which President Wilson apparently rejected after the poor results of his invasion of Vera Cruz in 1914. Chances for stability increased when Provisional President De la Huerta put down a revolt by General Pablo Gonzales and purchased the pacification of Francisco 'Pancho' Villa. When Obregón announced that he would not enforce Article 27 most of the problems of American investors appeared solved. Armed intervention did not occur, but Wilson decided to wait before providing official recognition to the new Mexican Government.¹¹²

¹¹¹Fall Committee, pp. 3368-3373.

¹¹²Callahan, American Foreign Policy, p. 582.

The Fall Committee was a product of its times. Biased from the beginning with a chairman who favored intervention and backed by a Republican Senate dissatisfied with a Democratic President's foreign policy, the Committee solicited evidence to prove Mexico was following a radical path in disregarding American life and property south of the Río Grande. Evidence did suggest a heavy loss of American lives in Mexico during the Revolution, but Mexican Consular Agent De Negri in New York compiled a booklet suggesting similar outrages against Mexicans in the United States.¹¹³ The charge of Bolshevism also had some backing with evidence submitted on Linn Gale, the IWW, and other radicals who may have sympathized with the Russian Revolution. The charges of foreign interference, however, were all out of proportion.

Mexicans disliked foreigners interfering in their politics as evidenced in Article 30 of the 1917 Constitution which expressly outlawed such actions. Linn Gale was deported under that provision, and Mexico broke diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in the late 1920's for the same reason. Mexico's Revolution was, above all, an exertion of sovereignty and national pride.

Naturally, large and small investors saw "Red" when it appeared they would lose property or oil rights in Mexico. It is debatable, however, whether they shouted "Bolshevism" from sincere belief or as a ploy for popular sentiment at the height of fears engendered by the recent Russian Revolution. Whatever the case, the tactic failed, especially since the Fall Committee suggestions were never implemented.

¹¹³Fall Committee, p. 2954.

With De la Huerta, Obregón, and Calles in control in Mexico, it appeared that Mexican-United States relations would move toward stability in the 1920's.

CHAPTER IV

MEXICAN PRESIDENTS OBREGÓN AND CALLES, 1920-1926

CONFUSING THE ISSUES

General Alvaro Obregon's revolt in April 1920 destroyed Senator Fall's chances for obtaining intervention in Mexico based on charges that Carranza adhered to Bolshevism. In late May, Carranza was killed in his flight from Mexico City, and Adolfo de la Huerta became Provisional President. The basic question of depredations against Americans and their holdings in Mexico, however, remained. The 1917 Mexican Constitution continued as a major irritant in United States-Mexican relations. American oil interests and land investors sought protection from confiscation and satisfaction for property already lost during the Revolution. Unsuccessful in arousing support for intervention, United States businessmen still maintained hope in the weapon of United States non-recognition of Mexico and the election of Republican President Warren G. Harding.

The ailing President Wilson did not grant recognition to De la Huerta as Provisional Mexican President or to Alvaro Obregon who was inaugurated into the Mexican Presidency in November 1920. Instead, Wilson left the problem of recognition to his successor. President Harding's attitude toward recognition of Mexico surfaced in an announcement by the new Secretary of the Interior appointee Albert Fall. The Senator said:

So long as I have anything to do with the Mexican question, no government of Mexico will be recognized, with my consent, which does not first enter into a written agreement promising to protect American citizens and their property rights in Mexico.¹¹⁴

Anxious as the Mexicans may have been for recognition that encouraged investors and lenders, President Harding held off until the Mexican President would make a commitment in writing.

President Obregón took a conciliatory attitude toward the United States in hopes of getting recognition without written assurances for Americans who had incurred losses or who might lose property under Article 27. From 1921 to early 1923 the two governments exchanged notes on a proposed treaty of amity and commerce without coming to an agreement on conditions to be discussed. Throughout that tense period, involving an American oil shutdown in Mexico to protest higher taxes and President Harding's dispatch of troops to the border for preparation to protect American lives and property, the United States Department of State investigated charges of Bolshevism levelled at Obregón and his associates.

As part of the conciliatory attitude toward the United States both Provisional President De la Huerta and later President Obregón took measures to eliminate Bolshevism in Mexico. Obregón and De la Huerta expressed bitter resentment when Linn Gale wrote that the two Mexican leaders were sympathetic to the radical cause.¹¹⁵ On June 7, 1920

¹¹⁴ Callahan, American Foreign Policy, p. 586.

¹¹⁵ New York Times, June 7, 1920, p. 9.

De la Huerta issued instructions to the Mexico City police chief to arrest all Bolsheviks and extreme radicals. He refused to allow Mexico to serve as a center for propaganda. Deportation proceedings began, and five Russians were ousted from Mexico for propagandizing.¹¹⁶

During 1920 De la Huerta took numerous actions against alleged Bolsheviks. He deported a number of American radicals who were wanted in the United States for draft evasion, including Linn Gale. He also ordered suspension of Bolshevik publications in Mexico and prevented radical meetings in the Federal District. A petition by socialists to establish a university in Mexico City was denied, and De la Huerta topped off the anti-Bolshevik crusade for the year by arresting nearly one thousand military personnel for meddling in politics under alleged Bolshevik inspiration.¹¹⁷

De la Huerta blamed Americans for much of the problem with Bolshevism. He claimed the Industrial Workers of the World carried on Bolshevik propaganda and that Communists belonged to that organization. Propaganda from the IWW, according to the Provisional President, was aimed at bringing the Mexican proletariat together under an "advanced Socialism, that is, Bolshevism!"¹¹⁸ Although a Mexico City newspaper reported an increase in Bolshevism in Mexico because funds were available from the United States branch of the IWW, Mexican officials denied Bolshevism

¹¹⁶ The New York Times, June 8, 1920, p. 32.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., July 23, 1920, p. 22; July 27, 1920, p. 17; July 28, 1920, p. 1; Sept. 3, 1920, p. 9; Aug. 28, 1920, p. 4; Aug. 29, 1920, II, p. 1; Sept. 13, 1920, p. 17.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., Sept. 3, 1920, p. 9.

had any real strength in that country. Instead, they claimed opposition elements in the upcoming election provoked radicalism.¹¹⁹ One of the candidates in that election, Alvaro Obregón, said he would not allow Bolshevism in Mexico. General Obregón indicated that the 1917 Constitution forbade foreigners from interfering in Mexican politics and that he would not allow political agitation that might injure Mexico.¹²⁰

A few days after Obregón made the above statement in September, 1920, an incident occurred at the National Palace which fanned charges of Mexican Bolshevism in the American press. A group of demonstrators with a parade permit marched to the Palace to present to Provisional President De la Huerta a petition against the high cost of living. According to press reports representatives from the group entered the Palace and side-tracked to a balcony where they addressed the crowd outside. An ex-Congressman unfurled a number of red and black flags while labor leader Luis Morones 'harangued' those gathered. The demonstration ended with an address by Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Yucatán socialist, and short term member of the Communist Party who called for attacks on private property and immediate raids on food shops.¹²¹

While The New York Times called the demonstration a Communist display, De la Huerta and Obregón denied any association with the group. President De la Huerta, who was ill at Chapultepec Castle

¹¹⁹The New York Times, Aug. 29, 1920, II, p. 1.

¹²⁰Ibid., Sept. 15, 1920, p. 8.

¹²¹Ibid., Sept. 28, 1920, p. 5 and Sept. 28, 1920, p. 17.

when the demonstration occurred, later said he would not allow such 'nonsense' in the future. He expressed sympathy for the workingmen but would not tolerate any but legal change. He told the Procurator General to investigate and report his findings to the Congress that they might censure any Congressmen involved in the alleged Communist outburst. Presidential Candidate Obregón was indignant over the demonstration. He agreed that violent preachings against the Mexican Government could not be tolerated.¹²²

In denouncing the demonstration at the National Palace, General Obregón gave some insight into the way he viewed the workers' movement and special interests. He said he had the support of numerous parties, but he was obligated to none individually and had made no compromises. His view of the President's role followed:

You may be well assured that all measures favoring the workingmen or others must be taken through legal means. A President of Mexico represents 14,000,000 people, and he cannot listen to only a few hundred here or there, but must consider the necessities of the greater number.¹²³

The demonstration did not have the desired effects sought by its leaders. No shops suffered from looting, and some of the more conservative members of the march against the high cost of living entered the cathedral and rang the bells to drown out the speakers when they appeared on the balcony.¹²⁴ Moreover, the display risked alienating the two men who could do the most for social change, De la Huerta and Obregón.

¹²²The New York Times, Sept. 29, 1920, p. 17.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid.

In November 1920, a month after the radical speeches from the balcony at the National Palace, Luis Morones showed how far removed he was from the Communists. In that month the dockworkers in Veracruz went on strike against low wages and the high cost of living. A Communist meeting on November 9 in Mexico City voted to call a general strike in favor of the Veracruz strikers. The government called out troops to protect property with whatever extreme measures where necessary. CROM, under the leadership of Morones, denounced the general strike. CROM officials refused to recognize any authority of the Mexican Communists in the labor movement.¹²⁵ The dockworkers went back to work in Veracruz when troops under Minister of War Plutarco Elías Calles disarmed them and mediated the dispute with the management. Here Morones, a former member of the Communist Party, sided with the government as he would do to a larger extent later as Minister of Industry, Labor, and Commerce under President Calles.

All of these incidences of 'Bolshevism' occurred against the background of the Mexican Government's desire for United States recognition and American hopes for claim settlements and assurances of protection for property holders in Mexico. The evidence suggests that the Mexican Government in this period actively combatted Communist influences. Behind the scenes, however, the United States State Department investigated and reported on allegations that Mexico was deeply imbedded in Communist ideology.

The State Department heard frightening accusations from its representatives in Mexico. The department's interest seems to have

¹²⁵The New York Times, Nov. 11, 1920, p. 17.

begun about the time it received a request in early 1920 from J. Edgar Hoover, then assistant to the Attorney General. Hoover asked the State Department to look into the activities of a Russian agent accused of carrying on radical activities in Mexico.¹²⁶

An unidentifiable report to the Secretary of State on April 13, 1921, claimed there was a secret Communist Provisional Government in Mexico in addition to the government of Alvaro Obregón.¹²⁷ This Provisional Government supposedly had an alliance with Japan, had developed a seven pound gas bomb more deadly than any weapon previously known, had control of a Red Army, and had the ability to overthrow General Obregón within twenty-four hours.¹²⁸ The report also detailed a plot by liberal United States newspapers to publish propaganda against United States intervention in Mexican internal affairs should such a revolt take place. It named as leading Communists in Mexico: Celestino Gasca, military governor of the Federal District; Luis Morones, director of munitions and Mexican national factories; General Plutarco E. Calles, former minister of war, then minister of government; Adolfo de la Huerta, minister of finance; and several other prominent Mexicans. Doubtless, any move by Obregón to eliminate these men would have made the Mexican President a very lonely man at the top.

¹²⁶R. G. 59, 812.00B/b, Secretary of State to Attorney General, April 11, 1920.

¹²⁷R. G. 59, 812.00B, April 13, 1921. Although this document is not identified on the National Archives microfilm series, the date and contents relate closely to other memoranda written by Consul Claude Dawson to Chargé George Summerlin in Mexico.

¹²⁸Ibid.

Aside from fears of Communist propaganda circulating in the United States through some sinister plot, numerous charges were made against General, and later President, Plutarco Elías Calles.¹²⁹ George T. Summerlin, United States Chargé in Mexico, declared that General Calles was attempting to set up a Soviet government in Mexico.¹³⁰

A Mexican newspaper named Omega stated that General Obregón showed fear of the Bolsheviks directed by General Calles, but it was nearly impossible for Obregón to disassociate himself because of "psychotic" tendencies.¹³¹ On January 29, 1923, Consul General Claude Dawson in Mexico City wrote to the Secretary of State informing him that 'a leading Mexican Red', Luis Morones, was in Europe seeking to collaborate with Moscow in fostering "radicalism in the United States through Mexico." Consul Dawson indicated that General Calles headed a Mexican Bolshevik movement and would make 'direct contact with Russian bolshevist leaders and ... foment the propaganda and replenish the Russo-Mexican-American exchequer' allegedly supervised by J. J. Sánchez, former governor of the State of Puebla. Sánchez was known in Mexico as a Russian 'Red' agent according to Dawson's report.¹³²

Governor Sanchez later denounced Communism. Arriving in New

¹²⁹For information of propaganda plots see R. G. 59, 812.00B/2, /4, /9, /10, /11, and 812.00211/9, /10.

¹³⁰R. G. 59, 812.00/25708, George Summerlin to Matthew Hanna (chief of division of Mexican Affairs, Department of State), May 30, 1922.

¹³¹R. G. 812.00B/2, Summerlin to Secretary of State, Aug. 25, 1920.

¹³²R. G. 812.20211.2, Claude Dawson to Secretary of State, Jan. 29, 1924.

York for a meeting with Samuel Gompers, he said Communism was "no good for America, no good for Mexico." He had just returned from Russia where he was denied an audience with Lenin, although he did manage to meet Trotsky. Governor Sánchez said he would report that Mexican workers should ally with American labor rather than with the Communists.¹³³

Although there is little evidence available to support Dawson's accusations, the climate of fear about radicalism in the United States during the early 1920's gave officials some reason to suspect the influence of Communism in Mexico. While the State Department gathered such evidence to support policy making decisions, the Mexicans capitalized upon the 'Red Scare' in the United States to manipulate public opinion in that country. Newspapers quoted a 'high Mexican official' as stating that Mexico needed immediate United States recognition in order to put down Bolshevism. He said agitators could use the oil conflict to attack the government and force it into a compromise with radicals. That compromise would work against foreign investments. The discontent over the high cost of living had also opened the way for a greater acceptance of Communism, according to the unnamed official. He said United States investment capital could prevent the Communist take-over, but Mexico would surely become the Russian Soviet of America if that assistance did not come soon.¹³⁴ An editorial in The New York Times denounced that revelation as typical of the poor threat policy employed by Germany right after World War I. The newspaper indicated

¹³³New York Times, Sept. 16, 1922, p. 17.

¹³⁴Ibid., Nov. 13, 1920, p. 1.

that Obregón could not have sanctioned the official's comment as Obregón was "too intelligent to think that Mexico [could] be served or the United States scared in that way."¹³⁵

Obregón persisted in his opposition to Communism, and he continually spoke of his determination to rid Mexico of the Bolshevik movement. Foreign doctrines opposed to Mexican law were not allowed.¹³⁶ American officials expected Obregón to take firm measures against the Communists, and he promised to do just that. Obregón said he would use the entire military to put down the Bolsheviks if necessary. To the Mexican leader the Communists were "false friends who would save Mexico by a revolution of the proletariat."¹³⁷ Obregón's view of government denied the necessity of further violent change in Mexico.

When several State legislatures in the United States recommended that the United States recognize Obregón in mid-1921, the National Association for the Protection of American Rights in Mexico protested. NAPARM issued a statement which claimed, "... unless the Mexican Government is brought back to a sound policy in its foreign relations, it is very probable that the rising tide of Bolshevism will inundate all Mexico."¹³⁸ The organization wanted a settlement on land and petroleum claims and guarantees against confiscation.

Obregón actually had greater control over Mexico than any President

¹³⁵The New York Times, Nov. 15, 1920, p. 14.

¹³⁶Ibid., April 3, 1921, p. 7.

¹³⁷Ibid., Nov. 21, 1920, p. 12.

¹³⁸Ibid., June 9, 1921, p. 4.

since Porfirio Díaz. Although some agitation did occur, especially in Yucatán, military and civil authorities generally quashed revolts rapidly.¹³⁹ Communists were arrested in Mexico City, and a Russian deported. In addition, an agitator from the United States was denied permission to enter Mexico. The Mexicans put the agitator on the first boat sailing back to New York.¹⁴⁰ Whatever Communist threat there may have been in Mexico going into 1923, Obregón possessed the power and used it against those who refused to adhere to Mexican nationalism and the law established by the 1917 Constitution.

In March, 1923, Obregón's Minister of Foreign Relations Alberto Pani approached George T. Summerlin with news that Obregón wanted to settle the land and oil problem. Minister Pani said President Obregón would seek indemnification for Americans who lost property to confiscations under Article 27. He also cited settlement of problems concerning the national debt under the Lamont De la Huerta agreement of June 16, 1922, and decisions by the Mexican Supreme Court which denied retroactive application of Article 27 in cases where oil companies had accomplished 'positive acts' to show their intent to use the petroleum properties.¹⁴¹

Thomas W. Lamont, the famous banker associated with J. P. Morgan, paved the way for agreements between Mexico and the United States. He refused to believe ideological barriers separated the two countries. Instead, economic issues represented the real problem in Lamont's

¹³⁹For revolts in Yucatán see The New York Times, July 23, 1921, p. 14; July 9, 1922, p. 13; July 31, 1922, p. 28.

¹⁴⁰The New York Times, July 9, 1922, II, p. 1.

¹⁴¹Callahan, American Foreign Policy, p. 592.

opinion. In 1922 he told fellow businessmen that Obregón's cabinet members were not members of the Third International as he had been told by the British Intelligence Office. Though they were "somewhat radical, they were not at all Bolshevistic or anarchistic." Lamont spread the word that Mexico's problem was not radicalism but poor organization.¹⁴² The International Committee of Bankers, which Lamont headed, therefore emphasized 'quiet, patient negotiations' as opposed to the 'bluster and threats of the oilmen.'¹⁴³

The apparent air of increased trust led to the Bucareli Conference. The Conference produced two tangible agreements: a general claims convention and a special claims convention. Additionally, some "Extra-official Pact" emanated from the Meeting. The general claims convention covered all United States claims against Mexico since 1868 while the special claims convention treated United States claims growing out of the Revolution. Americans accepted bonds instead of cash for hacienda lands taken for redistribution on condition that Mexico expropriate only limited lands for ejidos, or communal agrarian settlements. The Extra-official Pact revolved around Article 27. The Mexicans maintained the doctrine of "positive acts." Oil properties acquired legally between 1876 and 1917 were to remain perpetually in the purchasers' hands without requiring a drilling license as long as some proof of exploitation was evident. Both governments released news of the agreement on August 31, 1923.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²Smith, Revolutionary Nationalism, pp. 213-124, taken from "Remarks before the Dutch Treat Club, Lincoln, March 14, 1922."

¹⁴³Robert Freeman Smith, "The Formation and Development of the International Bankers Committee on Mexico," Journal of Economic History, XXIII (Dec. 1963), p. 586.

¹⁴⁴Cline, The United States and Mexico, pp. 207-208.

The substance of the discontent did not end with Bucareli. The claims commission actually met in 1924, but without success. Not until the 1930's did the two countries agree on claims settlements which were ratified by both Senates. When Plutarco Elías Calles became President, he disowned the agreement on Article 27. Obregón was under pressure to obtain United States recognition, and the unofficial nature of the pact made it non-binding on later Presidents.

Obregón gained official recognition from the United States after the conference. That recognition proved valuable a short time later when Adolfo de la Huerta revolted against the government as Obregón supported Calles for the Presidential election. Obregón was successful largely because of aid from the United States. Military supplies and cooperation along the United States border helped Obregón defeat the former Provisional President.¹⁴⁵

The Mexican Communist Party backed De la Huerta at the beginning of the campaign but switched to Calles and Obregón when Bertram Wolfe convinced the Party that De la Huerta represented the reactionary elements.¹⁴⁶ De la Huerta appeared to uphold that contention when he captured Yucatán and sent the radical Felipe Carrillo into retreat. The New York Times listed the Yucatán event as a defeat for the "leading exponent of Communism in Mexico." Americans in the region trusted the new De la Huerta government as its first act was to outlaw the sale

¹⁴⁵Cline, The United States and Mexico, p. 208. See also Manuel Machado, "The United States and the De la Huerta Rebellion," Southwestern Quarterly (January 1972), pp. 303-325.

¹⁴⁶Alexander, Communism, pp. 322-323. See also The New York Times, April 6, 1924, p. 12.

of liquor in the region, according to the news account.¹⁴⁷ De la Huerta did not hold power long in Yucatán, however, as he soon lost to Obregón-Calles troops.

Calles entered his first year as President with well-wishes from United States Secretary of State Charles E. Hughes. The cordial relationship between the two governments did not last long as Calles in December, 1925, decided to favor retroactive application of Article 27 despite the Bucareli agreement. The Mexican Congress established a new law whereby old leases had to be exchanged for new fifty year leases if foreigners wanted to hold their Mexican acquisitions at all.¹⁴⁸ Popular pressure did much to force the Calles government into the new position, but he was probably less hesitant to take action after tense diplomatic exchanges between the two countries.

President Calles did not get along well with Ambassador to Mexico James R. Sheffield and the new Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellogg. Sheffield, representing the United States in Mexico since 1924, received his information from anti-Calles conservatives and favored American investors. Kellogg, basing his knowledge of Mexico largely on information from Ambassador Sheffield, suggested in June 1924 that Mexico relax its new agrarian policy which called for foreigners to sell shares in land holdings in order to give Mexicans controlling interest. Kellogg further asked that confiscated lands be returned. He added in his statement to the press, " ... Mexico is now on trial

¹⁴⁷The New York Times, Dec. 17, 1923, p. 1.

¹⁴⁸Callahan, American Foreign Policy, p. 597.

before the world." Secretary Kellogg claimed further that the Calles Government was responsible for protecting Americans in Mexico.¹⁴⁹

President Calles indignantly replied that Mexico was no more on trial than any other country, including the United States. Both exchanges came through press releases rather than regular diplomatic channels. Resentment increased on both sides when Chargé d'Affaires H. F. Arthur Schoenfeld was kept waiting on a visit to Calles, and Mexican Ambassador Manuel Tellez received a lecture at the State Department on Mexican obligations and the correctness of Secretary Kellogg's statement.¹⁵⁰ There was no way to determine the effect on Calles, but the incident very likely was still on his mind when Mexico passed the December, 1925, petroleum and land law. With the added controversy of that law, relationships between Mexico and the United States remained under stress until 1927 after a peak of crisis over United States intervention in Nicaragua.

While Mexican relations with the United States deteriorated, Mexican-Soviet ties strengthened during President Calles' first few years in office. Obregón had established diplomatic relations with the Soviets after the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared on July 30, 1924, that Mexico recognized the right of each country to select its own form of government. On November 7, Stanislas Pestkovsky presented his credentials to President Obregón.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹L. Ethan Ellis, Frank B. Kellogg and American Foreign Relations, 1925-1929 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1961), pp. 27-28.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁵¹Clissold, Soviet Relations, p. 4.

The Soviets were overly-enthusiastic about their diplomatic success in Mexico. The Soviet Foreign Minister G. V. Chicherin announced that Mexico would be a base for further operations in the Americas. President Calles, who had replaced Obregón, responded bluntly by stating that the Soviet Legation would have to respect both Mexico's sovereignty and international law.¹⁵² Thus, the Soviet Union made its first blunder shortly after her first minister to Mexico, Pestkovsky, stepped on Mexican soil.

Pestkovsky made some of his own mistakes. His first was to criticize CROM, the official labor organization, and Luis Morones, its head. Morones no longer associated himself with the Communist cause. From his position in President Calles' cabinet, Morones conducted constant verbal attacks on both the Communists and the Soviet government. Pestkovsky further angered the Mexican government by his obvious role in the formation of numerous Communist-front organizations. Among such organizations formed were Friends of Soviet Russia, the Anti-Imperialist League, and the Young Communists.¹⁵³

Any hope for reconciliation between the Mexican and Soviet governments was further diminished by the latter's involvement in the 1924-1925 railroad strike. When Communist-supported rail workers decided to go on strike, CROM decided that it would be an opportunity to take control of rail operations since the striking laborers had

¹⁵² Carleton Beals, The Coming Struggle for Latin American (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1938), p. 136.

¹⁵³ Ibid., pp. 137-138.

earlier refused to join the more conservative official labor party. Strikers received over fifty thousand pesos (\$25,000) that had come from Soviet Russia. Knowing that the Soviet Government had to approve this arrangement, Calles and his government protested.¹⁵⁴ In 1926 Pestkovsky was headed toward home, replaced by the new Soviet Minister Madame Kollontay.

One of the principal reasons President Calles had protested Chicherin's remarks at the opening of Mexican-Soviet diplomatic relations was the Mexican President's awareness of American allegations of Bolshevism in Mexico.¹⁵⁵ Calles himself had been accused of being a Communist even before he replaced President Obregón. One such accusation came from Senator Reed Smoot of Utah.

Senator Smoot denounced Calles in a letter to Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes in January, 1924. He wrote that:

. . . our State Department is in the curious position of denying recognition to Russia while at the same time giving support to Calles, who is a much redder Bolshevik than Lenin ever was and who claims to have communistic ideas that are a great improvement, from the communistic point of view, over anything that Lenin advocated even in his reddest days.¹⁵⁶

In the same letter Senator Smoot said he had information from two banker friends in Mexico City who claimed Obregón had gone insane, and that Calles ran the government. Hughes' reply stated that Obregón was known to be in full possession of his faculties, but he did not

¹⁵⁴Beals, The Coming Struggle, p. 138.

¹⁵⁵Clissold, Soviet Relations, p. 4.

¹⁵⁶R. G. 59, 812.00/26711, Senator Reed Smoot (Utah) to Sec. of State Charles E. Hughes, Jan. 3, 1924.

mention Calles.¹⁵⁷

In 1925 reports were still coming into the State Department concerning President Calles and his alleged associations with Communism. The American Consulate in San Luis Potosí offered 'proof' that Calles believed women to be public property, a belief frequently associated with Bolshevism in those days. According to a Consulate official, an American friend in San Luis Potosí had gone with a Mexican known by Calles, to ask the Mexican President:

. . . in accordance with Spanish customs, for permission to marry his daughter. President Calles told the American that he did not believe in marriage and that the American could live with his daughter if he cared to do so.¹⁵⁸

While some persons reported to the State Department that Calles was a Communist, at least one Department representative in Mexico disagreed. On September 10, 1925, Chargé H. F. Arthur Schoenfeld wrote the Secretary of State that President Calles was not giving any active aid or support to the Communists or their propaganda movements in Mexico. In spite of all the directives coming from Moscow, there were few people in Mexico who would listen to anyone who received orders from a foreign power. Mexican nationalism was too strong according to Chargé Schoenfeld.¹⁵⁹

By the end of 1925 Mexican-United States relations were seemingly

¹⁵⁷R. G. 59, 812.00/26711, Senator Reed Smoot (Utah) to Sec. of State Charles E. Hughes, Jan. 3, 1924.

¹⁵⁸R. G. 59, 812.00B/106, Dan Haver (Consul at San Luis Potosí) to Sec. of State, Dec. 31, 1925.

¹⁵⁹R. G. 59, 812.0013/95, Chargé H. F. Arthur Schoenfeld to Sec. of State, Sept. 10, 1925.

at a low point. Americans with investments in Mexico were angered over Calles' refusal to abide by the non-retroactive application of Article 27 as had been agreed upon at Bucareli. President Coolidge paid little attention to Mexico, but his Secretary of State and Ambassador to Mexico generally favored the capitalist investors and a firm attitude toward Mexico. Though the real issue was over Mexico's attempt to assert her sovereignty at Americans' expense, it was confused by those added charges of Bolshevism that Mexico so vehemently denied. Relations ebbed even lower when the United States used those allegations of Mexican Bolshevism to justify intervention in Nicaragua in 1926.

CHAPTER V

CONFLICT OVER NICARAGUA: 1926-1927

Although officials in the State Department heard many charges of active Bolshevism in Mexico prior to 1926, those charges never led to direct action. In 1927, however, the State Department justified its invasion of Nicaragua by United States Marines by expressed fear of the forceful spread of Mexican Communism. The action put United States-Mexican relations into a tense state complicated by high pressure from American investors and churchmen. Mexico and the United States asserted their sovereign powers and exchanged hostile views amid popular discussion of impending war.

In 1926 oil and land remained at the base of the conflict between Mexico and the United States. The State Department maintained its antagonistic view of Mexico's December 1925 Petroleum and Alien Land Laws. Ambassador Sheffield and Chargé H. F. Arthur Schoenfeld supported American investors who looked at Mexican law as confiscatory. Although Secretary Kellogg was reluctant, his two representatives sought a confrontation to produce some definite settlement. They did not seek war, but they did not totally eliminate that option.¹⁶⁰

The hardliners pushing for firm action against Mexico, received support from the Catholic Church in the United States when a dispute erupted between the Church and the Mexican Government in 1926. The

¹⁶⁰Smith, Revolutionary Nationalism, p. 235.

Mexican Archbishop made the mistake of publishing a protest against the Mexican Constitution and some of its anticlerical measures. President Calles took it as a challenge and ordered those constitutional measures into effect as the Government had ignored them to that point. To protest the nationalization of Church property and the expulsion of foreign clerics, Mexican bishops ordered a strike of the clergy. Mexicans were without religious services.¹⁶¹

Although the majority of Mexicans were Catholics, they generally did not feel the need for priests. 'Parishoners kept the Churches open under orders from the government.' Although some staunch supporters of the Church went into open rebellion, the masses adhered to their government's policy. Church opposition lasted until 1929 when a compromise ended the crisis on terms mostly unfavorable to the Catholics.¹⁶²

In the course of the struggle between Church and State in Mexico, American hardliners found added support for their contentions of Mexican radicalism. The Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus wrote to the State Department asking for war against Calles to prevent realization of his allegedly radical aims.¹⁶³ Churchmen called President Calles an outright Bolshevik and declared the real struggle in Mexico was a religious one between Christian Civilization and Bolshevism.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹Alba, The Mexicans, p. 160.

¹⁶²For a detailed account of the feud between Church and State in Mexico during the revolution see John W. F. Dulles, Yesterday in Mexico: A Chronicle of the Revolution, 1919-1936 (Austin: University of Texas 1961), passim.

¹⁶³The New York Times, August 6, 1926, p. 1.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., August 14, 1926, p. 4 and Nov. 24, 1926, p. 11.

Here again Calles' adversaries did not recognize the nationalistic direction of the 1917 Constitution and the Mexican government. The Catholic Church, besides having its titular head outside Mexico, relied heavily on foreign priests and continued to symbolize the Spanish presence in Mexican life. Mexicans resented those who spoke for outsiders rather than for Mexicans, and scores of priests had to leave the country under the new Constitution. Some Americans in the State Department used that misunderstanding to rally support for a firmer United States policy toward Mexico.

Although oil representatives wanted support, they rejected the religious question because of its impracticality. Guy Stevens, a leading spokesman for oil interests, clarified his constituents' view. He denounced opposition to United States protests against Mexico's land use laws as coming from Communists who wanted an end to private property. On the religious controversy he said:

. . . articles and statements I have read have indicated to me that there is in not a few minds a prejudice so deep against the Catholic Church that some people would almost be willing to see the institution of private property destroyed if only the Catholic Church would go down in the same crash. It has always seemed to me exceedingly unfortunante that a multitude of unrelated questions should have to be thrown together, to the general confusion of the whole Mexican situation.¹⁶⁵

Stevens obviously feared that his cause could be hurt by the Church issue and therefore backed away. He was still willing to use the accusation of Communism against his opposition, however. It was indeed unfortunate that "a multitude of unrelated questions" should add to the confusion United States-Mexican affairs.

¹⁶⁵Guy Stevens, Current Controversies with Mexico (n.p., 1927), pp. 122-200.

The State Department used charges of Bolshevism in Mexico, however, not to justify intervention in Mexico but in Nicaragua! American intervention in Nicaragua was a complicated maneuver to restore stable government to that country so American investments and lives would not be harmed. The American presence suggested nothing new as the United States had kept order with troops there from 1912 to 1924. Mexico's involvement was new, however, and drew rounds of criticism from the Coolidge administration.

The problems in Nicaragua grew out of the 1924 Presidential election there. Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes wanted a free election so American Marines could be removed. Carlos Solórzano, a Conservative, won the Presidential position on a ticket with Liberal Juan Bautista Sacasa as vice-president. The outgoing Conservative government supported Solórzano and Sacasa because of a split within the Conservative ranks. Another faction of Conservatives ran Emiliano Chamorro. With the election over, Marines stayed on to insure order until the government called them home in August, 1925.¹⁶⁶

The Conservative Chamorro disapproved of the Liberal influence in Solórzano's government. On October 25, 1925, Chamorro led a coup d'état which forced Solórzano to give Chamorro command of the army as general-in-chief. While the President officially remained in office, Chamorro held actual power. The revolt stopped short of overthrowing Solórzano as the United States had pledged in a 1923 Central American

¹⁶⁶William Kamman, A Search for Stability: United States Diplomacy Toward Nicaragua 1925-1933 (South Bend, Indiana, 1968), pp. 26-29. Hereafter cited Kamman, Search.

treaty to withhold recognition from any government coming to power by unconstitutional means. The revolt did, however, effectively eliminate Liberal influence in the government as Chamorro had the Congress expel Liberal members, and Vice-President Sacasa fled to El Salvador on his way to Washington to plead for assistance.¹⁶⁷

Under Chamorro's control, the Nicaraguan Congress banished Sacasa for two years and opened his office to Chamorro who, according to the Nicaraguan Constitution, illegally received a senatorial seat while serving as general-in-chief of the army. In January, 1926, Solórzano broke under the pressure of the situation, became ill, resigned and left the country. Chamorro therefore became President.¹⁶⁸

The United States refused to recognize Chamorro even though he had the backing of American businessmen. Under a 1923 treaty with Nicaragua, the United States refused to recognize anyone who came to power illegally through violence or otherwise. The United States negotiated with Chamorro to get his resignation and a new Congressional appointee for President. Adolfo Díaz, the new President, received United States recognition on November 17, 1926, because the Nicaraguan Congress asked the formerly expelled Liberal members to rejoin it.¹⁶⁹

The Liberals did not accept the arrangement and fought on. They

¹⁶⁷Kanman, Search, pp. 42-46.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁶⁹Dana Munro, The Latin American Republics: A History (New York: D. Appleton-Century Col, 1942), p. 504.

denied that the Congress had been legally reconstituted.¹⁷⁰ According to Article 106 of the Nicaraguan Constitution the Congress could select a person to entrust with the Presidency if neither the elected President or Vice-President was in the country. Mexico claimed that the Nicaraguan Congress had never been restored to its legal form as it had existed before Chamorro's take-over. Sacasa claimed he had never abdicated except by that force with which the Conservatives, now under Díaz, took control. The United States claimed otherwise and gave financial aid to the new Díaz government while placing an embargo on arms to both factions. The Liberals held ground only with Mexican support.¹⁷¹

The United States was well aware of Mexico's military aid to Sacasa. Both countries claimed they were supporting the legal government in Nicaragua. Americans landed Marines in August to protect investments and lives by forming a neutral zone while Mexico continued to ship arms to the Liberals. A full force of Marines landed on December 24 to side with the Conservatives in keeping order. On January 10, 1927 President Coolidge appeared before Congress to condemn Mexico for not adhering to the embargo. Shortly thereafter the President lifted the embargo to give arms to the Conservative Díaz.¹⁷²

Unable to convert Mexico to its view of the Nicaraguan situation

¹⁷⁰For the controversy over Article 106 of Nicaraguan Constitution and whether or not the Nicaraguan Congress was restored to its legal components see Kamman, Search, p. 67, and Henry L. Stimson, American Policy in Nicaragua (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927), p. 29. Stimson's work hereafter cited as Stimson, American Policy.

¹⁷¹Stimson, American Policy, p. 26.

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 34.

as related to law, the Coolidge administration sought more popular support for its policy at home. Already in November, 1926, Undersecretary of State Robert E. Olds had raised the cry of Mexican Bolshevik plotting. Calling a number of pressmen to his office, Olds reported that Mexico was trying to spread Bolshevism throughout Central America as a threat to United States influence and control of the Panama Canal.¹⁷³

Trying to draw further support for a stricter policy toward Mexico, Undersecretary Olds said:

For more than a year the State Department had been concerned over the relations between the United States and Mexico, and those relations had now reached a very acute stage. It is an undeniable fact that the Mexican Government to-day is a Bolshevik government. We can not prove it, but we are morally certain that a warm bond of sympathy, if not an actual understanding, exists between Mexico City and Moscow.¹⁷⁴

Olds set the stage for a clearer definition of Mexican Bolshevism that was to follow.

President Coolidge went before the Senate on January 10, 1927, to justify using Marines in Nicaragua. He encountered Senatorial opposition, but that opposition waited to present its case until Secretary of State Kellogg could appear at a previously scheduled hearing of the Foreign Relations Committee. Senator George Norris of Nebraska added that he hoped Senators could take sides in the Nicaraguan question as

¹⁷³United States, Congress, Senate, Senator Robert LaFollette quoting from Nov. 27, 1926 issue of St. Louis Post Dispatch, 69th congress, 2nd session, Jan. 14, 1927, Congressional Record, 68, pt. 2, p. 1646.

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

their consciences would dictate without being called Bolsheviks. Newspapers, Senators, and citizens waited for Secretary Kellogg to make an explanation on January 12.

Some Senators were shocked when Secretary Kellogg finally explained American intervention in the tiny Latin American republic. The Secretary did not suggest protection of American lives and capital. Instead, he told of the administration's desire to prevent Mexico from establishing a Communist government in Nicaragua. To prove his point, Kellogg offered the following information: 1) a resolution of the third congress of the Red International of Trade Unions, July 8 to 22, 1924, which called upon workers to unite against American imperialism; 2) a speech before the Executive Committee of the Communist International February 4, 1926, which called the American Communist Party "defender of the oppressed peoples of Latin America;" 3) a Comintern thesis that "Latin America can and must become a basis of support against imperialism;" 4) the March, 1926, instructions to the American Communist Party to keep in touch with the Latin American labor movement; 5) a report to the American Communists that "direct contact with Mexico was maintained;" 6) reports on activities and plans of American Communists dated November 1926; 7) a quote from Soviet Foreign Minister Chicherin on using Mexico as a base for extending contacts in Latin America; 8) a speech in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies condemning Moscow for trying to embroil Mexico in a conflict with the United States; 9) a protest from the Mexican Regional Confederation of Laborers condemning

¹⁷⁵U. S., congress, Senate, Senator Norris speaking on Nicaraguan intervention, 69th Cong., 2nd sess., Jan. 10, 1927, Congressional Record, vol. 68, pt. 2, pp. 1330-1331.

Ambassador Pestkovsky's aid to radical groups in Mexico; and finally, 10) a resolution from CROM asking the Mexican government to break off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union because the Soviets had aided Mexico's internal enemies.¹⁷⁶ The New York World, after citing Secretary Kellogg's information, stated the following:

Thus far Mr. Kellogg has not cited one single Mexican document, official or otherwise. All this evidence consists simply in the statements by Russians in Moscow or Americans in Chicago as to what they would like to do in Mexico.

We come at the end to three documents by Mexicans:

A. Speech by Mexican Labor Deputy Treviño in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies on September 9, 1925. He denounces the communists in Moscow for trying to provoke 'an international conflict' with the United States.

B. Communication addressed to the soviet minister by the central committee of the Mexican Federation of Labor, by direction of the seventh congress of that organization. It tells him to keep his hands off Mexico, because 'no nation has the right to impose, nor to lay down for another the doctrine which must control its activities.'

C. Resolution adopted March 6, 1926, at the seventh annual convention of the Mexican Federation of Labor, asking the diplomatic representative of Russia to 'abstain from lending moral and economic support to the so-called radical group enemies of the Mexican Federation of Labor and of the government.'

On analysis, Secretary Kellogg's charges against Mexico collapse ignominiously. His own citations prove, first, that he has no evidence connecting the Mexican Government with the Communist International at Moscow, and second, that even Mexican labor has openly resisted communist activity.¹⁷⁷

Senator Robert M. LaFollette severely criticized Kellogg's rationale. Claiming that the Secretary of State had deliberately hoped to play upon fears already created, LaFollette denounced the Secretary's sensationalism. He then proceeded to refute Kellogg's

¹⁷⁶U. S. Congress, Senate, 69th cong., 2nd sess., Jan 14, 1927, Congressional Record, 68, pt. 2, p. 1647.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

statement. Nothing in the statement connected the Mexican government to international Communism. In at least one charge Secretary Kellogg had failed to give the entire truth. He did not give President Calles' reply to Soviet Minister Chicherin, and that reply was highly pertinent. Calles told the Soviets they were not to meddle in Mexican matters of sovereignty. The Mexicans, according to their President, based their doctrine on "their own sufferings and experiences and rejected foreign interference." Senator LaFollette implied that Secretary Kellogg was aware of Calles' response and deliberately sought to mislead the Senate and American citizens.¹⁷⁸

Secretary Kellogg's January statement drew criticism not only from American politicians and newspapers, but also from Soviet Commisar Maksim Litvinov. Litvinov commented as follows:

Statesmen of capitalist countries have recently acquired the habit of excusing their incapacity in internal affairs or their aggressive designs in foreign affairs by reference to Bolshevik machinations and the plots of the Soviet Government. Whether it is a question of the strike in England, or of the American fleet's raid on the independent State of Nicaragua, or the shooting of the citizens of Java and Sumatra by Dutch police—there is always the same excuse: the plots of the Bolshevik Government. I shall not be surprised if enlightened statesmen of the great Powers begin to ascribe to the machinations of the Bolsheviks the earthquake in Japan and the floods in America. To attempt a serious refutation of these fantastic explanations would be an insult to public opinion.¹⁷⁹

He added that to justify intervention with Marines in Nicaragua by quoting the resolutions of the Third International was as ludicrous as it would be for the Soviet Union to attribute bad harvests in

¹⁷⁸U. S. Congress, Senate, 69th Cong., 2nd sess., Jan. 14, 1927, Congressional Record, 68, pt. 2, p. 1648.

¹⁷⁹Jane Degras, ed., Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy 1925-1932 (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), II, p. 152.

Russia to machinations of the American Federation of Labor which made malicious resolutions concerning the Soviets.¹⁸⁰ The Soviets, too, opposed Kellogg's tenuous logic.

Some members of the United States Senate opposed the landing of Marines in Nicaragua. Among these were Senators William Borah and Burton K. Wheeler. Senator Wheeler introduced a resolution to remove the United States forces, but the action received little Senatorial support. Senator Wheeler claimed there was no Communist plot in Nicaragua, but the Marines remained.¹⁸¹

With United States aid, the Conservative Díaz was able to hold power in Nicaragua. In Mexico, where popular opinion favored Juan Sacasa as legal President of Nicaragua, Mexico City daily El Excelsior commented on the United States actions. It claimed Mexico had as much right as the United States to supply aid to legitimate governments in Latin America. It accused the President of the United States of having flexible moral principles.¹⁸² Whatever accusations Mexico might throw, the United States had the military power. The United States dictated the rulership in Nicaragua under the pretense that it was preventing Mexico from spreading Communism in Latin America.

At the height of tension over the Nicaraguan crisis, Henry Lane Wilson, former United States Ambassador to Mexico, sent a note to the Postmaster General asking that it be revealed to Secretary of

¹⁸⁰Degras, Soviet Documents, p. 513.

¹⁸¹Kamman, Search, p. 77.

¹⁸²James Wilkie and Albert Michaels, Revolution in Mexico: Years of Upheaval 1910-1940 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 139.

State Kellogg. Wilson recalled that Calles at one time, either under Carranza or Obregón, had declared himself a Bolshevik. He further stated that President Coolidge should not take attacks on his Nicaraguan policy seriously as the Americans would follow him in the event of war. Mr. Wilson concluded, however, that war with Mexico would probably not be necessary. He said that if the United States withdrew recognition the Calles government would fail. Neither Government was willing to go to war over the affair.¹⁸³

The criticism of United States involvement in Nicaragua hit a sarcastic note in a poem read by Senator George Norris which went as follows:

One't they was a Bolshevik who wouldn't say his prayers,
 So Kellogg sent him off to bed, away up stairs;
 An' Kellogg heerd him holler, and Coolidge heerd him bawl,
 But when they turn't the kivers down he wasn't there at all.
 They seeked him down in Mexico, they cussed him in the press,
 They seeked him 'round the Capitol, an' ever'where I guess.
 But all they ever found of him was whiskers, hair and clout;
 An' the Bolsheviks 'll get you ef you don't watch out.¹⁸⁴

Accusations of Bolshevism did not seem to arouse Americans as much as they had in the earlier 1920's. Newspaper and popular support for the administration's Nicaraguan policy waned.

With continued fighting in Nicaragua and active opposition at home, President Coolidge sent Henry L. Stimson to Nicaragua to mediate the argument in March, 1927. After viewing the situation, Stimson concluded that neither of the opposing factions could bring about a

¹⁸³R. G. 59, 812.001C13/24, Henry L. Wilson to Harry S. New (Postmaster General), Jna. 15, 1927.

¹⁸⁴U. S. Congress, Senate, Senator Norris read poem by James Whitcomb Riley, 69th Cong., 2nd sess., 1927, Congressional Record, 68 pt. 2, p. 1691.

decisive military victory. The upcoming 1928 election provided Stimson with a possible solution. If that election could be conducted impartially, then both sides might accept the victor. President Díaz accepted the idea and asked Stimson to propose the following conditions to the Liberals: 1) an end to hostilities before the new crop was ready for planting with both sides to turn their arms over to American supervisors, 2) amnesty for exiles and return of their property, 3) Liberal participation in the Díaz cabinet, 4) formation of a nonpartisan police force commanded by American officers, 5) American supervision of the 1928 election with enough force available to be effective, and 6) the continued existence of Marines to enforce stability.¹⁸⁵ Stimson took those terms to Liberal representatives.

The Liberals arranged a meeting between Stimson and their commander in the field, General Moncada. Recognizing Moncada as generally favorable to United States influence in Central America, Stimson was anxious to confer with him. The American representative was not disappointed. It took the two only thirty minutes to agree on a proposed end to hostilities with the exception of Moncada's opposition to Díaz remaining in the presidency. The Liberal general said he would try to convince his men, however, that it was necessary to accept Díaz until 1928 when the United States would guarantee a free election. Sacasa himself, though not pleased with the outcome, went along with his General's decision. With the agreement, the Liberal forces stopped fighting and received money for their weapons.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵Stimson, American Policy, pp. 63-64.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 76-84.

One Liberal commander refused to accept the peace terms. General Augusto César Sandino kept his guerrilla band together in the North. From 1927 to 1933 Sandino harassed American troops and gained fame throughout Latin America as the defender of Nicaraguan sovereignty against United States imperialism. As unjustified as United States accusations were against the Sacasa revolt, they would have been slightly more apropos had they been applied to Sandino after he began his own guerrilla war.

Fighting for the Liberal Party's cause, Sandino met with the Comintern agents who hoped to guide him into their fold. Farabundo Martí, a member of the League Against Imperialism, became Sandino's private secretary. The League Against Imperialism was secretly run by the Comintern and included the Mexican intellectual José Vasconcelos in its list of delegates at its first meeting in February, 1927. (Vasconcelos, like many others, very likely was unaware of the Comintern's control.) It was Farabundo Martí's job to win Sandino over to the Communist cause.¹⁸⁷

To assist Sandino, the Communists established their own collection agency, "Mafunenic," to get funds to forward to Nicaragua. It did more harm than good as Sandino already had his own agents collecting outside Nicaragua. Sympathetic foreigners, confused by the two groups, gave hesitantly. When the Communists did get funds, only a small percentage made it to Sandino.¹⁸⁸

In 1929 Sandino broke off his relations with the Communists.

¹⁸⁷Alba, Politics and Labor, pp. 130-131.

¹⁸⁸Ibid., p. 132.

Refusing to eliminate the intellectual and middle class as suggested by the League Against Imperialism, Sandino dropped Farabundo Martí from his secretarial position. In an exchange of letters in January, 1930, Sandino and the Secretary of the Mexican Communist Party formally rejected each other's cause. Though the Communists claimed Sandino was without moral principles, Farabundo Martí, his ex-secretary, confessed just before his execution for participation in a Communist-inspired revolt in El Salvador in 1931 that the break resulted from Sandino's refusal to accept Communism. Just before Farabundo Martí was executed, he praised Sandino as a patriot of Nicaraguan sovereignty.¹⁸⁹

The Sandino revolt lasted until 1933 when the United States finally committed itself to withdrawal of armed forces from Nicaragua. The new Nicaraguan President was Juan B. Sacasa for whom Sandino originally took to the field. President Sacasa gave Sandino amnesty and employment to his followers as well as opening segments of public land to peasant settlement.¹⁹⁰ Sandino did not keep his freedom long, however, as he was assassinated after a dinner given in his honor by President Sacasa in 1934. The alleged assassin was Brigadier General Anastasio Somoza, a jealous rival for the Presidency.¹⁹¹ Nicaraguan politics seemed to have benefited little from American moral guidance.

The Nicaraguan interlude served only to put increased strain on United States-Mexican relations in early 1927 when the State Department

¹⁸⁹Alba, Politics and Labor, p. 281. For exchange of letters between Sandino and the secretary of the Mexican Communist Party see Clissold, Soviet Realties, p. 15.

¹⁹⁰Alexander DeConde, Herbert Hoover's Latin American Policy (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1951), p. 84.

¹⁹¹Dubois, Operation America, p. 24.

made its charges against Mexican Bolshevism. At that time the Communists had less influence in Mexican government than they developed later with Sandino in Nicaragua. Fortunately, the hardliners failed to precipitate war with Mexico, but the possibility may have had some impact on the Mexican government which became more conciliatory toward the United States afterward. The argument that Mexico was attempting to set up Bolshevik governments in Latin America to spread the concept of nationalizing foreign property did not work to gain popular support. United States' willingness to use military force to back its interests, however, pleased those persons with business interests who were advocating militant measures against Mexico.¹⁹² United States intervention in Nicaragua may have added immediate tension to relations with Mexico, but in the long run, it may have helped to break the apparent stalemate in United States efforts to protect investments under pressure from the more radical articles of the 1917 Constitution in Mexico. Both Coolidge and Calles apparently wanted to prevent disagreements from leading to military action.

After the Nicaraguan conflict, both Mexico and the United States seemed to change their views toward a more conciliatory posture. Symbolic of the changing atmosphere in United States-Mexican affairs was the appointment of Dwight Morrow as ambassador to Mexico in September, 1927. President Coolidge could not have picked a better man to help smooth over the disagreements that had plagued the two countries since the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution.

¹⁹²Smith, Revolutionary Nationalism, p. 241.

CHAPTER VI

DIPLOMACY WITHOUT REDS UNDER THE BED

Even before Dwight Morrow's appointment as United States Ambassador to Mexico in 1927, a number of factors helped ease tensions between the Río Grande neighbors. Nearly a decade had elapsed since the Communist take-over in Russia, and the State Department officials seemed less willing to emphasize the Bolshevik plot in United States-Mexican relations. That was especially true because of Secretary Kellogg's failure to arouse popular support with that accusation in the Nicaraguan crisis. Despite the discomfiture of oil company representatives over the Mexican implementation of Article 27 and the new law ordering fifty year leases to replace the old perpetual ones, they agreed with Secretary Kellogg in August, 1927, that intervention was not the solution. An apparent shift in State Department attitude may have frightened the oilmen. J. Reuben Clark, Jr., representing the Department, denied the confiscatory nature of Mexican law and refuted claims by oil companies. He declared that no confiscation had taken place, but should that occur the oil people would have to content themselves with claims for damages against the Mexican government. Tension between the two countries also eased as Mexico sought to recover from the economic disruption of the Revolution.¹⁹³ Ambassador Morrow walked into a conciliatory atmosphere.

At first, Mexicans distrusted Morrow. The new Ambassador had

¹⁹³Ellis, Kellogg, p. 47

been associated with the J. P. Morgan Company for fourteen years prior to his appointment. Despite this background, Morrow took an impartial view of two of the most difficult problems facing the United States and Mexico—oil and the Church. Under instructions from President Coolidge to keep the United States out of war with Mexico, Morrow contributed greatly to that goal.¹⁹⁴

In discussions with Calles, Morrow made the first significant break in the impasse over the oil question. Morrow gained Calles' confidence and suggested, upon Calles' request for Morrow's opinion, that the best way to improve the situation would be for the Mexican Supreme Court to rule in favor of a 1921 decision against retroactive application of Article 27. Calles accepted the decision, and on November 17, 1927, the Supreme Court ruled that the December, 1925 law requiring fifty year leases was unconstitutional.¹⁹⁵

Oil companies were not satisfied. They were still subject to the provision requiring positive acts, and all lands became subject to expropriation for 'public utility.' Only complete guarantees for future operations were acceptable to the oilmen as many held oil lands that had not yet been exploited. President Calles introduced legislation giving the foreign owners or lessors preference should the Mexican government decide to allow development of those unexploited lands. Morrow and his banker friends urged the oilmen to accept the practical advantages of the Supreme Court decision and the January, 1928, legislation. From that point onward, the State Department took the

¹⁹⁴Ellis, Kellogg, p. 47.

¹⁹⁵Smith, Revolutionary Nationalism, p. 51.

position that it would not act except in cases of specific injuries. J. Reuben Clark, Jr., one of Morrow's staff, accurately outlined the new policy. He said nationalization of property was a sovereign right and the companies would have to accept conditions which Mexico imposed upon them.¹⁹⁶ For the time being oil companies had to accept Mexico's few concessions. The New York Times hailed it as the end to the oil problems.¹⁹⁷ There was no significant break in the arrangement until 1938.

Ambassador Morrow also intervened in Mexico's dispute with the Catholic Church and helped end the internal strife created by that particular disagreement. Morrow saw the reasoning for both points of view and felt that negotiations could bring the Church and government into an agreement. He met with both sides and drew them into conferences which ultimately led to a truce and end to the clerics' strike in 1929.¹⁹⁸

One author has asserted that the compromise between the Church and State came about because many Mexicans viewed the Church as having a valuable role in Mexican nationalism. Concerning the dispute Walter Washington said, "no atheistic void" awaited "the arrival of a Communist faith." The Mexicans did not seek Communist replacements for their striking clerics.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶Ellis, Kellogg, p. 55.

¹⁹⁷The New York Times, March 28, 1928, p. 1.

¹⁹⁸United States Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1928 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 326-335.

¹⁹⁹S. Wlater Washington, "Mexican Resistance to Communism," Foreign Affairs, XXXVI (April, 1958), p. 509.

With two of Mexico's most disruptive problems put into the background, Morrow settled down to less dramatic diplomatic practice. For the rest of his Mexican stay the former Morgan associate took up the challenge of Mexico's economic problems. Morrow sought stability as a prerequisite to the Mexicans' financial dilemma. In opposition to his old banker friends, the ambassador wanted American investors to delay temporarily demands for payments on confiscated lands as had been agreed under the Bucareli plans. Unsuccessful as he was in keeping those who lost land from exerting pressure for compensation, Morrow did succeed in keeping the State Department less hostile toward Mexico. No crisis arose over the claims in the 1920's.²⁰⁰

The new era of stabilized diplomatic relations corresponded with the evaporation of State Department concern over alleged Mexican Bolshevism. Although some elements of the United States public still claimed Mexico was a hotbed of Communism, the State Department did not take an active concern. The number of notes relating to Bolshevism dwindled to occasional passing references from 1928 to 1930 in State Department correspondence with its Mexican representatives.

The State Department's lack of interest in Mexican Bolshevism may have been related to an increasing Mexican government conflict with the irritating Communists. In 1928 a religious fanatic assassinated President-elect Obregón. Outgoing President Calles then had-picked Emilio Portes Gil to serve until new elections could be held in 1929. The Communists resented the strongman tactics of President Calles, especially since Calles and his supporters took an increasingly

²⁰⁰Smith, Revolutionary Nationalism, pp. 260-262.

conciliatory attitude toward the United States. A Comintern representative called Morrow 'Morgan's sleuth hound' and said the 'settlement' of the oil question meant the United States had now embarked upon a peaceful penetration policy in order to take control of the Mexican economy.²⁰¹ The Communists therefore took a hostile attitude toward the Mexican government.

In 1929 the Communists temporarily put aside their animosity toward Calles and President Portes Gil to aid the government in putting down a revolt by General Escobar. Escobar had taken up arms when it appeared his candidate, Gilberto Valenzuela, would not have a chance in the 1929 election because of Calles' imposition of Pascual Ortiz Rubio. The Mexican Communist Party paid for arms and ammunition and gathered a small force in Yucatán which helped defeat Escobar. Escobar's alleged reactionary support forced the Communists to side with the government. It was not a judicious decision as the Communists soon discovered.²⁰²

Calles, in his position as Secretary of War, took command of government forces. He not only crushed the Escobar rebellion with American aid, but also turned on the Communists who had organized against Escobar themselves. Communist leader José Guadalupe Rodríguez was executed for trying to form soviets of soldiers and peasants. The agrarian leagues under Ursulo Galván backed away from the Communists and went over to Calles.²⁰³ The Comintern reacted with hostility to the Mexican govern-

²⁰¹International Press Correspondence, July 26, 1928.

²⁰²Ibid., March 15, 1929.

²⁰³Alba, The Mexicans, p. 171.

ment for its treacherous alliance with United States imperialists, but the Communist agency was harsh on the Mexican Communists, too. According to the Comintern's executive committee the PCM had not understood the nature of the conflict in Mexico. To those sitting in Moscow, it appeared the Mexican struggle was between imperialist factions and the Mexican Communists should have stayed out of the fight.²⁰⁴

In July, 1929, the Executive Committee of the Communist International issued a manifesto against the 'Fascist' Mexican government. Peasants received instructions to keep their arms and "take a vigorous stand against Mexican fascism." The Comintern told all of its member organizations to protest the Mexican government's alleged friendliness toward imperialist nations.²⁰⁵ Mexico's Ambassador in Moscow wrote a protest note suggesting that the Soviet government exert its control and silence criticism coming from the Comintern.²⁰⁶ Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov, while stressing his government's friendly attitude toward the Mexican people, denied that the Soviet government had any control over the Comintern and, therefore, could not comply.²⁰⁷

The Mexicans themselves decided to act to quiet the Communists. In Mexico City on the evening of August 29, police raided the Communists' newspaper, El Machete. The office was shut down, and four were arrested

²⁰⁴International Press Correspondence, April 12, 1929.

²⁰⁵Jane Degras, ed., Communist International 1919-1943 (3 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1956-1960), III, pp. 71-73.

²⁰⁶Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki: SSR, xii (1929), no 329, p. 574, in Clissold, Soviet Relations, p. 92.

²⁰⁷Ibid.

including the editor, González Lorenzo.²⁰⁸ Shortly before the raid the Mexican government ordered immigration officials to prevent all Communists of any nationality from entering Mexico.²⁰⁹

The Comintern directed more protests against persecution of Communists in Mexico. United States affiliates of the International gathered before Mexican consulates to protest the arrest of comrades. Demonstrators appeared in Washington and New York, and one group harangued President Ortiz Rubio in Detroit on a visit to Henry Ford.²¹⁰

Designed to obtain the end of harassment of Communists by Mexican officials, the demonstrations backfired. When President Ortiz Rubio returned to Mexico, his Foreign Minister Genaro Estrada announced to the press that Mexico had severed diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The break came because of the insulting demonstrations which Ortiz Rubio said originated with directives from Moscow. The Mexican Foreign Minister indignantly denounced the Soviets for not displaying the same respect for sovereignty that Mexico had shown by recognizing the Soviet government at a time when it was less than fashionable to do so.²¹¹

With fervent anti-Communist campaign conducted by the Mexican government, the State Department apparently relaxed its fears. Friend-

²⁰⁸The New York Times, August 31, 1929, p. 5.

²⁰⁹Ibid., August 18, 1929, II, p. 21.

²¹⁰Ibid., Jan. 24, 1930, pp. 1 and 21.

²¹¹Ibid., p. 21. President Ortiz Rubio confirmed Estrada's comments in an appearance before the Mexican Congress. For excerpts from that speech see Clissold, Soviet Relations, pp. 95-97.

ly relations with Mexico could help protect United States investments there. The State Department could not control, however, individuals' attitudes towards Mexico and its leaders, and it was the attitude of one person that nearly disrupted friendly relations between the United States and Mexico in 1929. John A. Valls, District Attorney in Laredo, pursued a plan to arrest Mexican ex-President Plutarco Elías Calles.

In December, 1928, Calles went to Europe via the United States. The State Department then learned that John Valls, former District Attorney of Webb County, had stated that General Calles would be arrested for an alleged part in the murder of General Lucio Blanco and a companion in Laredo on June 7, 1922. Acting Secretary of State Wilbur J. Carr sent a message to the Governor of Texas asking that any such attempt be stifled. Carr said that any action against General Calles would be detrimental to the friendly relations between the United States and Mexico.²¹²

Calles passed through Laredo to New York without serious incidents. There was a small honor guard to greet him along with a committee from the Laredo Chamber of Commerce, and General Calles seemed quite pleased at the Reception.²¹³ Referring to charges against General Calles, a member of the Mexican Consulate in Laredo said that according to international law, Valls could not bring suit against the General. He said Lucio Blanco and his companion were murdered on July 7, 1922. Calles could prove that he was in Mexico City on that day. He was therefore

²¹²R. G. 59, 812.001C13/37, Acting Secretary of State Wilbur J. Carr to Governor of Texas Dan Moody, July 1, 1929.

²¹³R. G. 59, 812.001C13/41, Richard Boyce (Am. Consul) to Secretary of State, July 23, 1929.

outside the jurisdiction of the State of Texas. The Consular official further pointed out that at the time of his death Blanco was in open rebellion against the government of Mexico.²¹⁴

Secretary of State Stimson studied the legal aspects of the accusations against Calles. According to material available there was no basis for Valls to arrest Calles. If Calles were to be tried for Blanco's death, it would be Mexico's responsibility to prosecute. Stimson said this would be unreasonable since Blanco and his companion, Avralio Martínez, were in open revolt against the Obregón regime in which Calles served as a cabinet member.²¹⁵

Upon the eve of General Calles' return to the United States and Mexico in December, 1929, events did not bode well for him if he returned through Laredo as had been planned. In November the State Department was rudely awakened to the fact that Calles' arch enemy John A. Valls had returned to the post of Prosecuting Attorney of Webb County. When approached by an American Consulate official, Valls said that he still intended to arrest Calles should he ever enter Texas. He also claimed that only official recognition of Calles' diplomatic immunity by the President of the United States would dissuade him from making the arrest.²¹⁶ To attest to Valls' determination, Roy Campbell,

²¹⁴R. G. 59, 812.001C13/57, Sec. of State Stimson to Am. Consul of Laredo, Dec. 3, 1929.

²¹⁵R. G. 59, 812.001C13/51, Roy Campbell (Customs Collector at Laredo) to Ambassador Morrow, Nov. 13, 1929.

²¹⁶R. G. 59, 812.001C13/52, Consul Boyce of Laredo to Sec. of State, Nov. 28, 1929.

United States Customs Collector, told Ambassador Dwight Morrow that Valls was relentless and despised "everything and everybody in Mexico" except adherents of Porfirio Díaz.²¹⁷ Campbell's analysis could be confirmed by looking back to testimony Valls had given to the Fall Committee in 1920.

The American Consul at Nuevo Laredo, on December 4, 1929, noted further evidence that Valls was going to attempt to arrest Calles for questioning in the Blanco killing. According to a Consular report, Valls intended to break in the door of Calles' train to arrest him. If necessary he would also wire warrants for Calles' arrest to other parts of Texas. The report stated, furthermore, Attorney Valls did not care how much he might embarrass the United States Government.²¹⁸ The so-called political boss of Valls' district tried to dissuade him. So did other prominent citizens. Valls remained obstinant.²¹⁹

Secretary of State Stimson, determined to prevent any possible embarrassment by Attorney Valls, wrote to the latter informing him that General Calles would have diplomatic status and the United States Government would take the necessary steps to prevent his arrest.²²⁰

Valls made no reply other than to ask for clarification of what Calles' diplomatic status meant. The Consul at Nuevo Laredo said an exchange

²¹⁷R. G. 59.812.001C13/51, Roy Campbell (Customs Collector at Laredo) to Ambassador Morrow, Nov. 13, 1929.

²¹⁸R. G. 59, 812.001C13/77, Consul Boyce to Sec. of State, Dec. 4, 1929.

²¹⁹R. G. 59, 812.001C13/70, Consul at Nuevo Laredo to Sec. of State, Dec. 5, 1929.

²²⁰R. G. 59, 812.001C13/86, Stimson to Valls, Dec. 15, 1929.

of letters with Valls disclosed that the latter would not recognize Calles' diplomatic immunity. When the Consul asked Valls what he intended to do if the United States provided protection, Valls replied that he would be prepared to meet such an occasion.²²¹

On December 14, 1929, J. P. Cotton, Undersecretary of State, sent a message to the War Department. He instructed the Secretary of War to make whatever arrangements were necessary to provide for General Calles' safety in Texas. He was to prevent John Valls from molesting the Mexican ex-President in any way. In response, a "Guard of Honor" boarded Calles' train at Texarkana, Texas early on the morning of December 16. This small squad from the Eighth Army Corps was to protect Calles while passing through Laredo. At the International Bridge two private cars held another squad that would assist the first in case of an incident. They were supplementary to numerous special police agents from the railroad who were instructed to get Calles' train across the border.²²³

On the evening of December 16, 1929, the train carrying General Calles crossed the International Bridge without incident. Very few people saw the armed guard,²²⁴ and the only result of the threat was that the Mexican Consulate in Laredo closed as a reprisal. It was a reprisal, not against the United States Government, but against those

²²¹R. G. 59, 812.001C13/97, Boyce to Sec. of State, Dec. 13, 1929.

²²²R. G. 59, 812.001C13/100, J. P. Cotton to Sec. of War, Dec. 14, 1929.

²²³R. G. 59, 812.001C13/101, Hdq. Eighth Army Corps to Commanding General, Dec. 17, 1929.

²²⁴Ibid.

who had sought to embarrass General Calles.²²⁵

The exchange of telegrams between Attorney John Valls and Secretary of State Stimson on December 15, the day before Calles' arrival provided the clue to the significance of Valls' relationship to Bolshevism and the 'Red Scare.' Stimson said that Calles was traveling with the Mexican Ambassador to the United States and his diplomatic status was recognized. As a personal note he added that he could not understand why any law officer might wish to act against Calles' diplomatic status.²²⁶

John Valls made a rather brief but enlightening reply:

I thank you for your telegram of today excepting that part of it expressing astonishment at my contemplated action to arrest Calles

A government that has given diplomatic immunity to a fugitive from justice and thrown its protecting arms around the greatest exponent of Bolshevism in the Western Hemisphere should express no surprise at the honest efforts of patriotic officials to fearlessly enforce the laws of Texas. My Government's conduct in this particular only postpones the day of reckoning when Calles will be brought to the bar of public justice to face a courageous judge and an incorruptible jury in Webb County.²²⁷

How much influence prejudice may have had on Valls is disputable. By his telegram to Stimson, however, he gave the impression that Calles' guilt as a Communist matched any guilt he may have had the killing of General Blanco. Even if Valls' justification was the Blanco affair, it is certain his attitude toward Calles and Mexican Communism added to his determination.

²²⁵R. G. 59, 812.001C13/92, Consul Boyce to Sec. of State, Dec. 17, 1929.

²²⁶R. G. 59, 812.001C13/86, Sec. of State Stimson to John Valls, Dec. 15, 1929.

²²⁷R. G. 59, 812.001C13/81, John Valls to Stimson, Dec. 15, 1929.

There was really more danger in the incident than embarrassment to the United States government. The Consul at Nuevo Laredo had warned Valls that an arrest might lead to a break in diplomatic relations between the two countries. Under these circumstances, United States citizens in Mexico might be subjected to hostile treatment. An arrest also would have undermined the better relations the United States sought at the time. There was even the chance that violent revolution might break out again in Mexico. Valls rejected his government's reasoning, legal precedence, and pleas from his friends to attempt a policy based on his own fears and prejudices toward a man he considered to be the leading Communist in the Americas.²²⁸

Ironically, Calles on returning to Mexico, took a step away from the radicalism associated with Communism. He initiated an agrarian program based upon efficient production rather than rapid land distribution. There were times in the past when Calles had appeared to embody radicalism. He had been pragmatic in his approach to Mexican nationalism as directed by the Revolution of 1910. He had, however, never embraced international Communism.²²⁹

The Texas official's attempt to arrest ex-President Calles underscores the trend in Mexican-United States relations in 1929. Attorney Valls represented a decreasing faction disgusted with the Mexican Revolution and quick to attribute the excesses of that movement to Communist-inspired agitators. By the late 1920's, however, Americans

²²⁸R. G. 59, 812.001C13/70, Consul at Nuevo Laredo to Sec. of State, Dec. 5, 1929.

²²⁹Alba, The Mexicans, p. 166.

were less easily aroused by such allegations. The State Department recognized that trend, especially when Secretary Kellogg failed to gather popular support with charges against Mexican Communism in the Nicaragua affair in early 1927. The Department did not respond to Valls' charge that Calles was the leading Bolshevik in the Western Hemisphere. Instead, Secretary Stimson claimed there was no legal reason to arrest the Mexican ex-President. By ordering the War Department to protect Calles, Stimson showed the length to which the government would go in order to insure that nothing would interrupt the friendlier ties between Mexico and the United States. Diplomacy by negotiation and conciliation appeared to work where threats had failed. The United States had learned that the Mexican revolutionary government meant an assertion of Mexican sovereignty.

Mexicans demanded respect for their sovereign rights from all foreigners. When the Communists continued agitating, the Mexican government struck back under the legal justification of Article 33 of the 1917 Constitution which prohibited foreigners from meddling in Mexican political affairs and gave the President power to expel those foreigners without judicial process.²³⁰ In 1930 the Mexican President kicked out the Soviets for interfering in Mexican politics.

The New York Times summed up the significance of that break in Mexican-Soviet diplomatic relations. The newspaper called it the end of an era. Morrow received most of the credit as the paper reported the following:

²³⁰Fall Committee, p. 3130.

The end of that disturbed diplomatic period when there was bitter controversy over the oil and land laws and suspicions of Bolshevist manoeuvres against the United States through Mexico, came with the Mission of Dwight W. Morrow as Ambassador to Mexico, but the sharp swing that Mexico City has now taken away from Moscow is a source of gratification here and is regarded as one more indication of community of interests between Mexico and the United States.²³¹

The article pointed to the contrast of the situation in 1930 and the period three years prior when Secretary of State Kellogg called Mexico the center for Bolshevism in Latin America during the conflict over Nicaragua. Although Mexico consistently denied those accusations of Bolshevism, it was not until Ambassador Morrow went to Mexico that Americans ended their suspicions of the Mexican government in that regard. There was no official United States comment on the termination of Mexican-Soviet diplomatic relations, but there would be no reason to doubt the reporter's interpretation of a 'grateful' Washington.²³² It was indeed the end of an era.

²³¹The New York Times, Jan. 25, 1930, p. 3.

²³²Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

Communism left an indelible imprint on Mexico's affairs with her northern neighbor in the 1920's. Cries of Bolshevism frequently emanated from the North and disturbed the nationalistic Mexicans who were caught up in a revolution intended to produce social, economic, and political reform. The goals of that revolution, summed up in the 1917 Mexican Constitution, were similar enough to Communist designs in Russia so that many in the United States saw the Mexican situation as part of a Soviet-based international attack on American values and economic interests.

Mexico consistently defended her movement as an indigenous one and strove to obtain international respect for her sovereign rights. American businessmen may have lost capital and influence in Mexico during the 1920's, but the Communists, with their lack of respect for nationalism in the period, fared even worse.

The Communists never obtained much strength in Mexico. Michael Borodin, the first Comintern agent in Latin America, met Carranza, and the Mexican Communist Party received a grant from De la Huerta while he was finance minister for Obregón. Those two instances reveal the highest success achieved by the Communists in their attempt to influence the Mexican revolutionary government. Communists also constantly confronted problems in trying to organize labor. Mexican workers passed resolutions

rejecting directives from Moscow and often disowned Communist members within organizational ranks. Late in the 1920's when the Comintern ordered active resistance to the Mexican government, the Communist uprising was insignificant and quickly crushed.

Unsuccessful as the Communists may have been in the 1920's, there remained some potential for take-over. Lazaro Cárdenas, President during the 1930's and noted for his radical application of Article 27 while his country's leader, openly sided with the Communists after he left office. The realities of Mexico's strongman government could have meant Communist control had Cárdenas converted while still in the Presidency. As long as Mexican politics remained under domination by an elite, the Communists had an opportunity to obtain power should they persuade a member of that elite to accept Communist ideology.

Communist failure in Mexico did little to avert hostile opinion in some segments of the United States citizenry. The mere appearance of a Communist pamphlet or small demonstration provided sufficient evidence to convince some that the Mexican government adhered to an international conspiracy against the capitalist system. First among accusations of Mexican Bolshevism were those that emanated from the Fall Committee. They came mostly from men with economic interests in Mexico and included Chairman Albert Fall himself, who was not beyond looking after his own interests as was evidenced in the Teapot Dome oil lease scandal in 1923. Edward Doheny, one of the oil magnates involved in that scandal, was another who appeared before the committee to denounce Communism in Mexico. Both Fall and

Doheny had money invested in Mexican property. Certainly their convictions regarding rampant radicalism in Mexico had something to do with their own potential losses.

In late 1926 and early 1927 State Department officials took up the charge of Mexican Communism. They hoped to gain support for unpopular intervention in Nicaragua by accusing the Mexicans of trying to establish a Communist regime in the Central American republic. The response was immediate and negative. President Calles indignantly rejected the charge and Mexican newspapers defended Calles' position. United States Senators created the most active opposition to the charge of Mexican Bolshevism, and the affair died down after Secretary Stimson's successful negotiating tour in Nicaragua. Mexico and the United States had reached a peak of tension that brought on fear of impending war. Neither country desired that extreme attitudes seemed to change after that confrontation.

When Attorney Valls tried to arrest ex-President Calles he ran into stiff resistance from the State Department. Although the Department had recorded numerous charges against Calles as a Bolshevik, it preferred to keep up the new air of friendly relations that made negotiation over claims so much simpler. Arresting the former Mexican President would have thrown Mexico into new turmoil since Calles remained the power behind the Presidency. A new outbreak of violence very likely would have endangered American lives and property. State Department officials were not about to risk losing their new influence, gained largely through Ambassador Morrow's efforts.

Attorney Valls' criticism of Calles as the leading Bolshevik in

the Western Hemisphere seemed more like a remnant of an earlier time when Americans anxiously shipped out anyone suspected of sympathizing with the Communist cause, and arrest notices constantly filled the front pages of the nation's newspapers. By the late 1920's the scare had subdued to such an extent that the charge of Bolshevism would have fallen on many deaf or irritated ears. It was not sufficient to arouse popular support in 1927 when the Secretary of State tried to use it to justify intervention in Nicaragua. There was less chance it could bring support for a possible direct confrontation with Mexico in 1929, and that charge was the only one available against ex-President Calles since State Department lawyers declared there was no legal way to try Calles for implication in the Blanco murder. Since Mexico at that time was involved in an open break with the Soviets and actively prosecuting Communist agents, it would have been difficult to present a convincing claim that the Mexicans had gone Communist.

Throughout the 1920's, then, Communism had a definite impact on Mexican-United States relations. It is not within the scope of this study to suggest United States actions regarding alleged Mexican Bolshevism were either right or wrong. It is true that most of those charges came from persons with special interests in Mexico and therefore, with possible alternate motivations for desiring a direct confrontation with the Mexican revolutionary government. That the Mexicans did apply pressure on the Communists does not necessarily imply that they did so because of those harsh allegations emanating from the United States. More likely, the nationalist fervor in Mexico defeated the Communist and their international plan. By the end of the decade the

United States government came much closer to understanding Mexico's national goals and the possibilities of negotiating differences without threat and, as it appeared to the Mexicans, without the derogatory charge that the Mexican government adhered to an international Communist ideology.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

ARTICLE TWENTY-SEVEN OF THE MEXICAN CONSTITUTION OF 1917

The ownership of lands and waters comprised within the limits of the national territory is vested originally in the Nation, which has had, and has, the right to transmit title thereof to private persons, thereby constituting private property.

Private property shall not be expropriated except for reasons of public utility and by means of indemnification.

The nation shall have at all times the right to impose on private property such limitations as the public interest may demand as well as the right to regulate the development of natural resources, which are susceptible of appropriation, in order to conserve them and equitably to distribute the public wealth. For this purpose necessary measures shall be taken to divide large landed estates; to develop small landed holdings; to establish new centers of rural population with such lands and waters as may be indispensable to them; to encourage agriculture and to prevent the destruction of natural resources, and to protect property from damage detrimental to society. Settlements, hamlets situated on private property and communes which lack lands or water do not possess them in sufficient quantities for their needs shall have the right to be provided with them from the adjoining properties, always having due regard for small landed holdings. Wherefore, all grants of lands made

up to the present time under the decree of January 6, 1915, are confirmed. Private property acquired for the said purposes shall be considered as taken for public utility.

In the Nation is vested direct ownership of all minerals or substances which in veins, layers, masses or beds constitute deposits whose nature is different from the components of the land, such as minerals from which metals and metalloids used for industrial purposes are extracted; beds of precious stones, rock salt and salt lakes formed directly by marine waters, products derived from the decomposition of rocks, when their exploitation requires underground work; phosphates which may be used for fertilizers; solid mineral fuels; petroleum and all hydrocarbons—solid, liquid or gaseous.

In the Nation is likewise vested the ownership of the water of territorial seas to the extent and in the terms fixed by the law of the nation; those of lakes and inlets of bays; those of interior lakes of natural formation which are directly connected with flowing waters; those of principal rivers or tributaries from the points at which there is a permanent current of water in their beds to their mouths, whether they flow to the sea or cross two or more states; those of intermittent streams which traverse two or more States in their main body; the waters of rivers, streams or ravines, when they bound the national territory or that of the States; waters extracted from mines; and the beds and banks of the lakes and streams hereinbefore mentioned, to the extent fixed by law. Any other stream of water not comprised within the foregoing enumeration shall be considered as an integral part of the private property through which it flows; but the development of the waters when

they pass from one landed property to another shall be considered of public utility and shall be subject to the provisions prescribed by the States.

In the cases to which the two foregoing paragraphs refer, the ownership of the Nation is inalienable and may not be lost by prescription; concessions shall be granted by the Federal Government to private parties or civil or commercial corporations organized under the laws of Mexico, only on condition that said resources be regularly developed, and on the further condition that legal provisions be observed.

Legal capacity to acquire ownership of lands and waters of the nation shall be governed by the following provisions:

I. Only Mexicans by birth or naturalization and Mexican companies have the right to acquire ownership of lands, waters and their appurtenances, or to obtain concessions to develop mines, waters or mineral fuels in the Republic of Mexico. The Nation may grant the same right to foreigners, provided they agree before the Department of Foreign Affairs to be considered Mexicans in respect to such property, and accordingly not to invoke the protection of their Governments in respect to the same, under penalty, in case of breach, of forfeiture to the Nation of property so acquired. Within a zone of 100 kilometers from the frontiers, and 50 kilometers from the sea coast, no foreigner shall under any conditions acquire direct ownership of lands and waters.

II. The religious institutions known as churches, irrespective of creed, shall in no case have legal capacity to acquire, hold or administer real property or loans made of such real property; all such real property or loans as may be at present be held by the said reli-

gious institutions, either on their own behalf or through third parties, shall vest in the Nation, and any one shall have the right to denounce property so held. Presumptive proof shall be sufficient to declare the denunciation well-founded. Places of public worship are the property of the Nation, as represented by the Federal Government, which shall determine which of them may continue to be devoted to their present purposes. Episcopal residences, rectories, seminaries, orphan asylums or collegiate establishments of religious institutions, convents or any other buildings built or designed for the administration, propaganda or teaching of the tenets of any religious creed shall forthwith vest, as of full right, directly in the Nation, to be used exclusively for the public services of the Federation or of the States, within their respective jurisdictions. All places of public worship which shall later be erected shall be the property of the Nation.

II. Public and private charitable institutions for the sick and needy, for scientific research, or for the diffusion of knowledge, mutual aid societies or organizations formed for any other lawful purpose shall in no case acquire, hold or administer loans made on real property, unless the mortgage terms do not exceed ten years. In no case shall institutions of this character be under the patronage, direction, administration, charge or supervision of religious corporations or institutions, nor of ministers of any religious creed or of their dependents, even though either the former or the latter shall not be in active service.

IV. Commercial stock companies shall not acquire, hold or administer rural properties. Companies of this nature which may be organi

zed to develop any manufacturing, mining, petroleum, or other industry, excepting only agricultural industries, may acquire, hold or administer lands only in an area absolutely necessary for their establishments or adequate to serve the purposes indicated, which the Executive of the Union or of the respective State in each case shall determine.

V. Banks duly organized under the laws governing institutions of credit may make mortgage loans on rural and urban property in accordance with the provisions of the said laws, but they may not own nor administer more real property than that absolutely necessary for their direct purposes; and they may furthermore hold temporarily for the brief term fixed by law such real property as may be judicially adjudicated to them in execution proceedings.

VI. Properties held in common by co-owners, hamlets situated on private property, peublos, tribal congregations and other settlements which, as a matter of fact or law, conserve their communal character, shall have legal capacity to enjoy in common the waters, woods and lands belonging to them, or which may have been or shall be restored to them according to the law of January 6, 1915, until such time as the manner of making the division of the lands shall be determined by law.

VII. Excepting the corporations to which Paragraphs 10, 11, 12, and 13 here refer, no other civil corporation may hold or administer on its own behalf real estate or mortgage loans derived therefrom, with the single exception of buildings designed directly and immediately for the purposes of the institution. The States, the Federal District and the Territories, as well as the municipalities throughout the Republic, shall enjoy full legal capacity to acquire and hold all real estate

necessary for public services.

The Federal and State laws shall determine within their respective jurisdictions those cases in which the occupation of private property shall be considered of public utility; and in accordance with the said laws the administrative authorities shall make the corresponding declaration. The amount fixed as compensation for the expropriated property shall be based on the sum at which the said property shall be valued for fiscal purposes in the catastral or revenue offices, whether this value be that manifested by the owner or merely impliedly accepted by reason of the payment of his taxes on such a basis, to which there shall be added 10 per cent. The increased value which the property in question may have acquired through improvements made subsequent to the date of the fixing of the fiscal value shall be the only matter subject to expert opinion and to judicial determination. The same procedure shall be observed in respect to objects whose value is not recorded in the revenue offices.

All proceedings, findings, decisions and all operations of demarcation, concession, composition, judgment, compromise, alienation or auction which may have deprived properties held in common by co-owners, hamlets situated on private property, settlements, congregations, tribes and other settlement organizations still existing since the law of June 25, 1856, of the whole or a part of their lands, woods and waters, are declared null and void; all findings, resolutions and operations which may subsequently take place and produce the same effects shall likewise be null and void. Consequently all lands, forests and waters of which the above-mentioned settlements may have been deprived

shall be restored to them according to the decree of January 6, 1915, which shall remain in force as a constitutional law. In case the adjudication has been requested by any of the above entities, those lands shall nevertheless be given to them by way of grant, and they shall in no event fail to receive such as they may need. Only such lands title to which may have been acquired in the divisions made by virtue of the said law of June 25, 1856, or such as may be held in undisputed ownership for more than ten years are excepted from the provision of nullity, provided their area does not exceed fifty hectareas. Any excess over this area shall be returned to the commune and the owner shall be indemnified. All laws of restitution enacted by virtue of this provision shall be immediately carried into effect by the administrative authorities. Only members of the commune shall have the right to the lands destined to be divided, and the rights to these lands shall be inalienable so long as they remain undivided; the same provision shall govern the right of ownership after the division has been made. The exercise of the rights pertaining to the Nation by virtue of this article shall follow judicial process; but as a part of this process and by order of the proper tribunals, which order shall be issued within the maximum period of one month, the administrative authorities shall proceed without delay to the occupation, administration, auction or sale of the lands and waters in question, together with all their appurtenances, and in no case may the acts of the said authorities be set aside until final sentence is handed down.

During the next constitutional term, the Congress and the State Legislatures shall enact laws, within their respective jurisdictions,

for the purpose of carrying out the division of large landed estates, subject to the following conditions:

(a) In each State and Territory there shall be fixed the maximum area of land which any one individual or legally organized corporation may own.

(b) The excess of the area thus fixed shall be subdivided by the owner within the period set by the laws of the respective locality; and these subdivisions shall be offered for sale on such conditions as the respective governments shall approve, in accordance with the said laws.

(c) If the owner shall refuse to make the subdivision, this shall be carried out by the local government, by means of expropriation proceedings.

(d) The value of the subdivisions shall be paid in annual amounts sufficient to amortize the principal and interest within a period of not less than twenty years, during which the person acquiring them may not alienate them. The rate of interest shall not exceed 5 per cent per annum.

(e) The owner shall be bound to receive bonds of a special issue to guarantee the payment of the property expropriated. With this end in view, the Congress shall issue a law authorizing the States to issue bonds to meet their agrarian obligations.

(f) The local laws shall govern the extent of the family patrimony, and determine what property shall constitute the same on the basis of its inalienability; it shall not be subject to attachment nor to any charge whatever.

All contract and concessions made by former Governments from and

after the year 1876 which shall have resulted in the monopoly of lands, waters and natural resources of the Nation by a single individual or corporation, are declared subject to revision, and the Executive is authorized to declare those null and void which seriously prejudice the public interest.

Source: Foreign Relations, 1917, pp. 955-957.

APPENDIX B

ARTICLE ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE
OF THE MEXICAN CONSTITUTION OF 1917

The Congress and the State Legislatures shall ~~make~~ laws relative to labor with due regard for the needs of each region of the Republic, and in conformity with the following principles, and these principles and laws shall govern the labor of skilled and unskilled workmen, employees, domestic servants and artisans, and in general every contract of labor.

I. Eight hours shall be the maximum limit of a day's work.

II. The maximum limit of night work shall be seven hours. Unhealthy and dangerous occupations are forbidden to all women and to children under sixteen years of age. Night work in factories is likewise forbidden to women and to children under sixteen years of age; nor shall they be employed in commercial establishments after ten o'clock at night.

III. The maximum limit of a day's work for children over twelve and under sixteen years of age shall be six hours. The work of children under twelve years of age shall not be made the subject of a contract.

IV. Every workman shall enjoy at least one day's rest for every six days' work.

V. Women shall not perform any physical work requiring considerable physical effort during the three months immediately preceding a parturition; during the month following parturition they shall neces-

sarily enjoy a period of rest and shall receive their salaries or wages in full and retain their employment and the rights they may have acquired under their contracts. During the period of lactation they shall enjoy two extraordinary daily periods of rest of one-half hour each, in order to nurse their children.

VI. The minimum wage to be received by a workman shall be that considered sufficient, according to the conditions prevailing in the respective region of the country, to satisfy the normal needs of the life of the workman, his education and his lawful pleasures, considering him as the head of the family. In all agricultural, commercial, manufacturing or mining enterprises the workmen shall have the right to participate in the profits in the manner fixed in Clause IX of this article.

VII. The same compensation shall be paid for the same work, without regard to sex or nationality.

VIII. The minimum wage shall be exempt from attachment, set-off or discount.

IX. The determination of the minimum wage and of the rate of profit-sharing described in Clause VI shall be made by special commissions to be appointed in each municipality and to be subordinated to the Central Board of Conciliation to be established in each state.

X. All wages shall be paid in legal currency and shall not be paid in merchandise, orders, counters or any other representative token with which it is sought to substitute money.

XI. When owing to special circumstances it becomes necessary to increase the working hours, there shall be paid as wages for the over-

them one hundred percent more than those fixed for regular time. In no case shall the overtime exceed three hours nor continue for more than three consecutive days; and no women of whatever age nor boys under sixteen years of age may engage in overtime work.

XII. In every agricultural, industrial, mining or other class of work employers are bound to furnish their workmen comfortable and sanitary dwelling-places, for which they may charge rents not exceeding one-half of one per cent per month of the assessed value of the properties. They shall likewise establish schools, dispensaries and other services necessary to the community. If the factories are located within inhabited places and more than one hundred persons are employed therein, the first of the above-mentioned conditions shall be complied with.

XIII. Furthermore, there shall be set aside in these labor centers, whenever their population exceeds two hundred inhabitants, a space of land not less than five thousand square meters for the establishment of public markets, and the construction of buildings designed for municipal services and places of amusement. No saloons nor gambling houses shall be permitted in such labor centers.

XIV. Employers shall be liable for labor accidents and occupational diseases arising from work; therefore, employers shall pay the proper indemnity, according to whether death or merely temporary or permanent disability has ensued, in accordance with the provisions of law. This liability shall remain in force even though the employer contract for the work through an agent.

XV. Employers shall be bound to observe in the installation of

their establishments all the provisions of law regarding hygiene and sanitation and to adopt adequate measures to prevent accidents due to the use of machinery, tools and working materials, as well as to organize work in such a manner as to assure the greatest guaranties possible for the health and lives of workmen compatible with the nature of the work, under penalties which the law shall determine.

XVI. Workmen and employers shall have the right to unite for the defense of their respective interests, by forming syndicates, unions, etc.

XVII. The law shall recognize the right of workmen and employers to strike and to lockout.

XVIII. Strikes shall be lawful when by the employment of peaceful means they shall aim to bring about a balance between the various factors of production, and to harmonize the rights of capital and labor. In the case of public services, the workmen shall be obliged to give notice ten days in advance to the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration of the date set for the suspension of work. Strikes shall only be considered unlawful when the majority of the strikers shall resort to acts of violence against persons or property, or in case of war when the strikers belong to establishment and services dependent on the government shall not be included in the provisions of this clause, inasmuch as they are a dependency of the national army.

XIX. Lockouts shall only be lawful when the excess of production shall render it necessary to shut down in order to maintain prices reasonably above the cost of production, subject to the approval of the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration.

XX. Differences or disputes between capital and labor shall be

submitted for settlement to a board of conciliation and arbitration to consist of an equal number of representatives of workmen and of the employers and of one representative of the Government.

XXI. If the employer shall refuse to submit his differences to arbitration or to accept the award rendered by the Board, the labor contract shall be considered as terminated, and the employer shall be bound to indemnify the workman by the payment to him of three months' wages, in addition to the liability, which he may have incurred by reason of the dispute. If the workman reject the award, the contract will be held to have terminated.

XXII. An employer who discharges a workman without proper cause or for having joined a union or syndicate or for having taken part in a lawful strike shall be bound, at the option of the workman, either to perform the contract or to indemnify him by the payment of three months' wages. He shall incur the same liability if the workman shall leave his service on account of the lack of good faith on the part of the employer or of maltreatment either as to his own person or that of his wife, parents, children or brothers or sisters. The employer cannot evade this liability when the maltreatment is inflicted by subordinates or agents acting with his consent or knowledge.

XXIII. Claims of workmen for salaries or wages accrued during the past year and other indemnity claims shall be preferred over any other claims, in cases of bankruptcy or composition.

XXIV. Debts contracted by workmen in favor of their employers or their employers' associates, subordinates or agents, may only be charged against the workmen themselves and in no case and for no reason collected

from the members of his family. Nor shall such debts be paid by the taking of more than the entire wages of the workman for any one month.

XXV. No fee shall be charged for finding work for workmen by municipal offices, employment bureaus or other public or private agencies.

XXVI. Every contract of labor between a Mexican citizen and a foreign principal shall be legalized before the competent municipal authority and viséed by the consul of the nation to which the workman is undertaking to go, on the understanding that, in addition to the usual clauses, special and clear provisions shall be inserted for the payment by the foreign principal making the contract of the cost to the laborer of repatriation.

XXVII. The following stipulations shall be null and void and shall not bind the contracting parties, even though embodied in the contract:

(a) Stipulations providing for inhuman day's work an account of its notorious excessiveness, in view of the nature of the work.

(b) Stipulations providing for a wage rate which in the judgment of the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration is not remunerative.

(c) Stipulations providing for a term of more than one week before the payment of wages.

(d) Stipulations providing for the assigning of places of amusement, eating places, cafes, taverns, saloons or shops for the payment of wages, when employees of such establishments are not involved.

(e) Stipulations involving a direct or indirect obligation to purchase articles of consumption in specified shops or places.

(f) Stipulations permitting the retention of wages by way of fines.

(g) Stipulations constituting a waiver on the part of the workman

of the indemnities to which he may become entitled by reason of labor accidents or occupational diseases, damages for breach of contract, or for discharge from work.

(h) All other stipulations implying the waiver of any right vested in the workman by labor laws.

XXVIII. The law shall decide what property constitutes the family patrimony. These goods shall be inalienable and shall not be mortgaged, nor attached, and may be bequeathed with simplified formalities in the succession proceedings.

XXIX. Institutions of popular insurance established for old age, sickness, life, unemployment, accident and others of a similar character, are considered of social utility; the Federal and State Governments shall therefore encourage the organization of institutions of this character in order to instill and inculcate popular habits of thrift.

XXX. Cooperative associations for the construction of cheap and sanitary dwelling houses for workmen shall likewise be considered of social utility whenever these properties are designed to be acquired in ownership by the workmen within specified periods.

Source: Foreign Relations, 1917, pp. 986-987.

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