THE EJIDO

MEXICO'S WAY OUT

By

EYLER N. SIMPSON

WITH A FOREWORD

BY

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EN MÉXICO

CHAPEL HILL

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(*Courtesy of S. Eisenst*

MEXICO IS PREDOMINANTLY INDIAN

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THIS BOOK REPRESENTS A SMALL TOKEN PAYMENT ON A VERY LARGE DEBT WHICH THE AUTHOR OWES TO HIS FRIENDS AND TEACHERS

MAX SYLVIUS HANDMAN

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

AND

ELLSWORTH FARIS

PREFACE

> The governments of Mexico, revolutionary or otherwise, are under the strictest compulsion to find a solution for the agrarian problem. . . . This is the fundamental question which we must settle. About it gravitate all of the great problems which have agitated us in the past, which disturb us now and with which we will have to concern ourselves in the future. . . . No other problem can be attacked with success, much less solved, until we have found a solution for this question. . . . Once this [agrarian] reform has been put into effect—a reform which carries with it nothing less than the establishment of individual liberty for the great majority of the people of the Republic—all of the political and social progress which we long for now will come step by step.

Almost a score of years have passed since the above paragraph was published in a book written by Fernando González Roa and his former associate in the Cabinet of Madero, José Covarrubias. During these two decades the warning and the prophecy implicit in the words of González Roa and Covarrubias have been taken very seriously indeed. The result, as the whole world must know by now, has been a series of laws, acts and procedures which, taken together, make up Mexico's agrarian reform.

Excellent monographs both in English and in Spanish have been written on the subject of the Mexican experiment in "land and liberty." Many of these books, however, so rapid have been the changes and developments in the reform, are now somewhat out of date; others, in any case, have been more concerned with the background and the legal history of the reform than with its actual course and outcome; and practically all of them have tended to concentrate on the political and social aspects of the question to the relative exclusion of the economic and technological aspects—that is, on the "agrarian" problem in the narrow sense of the term to the neglect of the "agricultural" problem.

As matters have turned out the movement has perforce become involved as much with such questions of agricultural economics as production, marketing, irrigation and credit, as it has with such strictly agrarian problems as the breaking up of large estates and the distribution of land to the people.

The core and heart of Mexico's agrarian reform is the *ejido*. The word *ejido* (pronounced ã-heé-dõ) is derived from the Latin *exire*,

exitum—"to go out," "the way out." As originally used in Spain the term was applied to uncultivated lands held collectively and located on the outskirts (on the way out) of agrarian communities. In Mexico at the present time the word is used to refer to all types of lands which have been restored or granted to agricultural communities under the land reform initiated in 1915. By extension the word is also used to designate the communities possessing such lands. I have retained the Spanish word *ejidatario* (pronounced ā-hee-da-tário) to refer to persons who are beneficiaries of *ejido* grants.

It is fitting that I should make it clear here in the beginning that this book, as the title suggests, is hung on a thesis and hinged on an hypothesis. I have preferred this method of approach because I am convinced that all efforts at social analysis which aspire to anything more than the mere enumeration of events take place within a universe of discourse. Facts acquire significant meaning in relation to problems; a thesis is, or should be, the positive statement of a problem originally conceived in the interrogative form. Frankly acknowledged, a thesis may be a tool of research, and, contrary to popular ideas, need not involve trifling with truth or the manhandling of reality. To make explicit one's realm of reference is a contribution to clarity of thought rather than an admission of propagandistic intent.

The agricultural organization of Mexico, both in its traditional aspects and in those which the agrarian reform is establishing, differs in so many ways from the system of Anglo-Saxon countries that ordinary descriptive terms lose much of their significance. To help the reader, therefore, to link up the abstractions of laws and technical terms with Mexican reality, I have attempted to illustrate the problems of the *ejido* by presenting a number of specific studies of individual villages. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, it may be stated that these case histories have been selected, so to speak, with malice and forethought. Although in the course of my investigation I studied literally scores of *ejido* villages, my final selection of cases was made in the interest of illumination rather than proof. This does not affect the probability that all *ejidos* share in some degree the characteristics of the ones I have chosen for detailed analysis; it simply means that for each problem I have tried to single out a village which would exhibit the phenomena under consideration in their acute aspects. My cases, therefore, represent the typical heightened and thrown into bold relief. Because of the confidential nature of some of the information, all place names and names of persons have been changed and other identifying data, in so far as possible, have been effaced. I have made every effort to

allow the documents to speak for themselves. In translating from the Spanish I have sometimes, in my attempt to convey the spirit of the original, had to neglect literal meanings; I do not believe, however, that I have in any case distorted the sense unduly. Errors in grammar, logical *non sequiturs*, and other similar features of the original documents wherever possible have been carried over into English.

The reader's attention is called to the fact that, in view of the constant modifications which the laws of the reform are undergoing, it was necessary to draw a dead line in this field. Accordingly, I have not taken notice of any laws enacted after June 1, 1934.

To the Institute of Current World Affairs, which I have had the honor to represent in Mexico for a number of years, and to the founder thereof, Mr. Charles R. Crane, and the director, Mr. Walter S. Rogers, I owe a debt that I can hardly hope to do more than acknowledge with a profound feeling of gratitude. Without the support of the Institute this book could not have been written; without the constant friendly interest and encouragement of the officials of the Institute it would not have been written. The names of my Mexican friends who with unfailing courtesy and unstinted generosity have put at my disposal their time and their knowledge I will not record here because I do not wish even by implication to burden them with responsibility for any of the conclusions I have reached. I have tried in other and more personal ways to express to these persons my deep sense of obligation. For many valuable comments and criticisms I am indebted to Mr. Henry Allen Moe, Dr. Robert Redfield, Mr. Walter S. Rogers, Dr. Isaiah Bowman, Mr. Carleton Beals, Dr. Victor S. Clark and Mr. Henry Norweb who were kind enough to read part or all of my manuscript. From Dr. Frank Tannenbaum I obtained useful suggestions in the early stages of planning my study. Miss Keith Coppage gave freely of her time and knowledge of Spanish in helping me in the difficult task of conserving in English the spirit and something of the form of the verses which appear in various parts of the book. Finally, Miss Mary Louis Doherty, my assistant, secretary and right hand, performed services so numerous and so valuable that I despair even of trying to enumerate them.

E. N. S.

Mexico City
May, 1935

FOREWORD

When the Revolution of 1910 started in Mexico there was a small group in the United States which viewed with interest and sympathy the overthrow of the dictatorship Mexico had been suffering for so many years. But when political uprising changed into economic and social revolution sympathy somehow was soured and a feeling akin to disgust became generalized throughout the United States. During the years of prosperity and a "chicken in every pot" expressions of opinion about Mexico were apt to be limited to such sentiments as: "What a great pity it is for the people of such a rich country always to be fighting among themselves." No one seemed to be able to understand the important social and economic changes which were taking place in Mexico. Applying their own standards, American writers could talk about nothing but the Mexican disregard for the sacred rights of private property and the inviolability of contracts so indispensable to the profitable exploitation by foreigners of Mexico's natural resources. Chaos was, in their minds, the only possible outcome of such a situation.

In recent years, however, the Mexican Experiment has come to be viewed in a new light, and books about Mexico are beginning to rival in number those on Russia. Some of these books have been written with sympathy for the Mexican efforts, but with a lack of concrete knowledge of Mexican affairs. Others have exhibited painstaking care to investigate the facts, but have shown lack of vision about the real issues. In some cases the trouble has been that the author has come to the country convinced that he knows all about it and, after a visit of a few weeks, or a few months at the most, has merely projected his preconceived ideas. In other instances writers have arrived armed with letters of introduction to one or another group, with the result that the views of the group to which they were accredited—be it radical or conservative—were taken for the Mexican reality.

The Ejido—Mexico's Way Out belongs to none of the several classes of books just described. The author has lived in Mexico for eight years. He approached the task of understanding the country with the humility of the true student. He came to learn, not to teach. He identified himself with no one group and least of all with his own countrymen. His ambition was to know Mexico. The result is a book

which no student of Mexican affairs can ignore, for it is distinguished not only by detailed knowledge but also by sympathetic insight.

Of the many interesting features of *The Ejido—Mexico's Way Out* three may be selected for comment.

In writing the history of the legal aspects of the agrarian reform the author has not only grappled successfully with the tremendous task of compiling and cross-indexing the numerous laws, regulations and decrees which have been promulgated at various times, but he has gone farther and, distinguishing the fundamental variations from the superficial changes, has been able to trace the policy of the Mexican government and the modifications it has suffered following the shifts in personnel or in the ideas of our political leaders. This difficult and thankless job will never have to be done again. Dr. Simpson has laid down a foundation on which all future students may build.

Probably the most provocative feature of Dr. Simpson's book, and one which differentiates it from all other works in the field, is the case studies. These studies are not to be confused with superficial journalism; rather what we have here is the author's intimate knowledge of the country taking the form of narration backed up with documentary evidence. His description of the villages, his accounts of the workings of the *ejidos*, his personal experiences, his trips on horseback, do more to give a sense of reality to the book than could have been achieved by many pages of profound reasoning.

But, excellent as these case studies are, they suffer from the defects of their own virtues. Concerned as he was with illustrating the *problems* of the *ejido*, Dr. Simpson so impresses the reader with the flaws of the system, the human shortcomings of the *ejidatarios*, the harmful interference of politics, and the almost unsurpassable obstacles of ignorance and fanaticism, that when he finally arrives at the point of presenting his ideals and ambitions for Mexico his readers are unprepared for his conclusions. Our author is somewhat in the same position as a very careful physician who, in diagnosing a case, is not satisfied with ausculation but insists on making a microscopic analysis of the patient's excretions only to find, after describing the numerous classes of microbes and the diseases which each is able to produce, that the patient is, despite all of his germs, healthy and sound.

However, our author's method of approach was not without its purpose. For, as the reader in due course discovers, it was necessary to clear the ground, to reveal the *ejido* as it actually exists, before he could logically present *his ejido*—that is, an *ejido* shorn of its present shortcomings and become the vital cell of the new Mexico. In the

end he succeeds in convincing us that the existing *ejido* could become the ideal *ejido* he has so beautifully visualized. And this in spite of the fact that his task has been complicated by the necessity of addressing himself to two audiences—the American public and the Mexican people. The former, ignorant about Mexico, but open to conviction; the latter, better, though incompletely informed, and highly sensitive to criticism. For the benefit of his American audience he had to go into details well known to Mexicans, while to convince the latter he had to accumulate evidence that in some degree the American public will perhaps find superfluous.

During the first century of the Spanish rule there came to New Spain several orders of religious who fearlessly climbed the sierras, crossed the deserts and followed the rivers scattering themselves from one end to the other of the country. These men had a faith to teach to the natives and a task to do for their king. With a fine eye to strategic locations they erected stone churches and monasteries perched on the side of the mountains dominating the fertile valleys. Around these religious centers new villages grew where the Indians learned the trades and crafts of those times and the sowing of new seeds. Soon the valleys blossomed with plants of the New and the Old World and the villagers' hands were apt in molding pottery, weaving textiles, carving precious woods and working in metals. Industry and agriculture developed hand in hand and the natives would have been happy had it not been for the fanaticism and oppression which were, unfortunately all too often, an integral part of the system.

It may be that the example of the old friars inspired Dr. Simpson to his architechtonical vision of Mexico. A Mexico of *ejidos* and small industrial villages suffering from neither the evils of urbanism nor those of isolation; enjoying the advantages of machine production and yet not mechanized by its employment. A Mexico which will retain its sensitivity to beauty uncontaminated by the cheap and the shoddy. A carefully planned country without waste and without poverty in which each *ejido* will be imbued with the spirit of coöperation and a keen feeling of its collective interests, and each *ejidatario* will enjoy, together with technical education and a high standard of living, freedom from fanaticism. A nation of healthy men, disciplined yet courageous, ambitious but not greedy. This is our author's dream—a vision which many of us who call ourselves revolutionists have glimpsed, but here studied and planned as befits a student and scholar. Dr. Simpson has seen Mexico with the disinterested eyes of a foreigner and yet at the same time he has been able to dream a Mexican dream. In reading his book one wonders

how the same mind that could so objectively describe the natural resources of the country and analyze with such cold precision the laws of the agrarian reform, that could criticize the system of credit, understand the educational problem and even attempt to investigate the psychology of the people, could also achieve a vision of the future of Mexico so pregnant with meaning and so fraught with hope. Dr. Simpson's basic contribution lies in the fact that he has had the courage to be at once student and scientist, poet and prophet.

Such is the book Eyler N. Simpson has written. To some its critical strictures may appear exaggerated; its conclusions may or may not be acceptable in their entirety; one may not share the author's views in every case; but one has to recognize that *The Ejido—Mexico's Way Out* stands in a class by itself in the long list of books written by American authors about Mexico. Dr. Simpson comes nearer to demonstrating a right to aspire to the laurels of Baron Alexander von Humboldt than any foreign writer in recent years.

RAMÓN BETETA.

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PART ONE

THE ORIGINS OF THE EJIDO

The 30-30

How very poor are we all
Not even a piece of bread to eat;
Our bread is spent in order that
The boss' pleasure be complete.

He lives in palaces with money
To buy himself rich clothes—
While we go around in rags
And live where pigs repose.

We see to all the sowing
And all the reaping, too,
But, however fine the harvest,
None of it will be our due.

All our lives we suffer
From war and exploitation;
Yet we are called thieves because
We ask lands for cultivation!

And then the servile little priests
Call for our excommunication—
Perhaps they think Christ was like
These bosses of our nation!

Listen, comrades of the plow,
All you workmen who are worthy,
Only one way remains to us:
Grab up your thirty-thirty!

El 30-30

Que pobres estamos todos,
Sin un pan para comer,
Porque nuestro pan lo gasta
El patrón en su placer.

Mientras él tiene vestidos
Y palacios y dinero,
Nosotros vamos desnudos
Y vivimos en chiquero.

Nosotros sembramos todo
Y todo lo cosechamos;
Pero toda la cosecha
Es para bien de los amos.

Nosotros sufrimos todo,
La explotación y la guerra;
¡Y así nos llaman ladrones
Porque pedimos la tierra!

Y luego los padrecitos
Nos echan excomuniones—
¡A poco piensan que Cristo
Era como los patrones!

Compañeros del arado
Y los de toda herramienta,
Nomás nos queda un camino:
Agarrar un treinta-treinta!

—C. Gutiérrez Cruz.

CHAPTER I

ROOTS IN THE PAST

IN THE early part of the sixteenth century at the time of the Spanish Conquest, there were some hundreds of Indian tribes scattered over the area now known as Mexico. These groups, totaling perhaps eight million individuals, were in various stages of cultural development from that represented by the still primitive and nomadic tribes of the north to the relatively highly organized and settled tribes of the south-central plateau region and Yucatán.[1] The wandering groups in the cordilleras, on the great northern plains, and along the coasts subsisted mainly by fishing and hunting. They made but temporary use of land and, accordingly, had only the most rudimentary ideas of real property. The peoples of the *Mesa Central* and in Yucatán, on the other hand, early developed a sedentary, agricultural type of society and the possession and use of land became a matter of the greatest importance. Since the systems of landholding worked out in these groups have left their permanent impress upon the agrarian institutions of Mexico, they must be examined in some detail.

PRE-CONQUEST SYSTEMS OF LANDHOLDING

By the time the Spaniards arrived in Mexico the social and political organization of the *Mesa Central* peoples was in the process of changing from a kind of primitive oligarchy to something resembling an absolute monarchy.[2] Correspondingly, the systems of land tenure

[1] The purpose of this and the several succeeding chapters is to give the reader unacquainted with Mexican social history enough of the background of the Mexican agrarian problem to make the developments in recent years intelligible. Any new contribution to which the present study may lay claim relates almost solely to the period since 1920. In outlining the early developments in the story of the land in Mexico free use has, therefore, been made (and acknowledgment of indebtedness is hereby gratefully recorded) of the materials in Phipps, *Some Aspects of the Agrarian Question in Mexico;* McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico;* Mendieta y Nuñez, *El problema agrario de México;* and Magariños Torres, *El problema de la tierra en Méjico.* . . .

Due warning is hereby given that the use of secondary sources and the attempt to condense into a few pages an obscure and highly complicated subject has meant a certain amount of over-simplification. Such words as "monarchy" and "communism," as well as many modern legal terms, used in reference to pre-Conquest institutions in Mexico can, at best, be only suggestive.

[2] Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

which apparently had originally been communal in nature and distinguished by "democratic" administration and equality of distribution were being modified by the introduction of class distinctions and vested interests.

PATRIARCHAL COMMUNISM

The largest political and social unit among the more settled of the ancient Mexicans may be designated as the "tribe." Each tribe was formed of a number of kinship groups or "clans" known as *calpulli*. A still smaller unit was the household. Ordinarily a *calpulli* would be made up of several households, and several *calpulli*, in turn, would settle close together to form a village.[3]

Customs in regard to land tenure and distribution may be best understood by considering a typical village formed of several *calpulli*. Of the various kinds of land pertaining to such a village the following must be noted in particular:

1. The aggregate of all of the lands belonging to a community were known as the *altepetlalli* (literally, the town land). Each *calpulli* or kinship group was assigned a definite part of the *altepetlalli*, certain sections of which were for cultivation while others served to provide firewood, timber, grass for roofing and mats, a place for hunting, fishing, and so forth.[4]

2. The untilled portion of the *altepetlalli* belonging to a given *calpulli* could be freely used by any member of the clan, but not by the other kinship groups in the village. The agricultural lands, properly speaking, however, were divided into small plots and assigned to the several heads of families in the *calpulli*. These plots were called *tlatlmilli*. Allotments of parcels of crop land to heads of households were made by an official known as the *pariente mayor*. Although a record of the various tracts was kept by the *pariente mayor* on a kind of rough picture-map (copies of some of which are in the possession of villages to this day), there were no written titles to the individual lots. Usufruct was transmissible from father to son, and boundaries were jealously guarded, but apparently there was no sense of private individual ownership in the Roman sense of *uti, frui, abuti*.[5] That individual private property did not exist either in theory or in deed is shown by the facts: (a) that if a given plot was not cultivated for two successive years it was subject to forfeiture;

[3] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 114. The absence of pastures from the enumeration of uses to which the *altepetlalli* were put is to be accounted for by the fact that the aboriginal Mexicans had no cattle.

[5] Phipps, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15; and Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

(b) that lots could not be permanently transferred to members of another *calpulli* (although they could be rented on shares under certain conditions); and (c) that if a family became extinct or moved away, its tract reverted to the clan and was either reassigned or held in reserve for future needs.[6]

3. A third portion of the land pertaining to the *calpulli* was set aside for special public purposes such as the production of supplies for the maintenance of the village chief, for the entertainment of visiting officials, for the payment of tribute to higher chieftains, for carrying on wars and for the support of religious institutions and the priesthood. "These lands," writes McBride, "were, properly speaking, the commons of the *calpulli* since they were held and administered by that body and were worked by all the people in common, the whole community turning out together to cultivate the plots or to gather the harvest and store it in the village granary."[7] Within the general class of public lands or commons a distinction was made between the *tlatocatlalli* (lands of the tribal "kings"); the *tecpantlalli* (plots set aside for the support of the local community chief); and the religious lands (destined for the maintenance of the temples or *teocalli* and the priests).

DEVELOPMENTS AND MODIFICATIONS OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNISM

It is clear that in the early days, at any rate, the land system of the central plateau peoples could be characterized as a kind of patriarchal communism in which theoretically everyone had equal rights and privileges. It is equally clear from such records as exist, however, that some time before the arrival of the Spaniards this simple communal system was in the process of undergoing extensive modifications, modifications which "were gradually destroying whatever equality had formerly existed in the distribution of land and in the social organization that was based upon it" and which "were already reducing the importance of the Indian village as the classic landholding unit of the country and creating a form of tenure that closely resembled the individual holdings of post-Conquest days."[8]

The nature of the changes which took place in the development of the pre-Conquest systems of landholding may be briefly outlined.

First, the *pariente mayor*, who originally simply enjoyed the use of a plot of land like any other member of the *calpulli*, came in time to be distinguished from the rank and file and to have special lands

[6] Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

[7] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

(called *pillali*) set aside for his support. These lands were considerably larger in area than the other individual plots. In time they were regarded as belonging to the family of the *pariente mayor* by hereditary right and were cultivated by serfs (*mayeques*).[9] Moreover, such estates with their feudal retainers were possessed not alone by the *pariente mayor* but by other types of officials and even by private citizens.

A second class of privately-owned and serf-exploited properties developed out of conquest and warfare. As a reward for valor on the battle field or for other classes of notable service to the tribe certain individuals known as *teules* or *tecticatzin* were given lands and serfs to till them by the "king." While these lands were not an outright gift, nevertheless they tended to become so, for upon the death of one of these nobles his sons were given preference in the rights of succession. At about the time of the Conquest the number of nobles was estimated at 120,000.[10] In some cases a noble or chief would be granted by the king an overlordship embracing a number of villages under a system of feudal tribute. These possessions, or "fiefs," involved jurisdiction over land and people and were heritable.[11]

Finally, the temple lands, at first relatively small in area and cultivated in common by the members of the *calpulli*, were greatly extended ; a special class of serfs had to be dedicated to their exploitation and to the support of the very considerable sacerdotal class.[12]

The evidence shows that the nobles, overlords, chiefs, priests, and other privileged persons, by the time of the Conquest were a large and growing group. The landholding village was still the dominant unit in the agrarian system of central Mexico (as indeed, it continued to be for many years after the Conquest), but the landless peon was a definitely established social class. The large landed estate of the Aztec noble is first cousin, or perhaps better said, the great-grandfather of the modern Mexican hacienda, and the *macehuale* of pre-Conquest days is blood-brother to the peon of Colonial and later times. Debt slavery, the poverty of the disinherited and the arrogance of the privileged were known in Mexico before the coming of Spaniards ; abjectness, humility and servility were not lessons which the masses of the Mexican people learned for the first time at the knee of Cortés and his successors.[13]

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[9] Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[11] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[12] Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[13] McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-23 ; Phipps, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20 ; and Gama, *La propiedad en México*, p. 2.

The Spanish Importations

Students have often emphasized lust for gold as the impelling motive which launched the Spaniards upon their career of conquest in the New World. It has also been pointed out that, whereas the English, for example, came to the Americas as permanent settlers to wrest a home from a sparsely populated wilderness, the sons of Spain came to snatch a fortune from the treasure house of an ancient civilization and then to return to their native land and the delights of the life of a Spanish *caballero*. Cortés, his companions and his followers, thought of themselves as temporary sojourners in a green, pleasant, and profitable land; the Puritans, Quakers and their successors were workers, tillers of the soil, fellers of the forest—in a word, home-builders who had turned their backs upon the old world forever and aye.[14]

Generally speaking, the above characterization and contrast of motives and conceptions is true.[15] "I came to get gold, not to till the soil like a peasant"—the young Cortés is reported to have stated when he was offered land to settle on upon his arrival in Cuba in 1504.

And, yet, in the end, after the first wave of fighting and looting, it was lands and farms and Indians to work them which turned out to be the enduring fruits of the Spanish Conquest and not gold

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[14] "Their [i.e. "Cortés's freebooters"] original ambition had been to return to Spain and live the roistering life of a *caballero*. Their easily won spoils inflamed the imagination of later arrivals. The prospect of seizing a life-competence made agriculture, even under tropical productiveness, look pale. And when the portable plunder gave out, search for mines from which precious ores were to be extracted by the effortless employment of Indian slave labor, replace the more direct method of acquisition. This fever made the establishment of a permanent society seem unimportant. To the Spaniards, New Spain was from the start a place to take from, to grow rich in without labor and to leave heavily laden at the first opportunity." Ernest Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage*, p. 14. Reprinted by permission of the Century Company. See also Beals, *Mexico—An Interpretation*, pp. 3-4.

[15] But note this sobering comment:

"Spain, like Rome, conquered and exploited, but the English, by force of circumstances, were driven into another line of expansion. They had no less lust for gold than had the Spanish, but the geographical area which fell into their hands at first did not yield the precious treasure. They would have rejoiced to find, overcome and exploit an ancient American civilization—another Mexico or Peru; their work in India revealed the willingness of the spirit and flesh; and yet in the economy of history this was not to be their fate in the New World.

"Instead of natives submissive to servitude, instead of old civilizations ripe for conquest, the English found an immense continent of virgin soil and forest, sparsely settled by primitive people who chose death rather than bondage." From Charles and Mary Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization*, p. 11. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

and silver. Not that mining was neglected or that to this day it has ever ceased to pour its shining treasure into the coffers of the foreigner (be he Spaniard or his North American successor); but, as the conquerors increased in number, as warriors were replaced by immigrants and as more and more found their dreams of returning heavily laden to the old world fading, or impossible of realization, they became settlers in spite of themselves. The Spaniards were not, in truth, pioneers battling the wilderness on the bleak shores of New England, but they lived out their lives in the country and their children after them; they discovered the riches of men and soil and "settled down" to their exploitation.[16]

Gold mining is aleatory and temporary; farming, even when carried on by a landlord exploiting the labor of serfs, is a long-time, not to say permanent, undertaking. Most, perhaps the majority, of the Spaniards who came to Mexico during the three hundred years of the Colonial period were occupied in one way or another with land and agriculture. From the very beginning, the problems of land tenure, land distribution, and land ownership in New Spain were subjects of constant preoccupation on the part of the crown. Laws, decrees, and royal orders governing these matters were poured out in a steady stream.

Now, for obvious and natural reasons the net result of the activities of the Spanish conquerors become immigrants, landlords and farmers, and of the Colonial officials become administrators and legislators seeking to protect the Indians and at the same time to reward the conquerors and "open up" the country was the extensive introduction of contemporary agrarian institutions into New Spain.

Before reviewing the nature of the agrarian institutions imported by the Spaniards, emphasis must be given to one general point: the new land systems imposed upon the Indians fitted into and carried out the two conflicting lines of development we have noted as characterizing the epoch immediately preceding the Conquest. That is to say: during the Colonial period the struggle already begun between communal landholding villages and large, private, "feudal" estates was heightened and accelerated. Both land systems under the new regime were encouraged and supported by law; but this only served to make more manifest their fundamental incompatibility.

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[16] ". . . When the conquerors began to see that their dreams of gold and precious stones were not to be realized—at least in the measure which they had hoped for, they turned their attention to the true riches which were theirs: the labor of the Indians." Gama, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

ENCOMIENDAS, PEONÍAS AND CABALLERÍAS

The conquest of New Spain, stripped of its martial glory and denuded of its religious trappings, was a business undertaking financed and carried out with private funds.[17] The king of Spain lent his name to the enterprise and for this moral backing Spain's reward was theoretical sovereignty over all lands conquered with the implied rights of taxation and the exaction of tribute. However, it was clearly understood that the entrepreneurs and the capitalists who risked their funds or their lives in the business should also receive a return worthy of their investment. Once the loose gold and other concentrated forms of wealth had been divided up between the conquerors and the king, the main method left to the king for paying his "debts," on the one hand, and of consolidating his newly won domain, on the other hand, was grants of land. In New Spain, such grants were made on a lavish scale in several forms—all of which tended to strengthen the nascent institutions of private property and landed estates.

First and most important was the *encomienda.*[18] As developed in Mexico, the *encomienda* consisted of an allotment of a certain number of villages and carried with it the right to collect tribute and to exact personal services (labor in the fields and household, etc.) from the Indians living in the district thus *encomendado,* or entrusted. In return the individual receiving the *encomienda* was strictly enjoined by law to protect the persons and property of his "subjects." The *encomienda* system, familiar to the Spaniards in its characteristic features because of its similarity to the feudal organization of large estates worked by peasants in Castile, fitted like hand to glove in the situation which the conquerors found already existing in the land of the Aztecs. In many cases the Spaniards in the role of *encomenderos* simply took the place of the defeated (and all too often dead) Indian chieftain and continued to collect the tribute and services which before the Conquest had gone to the Aztec emperor.[19]

The individual allotments made to the *encomenderos* were often of very considerable size, embracing many villages, with populations

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[17] Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[18] The deed of *encomienda* read as follows: "Unto you, so and so, are given in trust (*se os encomiendan*—hence these distributions were called *encomiendas*) under chief so and so, with the chief, so many Indians, for you to make use of in your farm and mines; and you are to teach them the things of the holy Catholic faith." Fr. Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, III, Chapter III, quoted in Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

[19] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

totaling hundreds and even thousands of souls.[20] As the geographer Bowman has exclaimed: "How natural in the distribution of rewards for this great conquest that large concessions should be made in lands so new and wide, to men so few! All the Spaniards could be lords or *caballeros*. God had fixed a great gulf between the conqueror and the conquered of dark skins. Concessions and grants could be made generously. For every man there was, in a sense, a principality."[21] And this was almost literally true. Some there were of the *conquistadores* who had to be satisfied with only a few villages or an even smaller grant, but none went empty-handed. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that "before the close of the first half-century of occupation, a large part of the inhabited region of Mexico was held in *encomiendas*."[22]

As originally conceived the *encomiendas* were to be held subject to the pleasure of the king. However, by a series of decrees issued between 1536 and 1629, the duration of the grants was extended from one generation to another. The *encomenderos*, confirmed in their legal rights, forgot their legal duties and instead of protecting the Indians in their persons and their properties, gradually took possession of their lands and reduced the natives to serfdom.

The *encomienda* was not the only form of land grant or the only way in which the seeds of private property were planted. The rank and file of the conquering armies (and later anyone in royal favor) received outright grants of land, but without vassals. These grants (called *mercedes reales*—literally, royal favors), originally designed to reward the less important of those who took part in the Conquest, and later, serving as bait for attracting colonists to New Spain, were of two types: *peonías* and *caballerías*. The standard size for a *peonía* was approximately 100 acres, made up of the various classes of land estimated as necessary for the support of a single family. A *caballería* was five times the area of a *peonía* and probably varied in individual cases from 500 to 1,000 acres, depending upon the quality of the

[20] Cortés himself received an estate of 22 towns (each with its surrounding lands) with a total population of 23,000 vassals (heads of families). The whole grant embraced an area of perhaps 25,000 square miles. This and other properties which came into Cortés's possession were formed into one vast *mayorazgo* (a species of entailed estate) which remained intact as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ten thousand square miles in what is now the state of Guanajuato went to one of Cortés's lieutenants. The town and district of Xochimilco containing rich lands and some 30,000 Indians were given to Pedro de Alvarado, etc., etc. McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-49; and Gruening, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-16.

[21] From Isaiah Bowman, *The Pioneer Fringe*, p. 300, published by the American Geographical Society of New York.

[22] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

land involved. The exact amount of land distributed under grants of the type here under consideration is not known, although there is reason to believe that first and last it was considerable. Moreover, these gifts were, as has already been suggested, in many cases a nucleus about which the recipients accumulated additional holdings either by seizing neighboring Indian lands, through marriage, by purchase or by other means, fair or foul.[23]

LANDHOLDING TOWNS—NEW AND OLD

Just as private property in New Spain grew up out of a combination of the new and old—a Spanish plant grafted on roots already sunk deep in the native Aztec soil—so also were systems of communal and semicommunal land tenure reinforced and supported, on the one hand, and given new forms of expression, on the other, by the importation of Spanish agrarian institutions. In some cases native landholding villages with their ancient institutions of the *calpulli*, *altepetlalli*, *tlatlmilli*, and so forth, were simply recognized and given legal status after a minimum of reorganization. In other cases new landholding towns were founded on Spanish patterns adapted somewhat to the conditions of the new world. We will consider each of these cases in the following paragraphs, but it may be remarked here in the beginning that whether the towns were new or old, so similar were the native and Spanish conceptions, in a relatively short time through a process of blending and accommodation a common form of landholding village came into existence.[24]

The landholding town which the Spaniards used as the model for the numerous new villages established in Mexico in its most usual form in Castile involved two classes of land: the municipal and the communal. The first mentioned, called *propios* or *bienes concejiles*, were the cultivated or agricultural lands. They were administered by the town officials and either worked in common, by rotation, or rented.[25] In any case the proceeds were applied to the support of the local government and to pay taxes to higher authorities. The communal lands, properly speaking (*bienes comunales*), consisted of woodland, pasture, and a separate, well-defined area usually located just outside the city gates known as the *ejido*. "This ground," writes

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 50-52.

[24] Unless otherwise indicated, the material in this section follows the account given in McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-11, 123-25 and 127-29. The reader interested in the numerous laws by which the institutions here discussed came into existence will find the principal citations in Maragiños Torres, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-74, and in Martínez Báez, "El ejido en la legislación de la época colonial," *Universidad de México*, II, 112-17.

[25] Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

McBride, "was used for a great variety of purposes. It contained the pound for stray cattle as well as the public threshing floor, and places where the villagers might winnow their grain in the open air. It contained the public rubbish heap and the village slaughter pen. Upon it the farmer might unload the crops brought in from the fields or might keep his hives of bees. Parts otherwise unoccupied served for playgrounds and loafing places. *No building might be constructed upon this land, nor might it be cultivated.*"[26]

It should be noted that in the Castilian agricultural village of the type here in question neither the public (*propios*) nor the communal (*bienes comunales*) lands could be alienated.

As may be seen from the rules and regulations laid down in the royal orders issued by Charles V and Philip II[27] governing the founding of new towns in America, the above described model was followed in all but one respect. Provisions were made for setting aside the communal ejido,[28] pastures, and woodlands as inalienable possessions of the whole town in quite the regular Castilian fashion. In the case of the *propios* or municipal croplands, however, the laws apparently envisaged their division into individual lots (*suertes*) which, if occupied within three months and properly "proved up" within four years, became the private property of the persons to whom they were alloted. The individual parcels of the *propios* thus distributed were originally limited to five *peonías* or three *caballerías* (500 to 1,500 acres).

New settlements established in the latter part of the Colonial period (especially those in California, Sonora, and other parts of the northwest), departed even further from the Castilian type of organization. In addition to being endowed with a much larger area of land (four square leagues instead of the one common in the earlier pueblos) in these later villages there was no individual ownership of land in the full sense. Settlers were allotted agricultural plots of various sizes (the size depending upon whether they were Indians or Spaniards, officials, or private citizens) and after these plots had been worked for five years their holders were given individual titles; but the lands were still inalienable. They could not be sold and if they were not cultivated for a period of two years they reverted to the crown. Moreover, all other lands pertaining to the village were

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[26] From G. M. McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico*, p. 166, published by the American Geographical Society of New York. Italics inserted.

[27] *Recopilación de leyes . . . de las Indias*, 3rd. edit., Book IV, chapters 5, 7, 12.

[28] Because of the frequency of its use in this book the word "ejido" will not be italicized hereafter.

regarded as crown property only the use of which was vested in the pueblo.

Every pueblo established by the Spaniards, whether of the type followed in the more thickly settled parts of the country or that devised for the advance into the northern and northwestern sections, had, as one of its characteristic features, lands (ejidos, pastures, and so forth) held and administered by the village in its corporate capacity. In some villages the agricultural plots assigned in severalty were inalienable and the individual holder enjoyed only the use thereof under certain conditions—the ultimate title being vested immediately in the pueblo and eventually in the crown. In other villages complete title to agricultural plots, after the fulfillment of certain conditions, was apparently vested in the individual holders.

Let us turn now to the second method by which Spain strengthened communal and semicommunal systems of land tenure in the new world. As has been pointed out, the method here in question in all essentials meant the legal recognition of the existing indigenous land systems.[29] Certain changes from the traditional Mexican procedures, however, were made—especially in the case of new Indian villages (usually known as *congregaciones*) organized in an effort to "settle down" and "civilize" hitherto wandering tribes. But, whether in new villages or in those already in being, the system of land tenure recognized in the several laws on the subject was definitely autochthonous in pattern and differed in important respects from the Spanish towns modeled on the Castilian agricultural village.

Abandoning what remained of the *calpulli* as a kinship group, the Colonial laws established the Indian pueblos clearly and definitely as place units. Each village was to be insured in its possession of a plot of land whereon to construct houses, public buildings, and so forth, known as the *fundo legal* and measuring 600 varas in each direction from the door of the church. In addition,[30] every village was to have at least one square league (and more if necessary) made up of crop land, pasture, and woodland. This was the ejido. But, be it noted, not the ejido in the sense in which this term was used in Spain. In the Indian pueblos of Mexico, the ejido, from being a relatively small unoccupied space at the entrance to the village,

[29] Indian towns not included in the *encomienda* grants—and there were many—were regarded as direct vassals of the crown and in paying their taxes they acted accordingly. Hence the zeal of the crown to give such villages complete legal status and to protect them from the land-hungry Spaniards.

[30] According to the *cédula real* of December 10, 1573.

broadens out and includes all of the communal agricultural land of the town. The ejido as it was conceived in New Spain is the Aztec *altepetlalli*, only slightly modified. It is also the prototype of the modern ejido reconstituted and recreated in the laws of the present day agrarian reform.[31]

[31] This account of the ejido follows McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 124. Some writers (for example, Martínez Báez, *op. cit.*, p. 115) hold that as originally set up in the several Colonial laws on the subject the ejido did *not* include crop lands, but was a term used to cover the communal pastures. Whatever may have been the legal definition given to the word, in common usage it came in time to have the inclusive significance indicated above. See McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

CHAPTER II

STRUGGLE FOR THE LAND

THE STAGE is set. On the one hand is the institution of private property, already present in its incipient forms in pre-Conquest days, but now, with the importation of the *encomienda*, the *peonía* and *caballería*, fortified, strengthened, and ready to develop in stature and power until soon it stands full grown as the classic type of landed estate—the hacienda. On the other hand is the landholding, communal village rooted deep in age-old custom and tradition and now given new life and legal support in the reorganized native pueblo and in the scores of new villages soon to be founded on the Indian model. From this point on the history of Mexico is, in its most fundamental aspects, the drama of the struggle between feudalism and the free village, between the individual private estate and the collective, communal holding—in fine, between the hacienda and the ejido. For almost four hundred years it is the hacienda which wins. The victories of the villages are only temporary triumphs; slowly but surely the ejido is pushed back and back until by the turn of the twentieth century only in the mountain fastnesses and in a few other isolated areas does it still persist. Finally, and at long last, the tide turns, a new chapter is opened and the ejido comes into its own—or, at least, so it would appear. Our major concern here is with the reading and interpreting of what has so far been written in this last chapter. A few more of the pages of the earlier installments remain to be leafed through, however, before we can go on with the story.

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

During the Colonial period (1521-1821), the villages were not without protection in their struggle to maintain their traditional rights and to achieve those new rights to the enjoyment of the land decreed by law. Indeed, in theory at any rate, the Spanish crown, as numerous decrees and royal orders bear eloquent witness, did everything in its power to shield the communal villages against the encroachments of the haciendas.[1] Special courts and officials were

[1] For the material in this section the author is mainly indebted to Helen Phipps, *Some Aspects of the Agrarian Question in Mexico*, pp. 23-42. Abstracts and reprints from Phipps in this Chapter are made by permission of the University of Texas Press.

created and charged with the specific duty of preventing the alienation of the pueblo (and more particularly of the Indian pueblo) lands; the natives were exempted from various kinds of taxes; even a papal bull was issued[2] declaring that all Indians were to be respected as to their personal liberty and property and proclaiming excommunication as the penalty in extreme cases of encroachment. Many of the free villages (that is, those not included in *encomiendas*) profited by the efforts on their behalf and were able not only to maintain their original lands, but greatly to extend their holdings. As a matter of fact, so well did the Indian chiefs and other leaders learn the new game of land grabbing and land litigation, that they often became the aggressors and pushed the fight into the enemy's territory,[3] resorting in the process to every form of trickery, sharp practice and, in not a few cases, to outright violence. One of the methods of striking back at the landlords which the natives soon learned and used on many occasions was that of founding new towns. The Colonial laws allowed Indian towns to be established even on private property and the officials were forced to provide such towns with the regular *fundo legal* for their buildings and ejido lands measuring one square league. It was a relatively simple matter for a group of Indians living together in a settlement to petition to have their community given the status of a pueblo—as more than one landlord learned to his discomfort.

But the cases of villages successfully defending their property during the Colonial period were the exception rather than the rule. The majority of the pueblos, and this applies especially to the large number of communities given in *encomiendas*, fared very badly indeed. With the many and devious practices adopted by the *encomenderos* to seize the properties of the villages with which they were entrusted and to reduce their inhabitants to virtual slavery we cannot be detained here. Sufficient it is to say that, in spite of the laws designed to protect the indigenous groups, the villages fought a losing battle. Even the complete abolition of the *encomienda* system in 1720 came too late—by that time "the heirs of the original *encomenderos* had such firm hold upon the persons and properties of the Indians that the latter were virtually serfs and a mere edict made little difference in their condition."[4] The outlawing of the *encomienda* served neither to return the land to its original possessors nor did it free the Indian. Such freedom as the Indian theoretically ob-

[2] By Pope Paul III in 1537.

[3] Some Indian chiefs became so imbued with the new ideas of private property that they betrayed their followers and, seizing their lands, became rich and powerful landlords.

[4] Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

tained to dispose of his labor was a reality only for a short time if at all; for debt bondage upheld by law very promptly and efficiently took the place of the old system of vassalage. The Indian remained what he had become under the institution of the *encomienda*—a serf inexorably bound to the land.[5]

Similarly, the various attempts that were made between 1571 and 1754 to remedy the chaotic situation that prevailed regarding private property and to rectify the numerous illegal invasions of the lands of the villages by laws requiring the landlords to confirm their titles, while well intentioned, nevertheless became in practice only a pretext and a method for further land grabbing. By a small payment to the royal treasury the landlords were able to receive clear titles not only to properties already invaded but in many cases to additional lands seized at the time of and in the very process of rectifying their titles.

Another instrument for solidifying the accumulation of private property in the hands of the few was the practice of creating *mayorazgos*. "No sooner would a colonist acquire a fortune," writes McBride, . . . "than he would seek a title of nobility and with his title would go the estate, which must then remain undivided. Distinguished services to the crown were also rewarded by the bestowal of a title, accompanied by the creation of a *mayorazgo*, and often by a large grant of land or of tribute villages. It was this custom of forming *mayorazgos*, a custom which prevailed until the era of independence, that was largely responsible for the preservation of large estates in Mexico. Aggregation was constantly going on; division of property was almost impossible."[6]

The net result of the foregoing plus the operation of numerous economic factors (such, for example, as the absence of any direct land tax, and the custom of mortgaging estates to the Church—with the clergy thereafter refusing to allow a division of the mortgage) by the end of the Colonial regime had brought about a situation of great injustice and inequality in the distribution of the agricultural resources of the country. According to one contemporary authority, one-fifth of the population owned all the property while the other four-fifths were landless and many were homeless. Estimates of the number of large properties (haciendas) varied anywhere from 4,000

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[5] "They [the Indians] were not allowed to go into debt for more than six pesos; yet that small amount bound them legally to the land of the *hacendado* until it was paid. . . . If they ran away owing anything to the master, he could have them brought back by the authorities." *Ibid.*

[6] *The Land Systems of Mexico*, p. 59, published by the American Geographical Society of New York.

to 20,000; and many of these properties were from three to six hundred square leagues (1.3 to 2.6 million acres) in area. There was at least one property of almost 22 million acres.[7]

It must not be thought from what has just been said that the landholding village was no longer a factor of any importance. Bad as conditions were in many of the pueblos and great as had been the growth of private property, many of the villages continued to hold their own. But despite this fact and despite the founding of new types of communal villages (*congregaciones*, *communidades*, and *rancherías*), the outlook for the pueblo at the end of the Colonial period was far from bright. And the proof thereof, the proof of the miserable condition of literally millions of the mass of the population, was that Miguel Hidalgo in 1810 was able to raise and hold aloft successfully, at least for a time, the banner of revolution.

Agrarian Aspects of the War for Independence

The war for independence was an agrarian war—a war of *proletarios contra propietarios*.

My children, this day comes to you a new dispensation. Are you ready to receive it? Will you make the effort to recover from the hated Spaniards the lands stolen from your forefathers three hundred years ago?[8]

Thus the white-haired Father Hidalgo addressed his flock on the fateful night of September 16, 1810. The response in less than six weeks was a ragged army of 80,000 disinherited Indians and mestizos[9] ready to fight and die for land and freedom. And fight and die they

[7] Phipps, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

[8] Quoted in Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[9] Shortly after the Conquest lines were drawn between four principal classes in New Spain: the Spaniards born in Spain; the Creoles (individuals of Spanish parents, but born in Mexico); the mestizos, or persons of mixed Spanish and Indian blood; and, finally, the Indians. These class lines, originally having primarily racial connotations, soon were reduced in number and came to mark social and economic distinctions. On the one hand were the Spaniards and Creoles—the master class, the landholders, the "economically fit." On the other hand were the mestizos and the Indians—the landless, the downtrodden, in short, the proletariat. The distinction was no longer racial, whites vs. Indians; it was economic and social—the rich vs. the poor; the aristocracy vs. the masses. Along toward the end of the Colonial regime it was estimated that the population of New Spain was distributed as follows: whites, one-tenth; mestizos, six-tenths; and Indians, three-tenths. This estimate undoubtedly is too low in the part referring to the proportion of pure Indians, but whatever the deficiencies of these figures as a statement of the racial distribution they offer a basis for a rough calculation of the distribution of wealth. In terms of class, as contrasted with blood, one-tenth of the population was arrayed against nine-tenths; the mestizos made common cause with the Indians because, for the most part, they shared a common misery. Compare Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

did for eleven long years. But in the end it was the landlords who reaped the benefit of their sacrifice; for the war for independence which began as a social revolution ended as a political uprising. That which began as a civil war in which the "have-nots" were aligned against the "haves" in a struggle for freedom from economic bondage was consummated as a mere movement for political independence from the mother country, led and supported by the very reactionary elements—the Church and the landlords—against which the original revolution had been directed. In the end when the separation from Spain was an accomplished fact it was Augustín de Iturbide, a rich *hacendado*, who sat in the seat of power as Emperor of Mexico, and not the representatives of the landless hordes who had answered Hidalgo's call to arms. It was the "Plan of Iguala," Iturbide's pledge to maintain the status quo and to unite the landlords in the protection of their property, and not the "Cry of Dolores" and Hidalgo's promise to return the land to its original owners which was translated into action.

True, as a result of independence, the Indians secured legal equality with the whites and thereby gained greater liberty in contracting for their services. True, also, that in 1823 a law was passed abolishing the *mayorazgos*. These reforms, however, proved to be of more theoretical than practical significance. A few of the large estates changed hands; the Church lost some of its property and suffered financially in other ways; Creoles took the place of Spaniards in governmental and other positions of power; but the old stratification of Mexican society into *propietarios* and *proletarios* continued in force. The old system of the concentration of land ownership in the hands of the small minority was maintained under the Republic much as in Colonial times. The landless masses of Indians and mestizos remained the landless masses with the difference that they no longer had even the doubtful benefit of the protection of the Spanish crown. Another century was to pass and much turbulent water was to flow under the bridge before the coming of the real revolution.

The Church as Landlord

Up to this point only incidental mention has been made of the very important role played by the Catholic Church in the concentration of the ownership of land into the hands of the privileged few. Readers of Prescott's famous work on the conquest of Mexico will recall that Cortés and his followers undertook their great adventure not only to enrich themselves and to add dominions to the crown of Spain, but also for the glory of God and the Catholic Church. Remembering this and the strong hold which the Church had upon

Spain at that time, one is not surprised to find historians of the Colonial period in Mexico writing in this fashion :

The clergy was an economically privileged class from the beginning. The members of it received large grants of land from the crown. Many monasteries, cathedrals and individual prelates were given *encomiendas*—which had more or less the same history as those conferred upon laymen. For the erection of churches, monasteries and residences the royal treasury furnished half the money, the *encomenderos* or the Spanish population in general furnished the other half, and Indians did the work without remuneration. Ecclesiastical capital was free from taxation—legally in the early days, virtually, always. . . . From the outset [the Church] had an economic advantage over even the richest of the *encomenderos*, who had to build their own houses and provide their own working capital, and had not the sources of income that the clergy had. So, with the immense prestige of the Church behind them, it is not surprising that the clergy dominated the Colonial era economically and politically. Nor is it strange that, as the years went on, the early missionary fervor tended to give place to complacent well-being and easy acceptance of priority thrust upon them ; that adventurers were to be found in the ranks of the clergy as in all walks of life ; that this easy means of acquiring an honorable position and a comfortable livelihood attracted such large numbers that in 1644 the town council of Mexico City implored Philip IV to send no more monks, as more than six thousand were without employment, living on the fat of the land.[10]

The Church's sources of revenue were numerous and diverse. In addition to the customary sums received from tithes, gifts and bequests of money and property ; parochial fees for marriages, funerals, baptism, confession, and for masses both ordinary and requiem ; special collections to honor some patron saint ; alms gathered by the monasteries ; dowries given to convents of nuns, and so forth, the Church derived additional funds in other and, to say the least, less customary ways. The personal services and labor of the Indians were used without limit ; large sums were gained from legal practice by members of the clergy in both civil and ecclesiastical courts ; the clergy operated and controlled grocery stores and meat markets and engaged in commerce of all sorts (in this manner were the tithes, often paid in "kind," disposed of) ; and, finally, direct usurpation of the land (especially that of the Indians) by the clergy was by no means unusual. Some idea of the huge sums of money gathered by the Church in these various and devious ways may be gained from Humboldt who records that the tithes alone in the later years of the

[10] Phipps, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

Colonial period averaged over 2.4 million pesos a year;[11] one monastery in Mexico City had an annual income of 100,000 pesos solely from alms and was said on one occasion to have collected 40,000 pesos in a single day.[12]

Still another source of income and a favorite means of investment for all the ready cash of the Church was real estate and real estate mortgages. The accumulation of real property by the Mexican clergy began early in the Colonial era and, as generation succeeded generation, the Church came to control more and more of the land of the country. Although it is impossible to do more than guess at the amount of real property owned by the Church at the end of the Spanish domination, the following statistics may be cited as fairly accurate:

In 1796, according to a reliable and official source, the income of the clergy from rented property in the capital city alone was $1,060,995 out of a total of $1,911,201. This income, capitalized at five per cent would give a property valuation of $21,219,893. The Carmelites had *haciendas* extending from the City of Mexico to Tampico, a distance of 120 leagues. Four-fifths of the real estate in the diocese of Puebla, where the Church was exceedingly strong, is said to have belonged to communities of monks and nuns, cathedral chapters, corporations and hospitals. One writer estimates the income of the clergy in 1800 at $13,000,000 which, capitalized at five per cent, would give $260,000,000 as the valuation of productive property. Lucas Alamán, a decided partisan of the clergy in their later struggles with the republican government, estimated that not less than half of the real property and capital of the country belonged to the Church at the end of the colonial era. Most of the remainder was controlled by the clergy through mortgages. The Church was the landlord, the banker, and the trustee of the period.[13]

Many attempts were made during the Colonial period both by the higher ecclesiastical and the civil authorities to check the economic domination of the Church. The most important of these attempts was the royal decree of Charles III in 1767 ordering the expulsion of the Jesuits from Mexico and the confiscation of their estates. Although, because of religious opposition and political corruption, this effort was not entirely successful, at least 128 of their large haciendas and other holdings were offered for sale to the public.[14]

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[11] Humbolt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, III, Book IV, p. 283, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 48.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

[14] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

The Laws of the Reform

In the years following independence—from 1821 to the Reform of 1857—efforts to combat the power of the Church and the *hacendados* met with somewhat greater success. In 1823, the government nationalized the rather considerable property of the Inquisition. In 1833, when the burden of debt and decreasing revenues had produced a national crisis, a movement to storm the bulwarks of the Church gathered headway and laws even more drastic than those eventually put into effect in 1857 were proposed. Although this attack failed, it is said that the Church, between 1833 and 1860, seeing the fatal trend of events, did actually dispose of real property valued at 85 million pesos for about 42 million pesos.[15]

Another national crisis arose in 1847. Mexico was at war with the United States and in order to raise badly needed funds it was proposed to mortgage and sell Church property to the extent of 15 million pesos. This, of course, called forth a violent protest from the Church. Later on Santa Anna raised the levy to 20 million pesos and the Church, admitting defeat, agreed to settle for 2 million cash if the law should be repealed. This was promptly done.[16]

Finally, in 1855 came the so-called "Puebla incident." A law was passed forbidding ecclesiastical courts to take cognizance of civil cases and limiting their jurisdiction to the offenses of the clergy. This law led to a rebellion in the very strong Catholic state of Puebla —a rebellion financed by the clergy of the bishopric of Puebla. When the outbreak was put down at the cost of much bloodshed and some 1.2 million pesos, President Comonfort issued a decree providing for the sequestration of Church property to an amount sufficient to indemnify the national and state governments for the losses occasioned by the revolution. Despite the desperate opposition of the Church, this decree was carried out.[17]

The events between the years 1821 and 1856 did not greatly affect the position of the Church. Although considerable inroads were made upon ecclesiastical holdings, it was estimated that at the time just preceding the Reform the productive real property of the Church (not counting churches, schools, monasteries, hospitals, etc.) was worth considerably more than 184.6 million pesos. Ninety per cent of the urban property was said to be owned by the clergy and most of the rural real estate either belonged to them in reality, or was deeply mortgaged in their favor. The yearly income of the archbishopric of Mexico alone was 348,378 pesos.[18]

[15] Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 70-72.
[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.
[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

Encouraged by its success in the Puebla affair, the Reform government gathered its forces to launch an even more determined attack on the Church and in June 1856 the "Law of Expropriation" (*Ley de desamortización*) was passed. "This measure provided that all real estate held by religious or civil corporations should be adjudged in severalty to the persons to whom it was rented or leased, at a price corresponding to a sum which, at six per cent interest, would yield an annual income equal to the amount being paid as rent. Properties not so leased or rented should be sold at auction. The law forbade the subsequent sale of these holdings to any religious corporation. These measures were not to apply to properties used directly for civil or religious purposes, such as church buildings, convents, espiscopal residences, colleges, hospitals, municipal buildings, and land such as the ejidos which were held for the common use of people living in a town. Three months were allowed for the disposal of the properties to be alienated, after which the government would proceed to take over those remaining unsold."[19]

The Law of Expropriation remained on the statute books eighteen months. Although it was relatively moderate in its demands as compared with subsequent laws and decrees, it was, nevertheless, difficult to enforce and proved a great disappointment to its sponsors. The Church was compelled to dispose of some property, but this property, for the most part, simply passed into the hands of the rich *hacendados* and the landless masses remained in the same position as they were before.

But this time the fight was not to be stopped with only a half-won victory. On the heels of the Law of Expropriation and embracing all of its most important principles came the Constitution of 1857. Article number twenty-seven of this famous document forbade civil[20] and ecclesiastical corporations to own and administer real property, except that destined immediately and directly for worship or for the object of the institution; and article twenty-five declared that the state could not permit any contract, compact, or agreement to be entered into by which an individual lost or irrevocably sacrificed his liberty, whether by reason of work, of education, or of religious vows. The latter article was directed primarily against peonage, but it also contained the basis for the suppression of monastic orders and the confiscation of their property.

Following, and largely as a result of, the promulgation of the

[19] From G. M. McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico*, p. 69, published by the American Geographical Society of New York.

[20] Including, be it noted, such corporations as landholding villages which had been exempted under the Law of June 1856.

Constitution of 1857 there came the "Three Years War" in which the large landholders and the clergy were arrayed against the liberals led by Benito Juárez. During this struggle, Juárez went a step beyond the Constitution and in 1859 decreed the complete nationalization of all Church property and proclaimed the absolute separation of Church and State. The decree ordered the suppression of the monastic orders, confraternities, brotherhoods, and congregations; the partial suppression of orders of nuns; and the (aforementioned) nationalization of all property of the regular and secular clergy, whether urban or rural, real estate stocks or rights to receive money.

With such decrees and the Constitution of 1857 the reform movement went forward during the troubled years of revolution and of the Empire under Maximillian.

Due to the lack of adequate records and the general confusion of the period, it is difficult to discover just how successful the Reform was in its main purpose—that is, to break the grip of the "dead hand" of the Church. Some authorities estimate that about 100 million dollars worth of ecclesiastical property was reduced to private ownership and that some 40,000 properties changed hands.[21] Without doubt the Church suffered more than it ever had before, although by subterfuges, legal trickeries and maneuvers of one sort and another[22] the clergy was able to do much in the way of tempering the wind to the shorn lamb and managed to retain a very considerable amount of property.

In its avowed intention of "creating a class of small independent landholders," the Reform also failed in large degree. Very probably the number of small landholders increased by some thousands in the years following the Reform, but in the main the Church estates passed in large, unbroken tracts into the hands of the followers of Juárez, and although in this fashion a new landed aristocracy was created, it was nonetheless an aristocracy. Anything like an equal distribution of the land still remained a problem to be struggled with by future generations.

Whatever the Reform may have accomplished in paving the way for the appearance of a middle class in Mexico was more than offset by the damage done to the landholding pueblos. The deliberate inclusion in the Constitution of 1857 of civil communities in the list of corporate bodies forbidden to hold lands led inevitably to the break-up of hundreds of communal groups and the loss of their property

[21] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 71, and Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

[22] Including the threat of excommunication.

to the ever greedy land monopolists. The idea, well intentioned as it may have been, of forcing the villages out of their communal lethargy, of creating a new class of independent small farmers by substituting personal for collective ownership, simply did not work out in practice.

It has been estimated that in 1854 there were about 5,000 villages of various types (*villas*, *rancherías*, *pueblos*, and *congregaciones*) holding in collective ownership ejidos aggregating around 45,000 square miles.[23] As has been previously explained, the system by which these villages held and cultivated their land in common had existed for centuries. In some places (especially in the northwestern states) where Spanish conceptions of land tenure dominated,[24] the Reform did little harm, for in many cases individual private ownership of plots of the town land existed already in fact if not in name. But, by and large, the effect of the Reform on the vast majority of the landholding villages was little short of disastrous. A few villages were wise enough to place their newly acquired individual titles in the hands of some trusted leader, thus evading the law and preserving their property intact. The majority of the villagers, however, having no conception of the meaning of private property, unaccustomed to working under the stimulus of individual initiative and lacking both capital and equipment, saw their little parcels of land absorbed into the great haciendas or gobbled up by unscrupulous speculators. A mortal blow was dealt to one of the most important and stable of Mexico's agrarian institutions. Whole communities, for generations proud of their freedom and secure in their economic independence, were reduced almost overnight to poverty and peonage.[25]

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[23] McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-33.

[24] See above p. 12.

[25] It is interesting to observe the similarity of the fate of the Mexican Indian pueblo and the Indian pueblo in the United States—in both cases as the result of avowedly well-intentioned laws. Compare the account given in the foregoing pages with the following quotation from a recent address by the American Commissioner of Indian Affairs:

". . . In 1887, a new device was perfected. It was a device for peaceably and lawfully transferring Indian lands to white ownership. This device was the system of forced land allotment, which compelled each individual Indian to become possessor of one separate parcel of land, breaking up the tribal [communal] holdings and shattering the tribal or corporate system of Indian life.

"The individual Indian, placed on his separate fragment of land, was left unsupplied with agricultural training or the capital which would have enabled him to use his land. When he died, the land had to be physically partitioned among the heirs—usually impossible—or else sold, and the sale was practically always a sale to whites under unfavorable market conditions.

"This allotment scheme, as a means of transferring Indian land to whites, was cheaper,

CHAPTER III

REVOLUTION IN THE MAKING

AND WHAT analogy exists in Mexico between the white and the Indian? The first speaks Spanish and French; the second has more than a hundred different languages. . . . The white is Catholic or indifferent; the Indian is idolatrous. The white is the proprietor; the Indian the proletariat. The white is rich; the Indian poor, miserable. The descendants of the Spaniards are within reach of all of the knowledge of the century and of all scientific discoveries; the Indian is ignorant of everything. The white dresses in the latest Parisian mode in the most expensive clothes; the Indian goes about almost naked. The white lives in cities in magnificent houses; the Indian is isolated in the fields and his habitation is a miserable hut. This is the contrast which Mexico presents: no wonder Humboldt said it was a country of inequality!

Thus did the Mexican *hacendado* and conservative, Francisco Pimentel, contrast the conditions of the mass of the Mexican people with those of the masters in his famous report on *The Present Situation of the Indigenous Race*[1] published just seven years after the promulgation of the Constitution of 1857.

But not yet had the masses of Indians and mestizos drunk the full measure of their cup of sorrows. To inequality was to be added still more inequality, and injustice was to be compounded with injustice. If the laws of the reform as embodied in the Constitution of 1857 struck a mortal blow at the landholding villages, it remained for the Díaz government to administer the final *coup de grâce*, to wrest from those that had not even that little which they had. For the long rule of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911) was marked by a concentration in the ownership of land to an extent unequalled before in the history of

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more peaceable and more respectable than the treaty-smashing scheme; and since 1887 it has transferred to white ownership 91,000,000 acres of Indian land.

"There remain only 47,000,000 acres of land owned by Indians, and nearly half of this is desert land.

"The allotment system is today, as in past years, the 'backbone of Indian law,' and it insures the complete disinheritance of those allotted Indians who still possess some land. It has already made more than 100,000 of the Indians absolutely landless." Collier, "The Crisis in Indian Affairs," (mimeographed press release) p. 2.

[1] Pimentel, *Memoria sobre las causas que han originado la situación actual de la raza Indígena de México*, etc., in: *Obras completas de D. Francisco Pimentel*, III, 134. Note that for "Indians" one should read "Indians and the great majority of mestizos." See footnote 9, Chapter II.

Mexico and, perhaps it is no exaggeration to say, unequalled in the history of any other country in modern times. It will not be necessary to rehearse here in any detail the various legal and pseudo-legal means by which this unhappy state of affairs was consummated. A short summary of the two principal features of Díaz's agrarian policy —the alienation of public lands and the expropriation of village properties—will suffice to show why the end of the "Great Dictator's" regime found Mexico a house divided against itself, a people steeped in poverty, a nation standing on the brink of disaster.

The Alienation of Public Lands

A favorite theory of many political leaders in the period following independence was that the best way to develop the country would be to attract large numbers of immigrants. This theory, translated into law, led to a number of ill-fated attempts at colonization on public lands. In practically every case the result was complete failure; large tracts of the public domain passed into the hands of a few colonization companies and speculators "for a song,"[2] or, as in the case of Texas, into the hands of a foreign government; a few thousand immigrants, after struggling futilely with the Mexican climate and soil straggled back to their native lands—and that was all.

It remained for the Díaz government to tackle the problem of colonization and the opening up of public lands in a really big way. The first important step in this direction was the enacting in 1883 of a law providing for the surveying, subdivision and settling of public lands. Under this law the executive was empowered to carry out colonization operations either through government concessions or by means of contracts with private companies. In the latter case, the companies were to receive up to one-third of the land surveyed as payment for their work and in addition had the privilege of buying the other two-thirds at special rates. It was specified that all lands acquired by such companies must be sold to colonists in tracts not greater than 2,500 hectares.

The system of distributing public lands set up in the law of 1883 started an era of land grabbing and speculation which in a few years reached enormous proportions. By 1889, out of some 32 million hectares surveyed, 29 companies obtained possession, either as compensation for their "work" or by purchase, of over 27.5 million

[2] Even the great President Juárez, when hard pressed for money, was responsible for a few "ruinous colonization contracts," notably the one by which the government in 1864 for the sum of 100,000 dollars agreed to turn over for "development" to the Lower California Company 29.9 million acres of land. For violation of the contract, however, this concession was cancelled in 1873. Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

hectares—an area equal to 14 per cent of the total area of the Republic. In the next five years another 6 per cent of the country passed into the hands of the land companies, thus making the total public lands alienated by 1892 equal to around one-fifth of the entire geographical area.[3]

Referring to the operation of the land companies before 1885, one Mexican authority called attention to the following facts:

> . . . First, these surveys have not brought about the reduction in the slightest degree of the great accumulation of property in our nation; the infernal hydra of this dark and arrogant feudalism remains as ever with its seven heads unharmed. Second, we must remember that these thirty million hectares [of lands alienated] represent many more millions of tears; for it is not the powerful, not the great *hacendados* who have seen their millions of hectares fall from their hands, but the poor, the ignorant and the weak . . . those who were not able to call friend (*compadre*) a District Judge, or a Governor, or a Minister of State.[4]

But this was just the beginning. After 1894 and the enactment of a still more liberal law of colonization, even the pretext of opening the country to settlers was dropped and concessions of public lands were used by Díaz, with practically no effort at concealment, to reward political favorites and to bulwark the dictatorship in its complete domination of the country.

All of the grants made under the colonization laws of 1883 and 1894 were large; some of them were of almost incredible proportions. In the state of Chihuahua, over 14 million hectares were given out to seven concessionaries; one company received a total of some 5 million hectares scattered over the states of Coahuila, Nuevo León, Tamaulipas, and Chihuahua; in Durango, 2 million hectares were divided between two grantees; in Oaxaca four concessionaries received a total of more than 3.2 million hectares, and so forth.[5]

According to Phipps, the grand total of all public lands transferred to the hands of a few individuals during the Díaz regime was over 134.5 million acres (approximately 63.8 million hectares) or about 27 per cent of the total area of the Republic. In return for this vast quantity of land the Mexican government received a little more than 11.8 million dollars, paid mostly in depreciated bonds.[6] "By the end of the Díaz administration," writes McBride, "there remained no

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[3] Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

[4] Orozco, Wistano Luis, *Legislación y jurisprudencia sobre terrenos baldíos*, II, 914, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 75.

[5] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[6] Phipps, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-11.

public lands in twelve of the states and in the Federal District, while in six of the remaining states there was little left"—in the whole Republic less than 23 million hectares.[7]

The Rape of the Pueblos

One might forgive, some excuse might be found—although how and where it is difficult to conceive—for the sins of the Díaz government in dissipating the national domain, in wasting the country's resources of land, forest, and pasture, and of creating enormous new landed estates and making still greater those already in existence. But no palliation, no extenuation can be imagined for the cold rape of the pueblos and the heartless suppression of the small landowners which Díaz not only countenanced but openly aided and abetted.

Of the numerous ways in which the villages were deprived of their few remaining hectares and were reduced to poverty and peonage hardly more than a bare list can be made here.[8]

1. *New interpretations and increased vigor in the application of the Laws of the Reform.* If during the Díaz regime the government winked at the reform laws in so far as they applied to the Church (and thus allowed the Church to recoup much of its wealth and economic power) it more than made up for its laxness by the zeal and stringency with which it enforced that section of the Constitution of 1857 prohibiting civil corporations from holding land. Many villages by one method or another had been able to stave off the application of the law to the agricultural portions (*terrenos de común repartimiento*) of their ejidos and to continue to hold these lands collectively. But by two circulars (1889 and 1890) Díaz declared categorically that *all* the lands of the villages must be divided up and titles allotted in severalty and called upon the governors of the states to exert every effort to enforce the law in this respect. The inevitable result was that thousands of *ejidatarios*,[9] either not comprehending the meaning of private property or unable to defend the little plots of land turned over to them through the application of the law, soon lost them to speculators, land companies, or to the *hacendados*. Sometimes the

[7] McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76. The greater part of the public lands alienated by the Díaz government were semiarid, desert, and mountain properties of doubtful value to anyone and certainly not subject to exploitation by small farmers. At the same time, however, there were included in the public domain squandered by Díaz millions of hectares of the best forest lands and pastures and a very considerable amount of good crop land.

[8] For a detailed discussion with illustrative case materials, see Phipps, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-28; also Gruening, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-30.

[9] *Ejidatarios* are heads of families in villages holding lands (ejidos) communally. In view of the fact that there is no convenient way of translating the term and because of the frequency of its use, *ejidatario* will appear hereafter in unitalicized form.

ejidatario was divested of his parcel by legitimate sale (albeit, usually at a ridiculously low price); more often the land was simply seized and, without adequate recourse to either law or force, the ejidatario had no choice but to submit.[10]

2. *Encroachments of colonization companies.* The agreements made by the colonization companies with the government provided that the properties of third persons comprised within a grant should be respected. But many of the companies also had the right to deal directly with any claimants on the lands surveyed—"in order to expedite the proceedings." Moreover, the burden of proof of legal possession lay upon the claimant.[11] Armed with such power, it is easy to understand how the colonization companies were able to force many villages either to abandon their property entirely, or to pay rent for lands which they had held for generations.

3. *Losses through "denunciation."* One of the sections of the Colonization Law of 1894 provided that anyone might denounce and file a claim to occupied lands for which it could be proved no legally registered title existed. Presumably this section of the law was designed to recover for the nation the so-called *demasías* or *excedencias* illegally held by the great landlords. At the same time, however, in the Constitution of 1857 and by express reiteration in the law of 1894, villages were prohibited from holding land and hence all communal properties of the pueblos were automatically classed as illegal and thus subject to denunciation. How many villages lost their lands to energetic "denouncers" is not known, but the number is believed to be appreciable.

4. *Alienation through manipulation of water rights.* By a series of laws (1888, 1894, and 1896) the definition of federal waters was greatly extended and the president was empowered to grant to individuals and companies exclusive rights to the use of federal waters for irrigation and industrial purposes. In many cases these concessions in the hands of powerful *hacendados* and land companies were used to deprive villages of their property by the simple process of cutting off the supply of water. The village lands thus made useless would be abandoned and thereafter promptly seized by the landlords.

5. *Punishments for rebellion.* Many villages, and more especially those of the Indian tribes, were destroyed and their lands taken over (and later parcelled out to Díaz's friends) by the direct action of the

[10] Phipps has estimated that around 2.3 million acres of communal land were allotted in severalty during the Díaz period and that practically all of this land passed, either legally or otherwise, into the hands of the land companies or of the *hacendados*. *Op. cit.*, p. 115.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

federal government. The excuse was rebellion and refusal to comply with the law; but the reason, as always, was greed. Thus it was that the Mayas in Yucatán, the Yaquis and Mayos in Sonora, and various other Indian groups lost their lands and often their lives as well. Indeed, the story of the treatment of the Indian tribes, which in many cases the government itself had goaded to resistance by injustice and oppression, is one of the blackest chapters in the whole history of the Díaz government.

Many ways and means by which the communal villages were either directly or indirectly deprived of their land might be mentioned in addition to the ones just listed. The system of agricultural credit which operated only to the benefit of the *hacendado*, the unjust taxation laws by which the burden of government support fell upon the small farmer, the great difficulties and expenses involved in obtaining clear titles to property, the effect of the unfair rates on the new railways, and the manipulation of import and export duties—all these and a number of other factors and forces, both legal and economic, operated to the detriment of the villages and small farmers and to the benefit of the *hacendados*.

The net result was that by the end of the Díaz regime, according to Luis Cabrera, 90 per cent of the villages and towns on the central plateau had no communal lands of any kind.[12] "Few ejidos were left in Hidalgo, none in Tlaxcala or in the Tehuantepec region. Villages of the states of Puebla and México 'had not pasturage for a goat.' Morelos contained only one village, Tepoztlán, that still owned communal lands. Some villages had so little land that each family could be allotted only one or two furrows. . . . In many localities the Indian villages were pushed off on arid, bleak mountain slopes where they, with great difficulty, extracted a living from the unkindly soil. . . ."[13]

Distribution of Land Ownership

Any attempt to summarize the land tenure situation at the end of Díaz's long rule in terms of the distribution of ownership meets with the difficulty that no comprehensive census of holdings exists for the period in question. It is clear that there were three principal forms of land tenure: the hacienda, or large, landed estate, the *rancho*, or small farm, and, finally, the landholding village. It is also clear that the bulk of the land was held by relatively few haciendas, a much smaller area by a relatively large number of *ranchos*, and perhaps a still smaller area by the villages. The exact proportions of the

[12] Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 120.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 120-21.

distribution of all rural property between these three forms of tenure is, however, impossible to state. To obtain even approximate estimates we will turn once again to McBride's ever valuable monograph, *The Land Systems of Mexico.*

The figures worked out by McBride on the basis of the 1910 census and certain other sources show that at the end of the Díaz period there were in the Republic a total of 8,245 haciendas.[14] Many of these properties were known to be of very considerable extent—thus, it is estimated that 300 of them contained at least 10,000 hectares; 116 around 25,000 hectares; 51 had approximately 30,000 hectares; while 11 are believed to have measured not less than 100,000 hectares each.[15] The aggregate total area of all haciendas in 1910, however, cannot be stated. Nor can any figure be given for the aggregate area of the some 48,000 small properties (*ranchos*) which McBride lists[16] for the same year. With regard to the landholding villages no accurate figures are available either for numbers or area for 1910.[17]

In the face of the lack of adequate materials on which to base an estimate of the distribution of landholding in terms of the aggregate areas embraced by the several types of tenure, McBride summarizes his findings on this subject in terms of the number of heads of rural families owning property as compared with the total number of heads of rural families. The figures he presents show that in 1910, in only one state in the Republic did the proportion of heads of rural families owning property exceed 7.7 per cent of the total of all heads of rural families. In twenty-five out of a total of thirty states listed less than 5 per cent of the heads of rural families owned any rural

[14] McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78. The size of haciendas varies greatly in different parts of the country and hence any figure selected to indicate where small farms (*ranchos*) leave off and large properties or haciendas begin is bound to be arbitrary. McBride adopts the figure of 1,000 hectares as the dividing line, thus defining haciendas as all properties of 1,001 hectares or more. (*Ibid.*, p. 25 and pp. 139, ff.) This definition of an hacienda appears to be sufficiently accurate for statistical purposes and will be used in the present study.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

[17] McBride estimates that in 1854 there were some 5,000 "agrarian corporations" in existence holding an aggregate of around 11.6 million hectares and then adds in a later passage, referring to the situation at approximately the date of the publication of his book (1923): "The landholding pueblos have greatly decreased in number since the middle of the last century. . . . However, they still survive in certain out-of-the-way parts of the country where the Indian influence has remained strong. This is noticeable in the secluded parts of the Mesa Central—and of the Mesa del Sur. In the states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, Jalisco, Veracruz, Tlaxcala and parts of Puebla the landholding pueblos are not at all uncommon." *Ibid.*, pp. 133 and 135. Compare this statement, however, with the one quoted on p. 31.

property. Or, to state the matter the other way around, more than 95 per cent of the heads of rural families in all but five states were propertyless and in all but one state the proportion of rural families owning no rural property whatsoever was greater than 92 per cent![18]

It is difficult to imagine a greater disproportion in the distribution of landholdings than these figures reveal. In the face of these statistics one cannot but admire the scientific restraint of McBride's language when he concludes that: "By 1910 the rural inhabitants of Mexico who had no individual property were probably more numerous than they had been at any previous time in the history of the country. Thus, in this important respect, and in spite of the marked material development of the country, Mexico was in a worse condition than she had ever been during the most stationary periods of the Spanish domination."[19]

Peonage and Poverty

Before attempting to summarize a few of the salient facts with regard to the social and economic conditions of Mexico's disinherited, landless masses in 1910, it will be necessary to recall some of the more fundamental points concerning the distribution of the population. According to the 1910 census, of the country's total population of 15.2 million individuals, 11.8 million, or 77.7 per cent, were counted as rural (that is, living in communities of less than 4,000 inhabitants) and 3.4 million, or 22.3 per cent, were classified as urban. If the Federal District with its disproportionate percentage of urban population be excluded from the accounting, the proportion of rural to urban population for the whole Republic rises to 80.8 per cent. As might be expected, the relation of rural to urban population varied considerably from state to state—in fact, from between 58.5 per cent in Aguascalientes to 100 per cent in Quintana Roo. In all but seven states the rural population numbered more than three-fourths of the total population and in no state except Aguascalientes did the percentage fall below 66.[20]

Where did these 11.8 millions of country folk live? The answer is: they lived in villages; and, moreover, they lived for the most part in relatively small villages. This fact, justly emphasized by many

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

Although McBride's statistics do not take into account rural families participating in the use of such collective village holdings as may have been still in existence in 1910, it is unlikely that the number of these families would greatly affect his percentages in the majority of the states.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 155-56.

[20] See Table 2, Appendix A.

students of Mexican social phenomena,[21] is one of the most fundamental facts about the country, whether one refers to the year 1910 or to the present time. Complete data bearing on this point for 1910 are not available; however, if we arrange the statistics for rural population of the 1921 census by size of communities, the truth of the foregoing statement can be seen at once. Thus in Fig. 1, it will be noted that almost half (48.6 per cent) of the total rural population

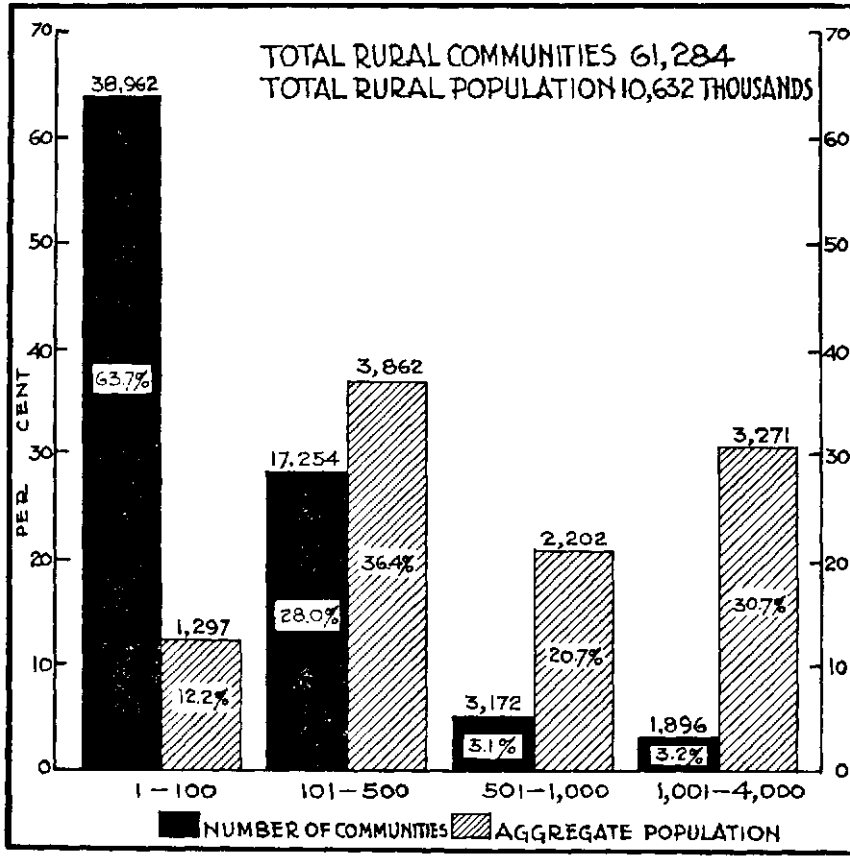

FIG. 1.—Distribution of rural communities and population in rural communities of specified size, 1921. (See Appendix A, Table 1.)

lived in communities of less than 501 inhabitants and almost 70 per cent in communities of less than 1,001. Of the 61,000 rural com-

[21] For example, see McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 104 ff.; and Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 28 ff.

munities in Mexico in 1921, almost 39,000, or approximately 64 per cent, were communities of less than 101 inhabitants and almost 92 per cent were in the class 1 to 500 inhabitants.[22]

Whether because of the distribution of the arable soil in isolated pockets, the insecurity of life in the country districts throughout most of the history of the country, or for other reasons,[23] the fact is that the family unit, the isolated individual farms such as are commonly found in the United States and Canada, for example, have never existed in Mexico in any appreciable degree. "Mexico has always been a country of villages."

A second basic fact about the distribution of the rural population in Mexico is that there are at least three different classes of rural communities: (1) hacienda villages; (2) free agricultural villages; and (3) mining, fishing, industrial, and other miscellaneous types of communities.

Hacienda villages are those located (*acasillado*) upon private estates. Typically, the inhabitants of hacienda villages do not possess any land, and are therefore entirely dependent upon the estate to which they are attached for their means of subsistence—either in the form of wages or of returns from various types of crop sharing, or both. Free villages, on the other hand, are those in which the inhabitants possess sufficient land, held either in individual, privately-owned parcels or collectively, to assure their inhabitants of at least the minimum necessities. The third class of rural communities—mining, fishing, industrial, and so forth—are essentially non-agricultural and in any case very few in number and hence do not enter into the present discussion.

Obviously, if some way could be found for showing statistically the relative proportion of free villages as compared with hacienda villages in 1910, we would have a method of distributing the rural population in a manner which would throw considerable light on the social and economic conditions of Mexico's agricultural folk under the Díaz government; for if the definitions given above of the several classes of villages mean anything at all, they mean that part of the rural population (living in hacienda villages) was, generally speaking, made up of dependent, landless day laborers—in short, peons; while another part of the rural population (living in free villages) was formed of individuals, relatively independent in the sense that they possessed land enough at least for subsistence, and free in the sense that they were their own masters. Unfortunately, no method exists by which any very accurate statistical statements can

[22] For comparable figures for the year 1930, see Table 1, Appendix A.

[23] Compare McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

be made with reference to the relative number, aggregate population or size of free villages as compared with hacienda villages in 1910.[24]

The most that can be said on the basis of the data available is that whereas, in the closing years of the Díaz regime there were a few villages scattered here and there in the Republic which could be fairly described as "free villages" in the sense in which this term has been defined here, by far the greater number of the some 69,500 rural communities embracing the bulk of the rural population were for all practical purposes entirely dependent

[24] Students of Mexican agrarian problems will recognize that the classification of rural communities given here is the same as that which occupies a prominent place in Tannenbaum's well-known monograph, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*. So far as the present writer's experience in Mexico goes, the classification adopted by Tannenbaum, *as a statement of a generally recognized social fact in Mexico*, is entirely accurate. However, the methods used by Tannenbaum in his statistical analysis of this social fact and hence the conclusions he arrives at concerning the relative number, aggregate population, and size of free villages as compared with hacienda villages are open to certain criticisms.

The census data in Mexico lists communities under a large variety of names—*ranchos, haciendas, pueblos, rancherías, minerales, villas*, etc.,—to the number of some 100 different types. To assume, as Tannenbaum does, that "hacienda villages" can be identified merely by the names (*rancho, hacienda, finca, campo-agrícola*, etc.) appearing in the census thus leaving all other agricultural communities in the class "free villages," involves a certain and possibly a large amount of error. Some communities traditionally known as and appearing in the census under the names of *haciendas, ranchos*, etc., are in reality (i.e., in terms of the social and economic criteria set up by Tannenbaum) "free villages," while other communities listed in the census as *pueblos, congregaciones*, etc., in actual fact have practically all the social and economic characteristics of "hacienda villages" as here defined.

It would appear that Tannenbaum's conclusion (pp. 30-37) based on the above described procedure, that in 1910 approximately 16 per cent of all villages and 51 per cent of all rural population could be classified as of the "free village" type, represents a considerable over-estimate of the number and aggregate population of free villages. As an example of the putative error involved in Tannenbaum's statistics, the case of the state of Morelos may be cited. Following his method of classification on the basis of census nomenclature, Tannenbaum arrives at the conclusion that in 1910, 125 villages, or 44 per cent of the total rural communities in Morelos (with an aggregate population equal to 74 per cent of the total rural population) were "free villages"!

Now, if Tannenbaum's classification of "free villages" is to be taken as meaning anything more than the fact that such villages were not located upon landed estates—i.e., if, as he apparently intends, free villages are to be thought of as villages in which the inhabitants are "free" in the sense that they own either individually or collectively sufficient land to provide them with at least the minimum necessities of life—then these figures are misleading. For Morelos is one of the few states in Mexico for which a fair amount of data is available from a number of different sources and these data (e.g., see McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-44) tend to show that of all the states in the Republic, Morelos was the prize exhibit of a state in which the villages in their corporate capacity and the inhabitants thereof in their private capacity before 1910 had suffered the greatest losses of land and in which the concentration of landholding in the hands of a few *hacendados* had reached its apogee. It is extremely doubtful if even as many as a round dozen of the villages in

upon the large estates for the means of holding body and soul together. The fact is abundantly clear in the case of the large number of villages actually located within the confines of haciendas and is hardly less clear with respect to many so-called free villages which either had no land at all or so little and so poor land as virtually to be in the same boat with *acasillado* communities.[25]

As an index of the social and economic conditions characterizing the life of practically all the inhabitants of the hacienda villages and all but a very few of the other agricultural communities in the latter part of the Díaz period, let us first consider the subject of wages.[26] Agricultural monetary wages in Mexico remained practically stationary from 1792 to 1908, a period of 156 years. In 1792 the average daily wage for agricultural labor varied between 25 and 30 centavos; in 1891 the average minimum daily wage was 23.5 centavos, the average maximum 50 centavos and the average of all wages was 36 centavos; in 1908, the figures were approximately the same. But while wages remained the same, or showed only a slight tendency to increase, prices in pesos of the principal articles of food consumption between the years 1792 and 1908 increased as follows:

	1792	*1891*	*1908*
Corn per hectoliter	1.75	2.50	4.89
Rice per 100 kilos	7.60	12.87	13.32
Flour per 100 kilos	2.71	10.87	21.89
Wheat per 100 kilos	1.80	5.09	10.17
Beans per 100 kilos	1.63	6.61	10.89
Chile per 100 kilos	26.08	27.13	57.94

In other words, with wages fixed, the price of corn rose in the period in question by approximately 179 per cent, rice 75 per cent, flour

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Morelos in 1910 were free in the sense that the inhabitants either individually or collectively possessed enough land to make their "freedom" anything more than a mere accident of political category.

What all this amounts to is simply that the classification "free villages" as defined statistically by Tannenbaum (as opposed to its conceptual definition) includes villages varying all the way from those which were in reality economically and socially free to those which were free only in that they may not have been physically located within the bounds of an hacienda. As a matter of fact, it is only fair to say that in his discussion of the free village (Chap. III) Tannenbaum himself offers ample evidence in support of the foregoing criticism; however, this does not make his statistics any more accurate.

[25] Compare Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-90.

[26] For historical wage data see "La curva de los salarios y el costo de la vida," *Estadística Nacional*, May 31, 1925; Silva Herzog, "La revolución económica," *El Sol.*, Feb. 1928; Fernández y Fernández, "Evolución económica del jornalero del campo," *Crisol*, Jan. and Feb. 1931; and "Un estudio sobre el costo de la vida rural," *El Economista*, Feb. 2 and 16, 1933; Soto, "Los salarios en México," *Crisol*, Oct. and Dec. 1933.

711 per cent, wheat 465 per cent, beans 565 per cent, and chile 123 per cent.[27]

If further comment be necessary to clarify these figures and the "tragic reality" they reveal, it may be found in a comparison of agricultural wages in Mexico and in the United States in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Figures worked out by the Mexican economist Francisco Bulnes show that the value of the average wage of the American farm laborer in 1886 was in terms of wheat 15 times greater than that of the Mexican peon; in corn 12 times greater, and in terms of calico (*manta*) 19 times greater. In general the acquisitive power of the Mexican peon was estimated to be 1,400 per cent less than that of the American farm laborer of the same class and time.[28]

Statistics on wages are even less satisfactory as an index of the standard of living in Mexico than they are in most countries, for in prerevolutionary Mexico money wages were at best nominal. Both the amount of wages and the form of their payment varied greatly from one part of the country to another and as between resident laborers and those not living on or permanently attached to haciendas. The nonresident laborers living in the so-called free villages ordinarily received somewhat higher monetary wages than the hacienda peons. The difference, however, was more apparent than real, for it was customary on most haciendas to supplement the money wages paid to the hacienda peons by certain additional "privileges" not extended to the nonresident laborers. Thus the hacienda peon might be allowed to buy corn at something under the market rate, or might be given a small plot of ground to cultivate.

Whenever possible the resident hacienda peons, and often the nonresident laborers as well, were paid not in actual cash but in tokens—orders on the hacienda store. This custom gave rise to and was supported by the vicious institution of the *tienda de raya* (literally, "payroll store"). Every large hacienda had one of these official company stores and workers were forbidden on pain of fines and even bodily punishment to buy at other stores—if, indeed, there *were* any other stores. "The ideal of good administration was to make such money as was paid out in wages return to the hacienda through this [official] store at a profit."[29] The testimony of Mexicans and foreigners alike leaves no room for doubt that few were the haciendas

[27] *La curva de los salarios*. The course of the relation of prices and agricultural wages in Mexico in the nineteenth century was exactly opposite to that in many other parts of the world—i.e., while in the United States and France, for example, prices remained stationary or increased only very slowly, wages rose steadily. Silva Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[28] Quoted in Gama, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.

[29] Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

which did not achieve this administrative ideal—and with room to spare.

The worst of the many distressing features of the life of the agricultural laborer in prerevolutionary days was the system by which millions of workers were tied to the haciendas in debt slavery. Undoubtedly this system was most effective in the case of peons resident on hacienda properties, but the landless inhabitants of the free villages forced to seek work on neighboring haciendas were by no means always successful in escaping its effects. The method was simplicity itself: an advance would be made to a worker on the occasion of some special celebration (a marriage, birth, religious festival, or whatnot), or credit for clothes or food would be extended at the *tienda de raya*—and the trap was closed. For, as long as the worker owed his employer a single centavo, he could not leave the estate, or, if he did leave, he could be brought back by force. Moreover, debts could be handed down from father to son.[30] Once the tentacles of debt had wound themselves around the body of the worker, escape was practically impossible, even unto the second and third generation.

Did space permit, instances and concrete illustrations could be cited almost without number in support of the general thesis that by the first decade of the twentieth century Mexico had become a nation of peonage and poverty, a country in which the great majority of the population were not only, in Sumner's recently popular phrase, "forgotten men," but men so long unremembered and abandoned to misery and affliction that manhood itself had all but vanished from the land. If these sound like "purple" phrases, then listen to the Mexican historian Luis Orozco describing the situation during the latter part of the Díaz regime:

> The hacienda peon of today is still the predestined successor of the Indian slave, he is still like a beast of burden, destitute of illusion and of all hope. The son receives at an early age the chains which bound his father and passes them along in turn to his sons. The *tiendas de raya* are the same as they were in the Colonial epoch, permanent agencies of robbery and factories of slaves. There the liberty of the worker is traded for salt, soap and shoddy cloth—sold at fabulous prices. The poor peon almost never holds in his hand a piece of silver money. The *tienda de raya* always pays wages in worthless merchandise; the "four pesos and ration," the monthly salary of the workers, is converted into a series of marks in a book which the poor peon cannot understand, nor tries to understand.

[30] Strictly speaking, none of this procedure was legal, for the Constitution of 1857 expressly provided (Art. V) that "nobody should be obliged to render personal service without proper compensation and his full consent."

The landlords, and especially the administrators of the haciendas, are still the despots who, whip in hand, are allowed to perpetrate every class of infamy against the workers, their daughters and wives. . . . The age-old system which robs slaves and masters alike has made our agricultural industry one of the most backward in the world. . . .[31]

The difference between the situation of the agricultural laborer living in the free villages located off the haciendas and that of the hacienda peon was in most cases the difference between tweedle-dedum and tweedlededee. If the nonresident laborer was not so easily trapped in the system of debt slavery and if he was able to escape some of the worst effects of the immediate personal domination of the hacienda owner or administrator, this did not necessarily mean that his lot was an enviable one. A few Indian groups, safe in the isolation of the mountains to which they had escaped in the early days of the Colonial regime, managed to eke out a miserable existence[32] without benefit of or contact with the hacienda. Here and there in such states as Oaxaca, Veracruz, and Jalisco a few sturdy and determined villages were even successful in defending their ancestral lands and in maintaining themselves in relative independence, if not in comfort. But these were the exceptions. Most of the free villages were free in name only. In the relatively few cases where a village had managed by hook or crook to retain a little land, it was seldom enough to produce even the most ele-

[31] *Legislación y jurisprudencia sobre terrenos baldíos*, II, 1096-97, quoted in Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[32] The following description of life in the Sierra de Puebla, although written in 1927, offers a fair picture of conditions in many parts of Mexico before 1910:

"The climate of this region is varied . . . the rainfall very generous and the land, if well cultivated, of enormous fertility. The people are hard working . . . men, women and children toiling like ants from sun to sun. And yet, despite the fact that nature has been prodigious in her gifts . . . that the land is well distributed amongst the population, that they have peace and for some time past have had a benevolent [local] government—still the standard of living of these people is of the very lowest type. . . . Using the methods of the neolithic age, the Indians work their land and gather its fruits. On the market day of the nearest little village ('nearest' often means a whole day's walk), the men, the women, and even the poor little children come carrying on their shoulders the meager harvest. . . . As did their fathers and their grandfathers and all their ancestors, so also do they; thus do they sow and reap, thus bargain and sell. . . .

"For the most part, they know of no other way to renew the fertility of their lands than to allow them periodically to rest. The year in which the land lies fallow, the family simply suffers more hunger. In one place, Zapotitlán, there was a man who cultivated his land very well. . . . This man wished to teach the Indians his secret. They listened to him with their usual apathy, but when the harvest came and they witnessed again the miracle of the greater yield, they asked to what saint he prayed in order to obtain such an abundant harvest and to what priest he said his masses." Sáenz, *Escuelas federales de la Sierra de Puebla*, pp. 79-80.

mentary necessities of life and the meager income had to be supplemented by work either as share croppers or as day laborers on neighboring haciendas. Tannenbaum has summarized the life of the free village as follows :

> These communities . . . have insufficient lands for their agricultural needs, and insufficient tools and animals to cultivate the lands they do have. Their agriculture is thus largely a hoe agriculture. Their lack of land and tools and animals compels them, in a large measure, to secure a portion of their income as wage laborers, as croppers, and as renters. Some of them fill out their economic needs by arts and crafts, and by acting as carriers, mule drivers, and petty merchants.
>
> These little villages . . . are isolated from the rest of the world, and their only connections are mule paths, more rarely ox-carts, and infrequently railroads. They have almost no professional service, frequently no postal, telegraph, telephone, newspaper, magazine, or book contacts. . . . Their food consists largely of maize bread, known as tortillas, beans, and chile. Meat is a luxury they eat only rarely. . . .
>
> The houses are one-room shacks, made of adobe in the colder regions, and in the warmer climates made of bamboo sticks or reeds. . . . The one room serves for the whole family, and sometimes for the animals that the family may have. . . . There simply is no sanitation in large parts of rural Mexico. . . . The water is so bad in some places that the natives avoid drinking it, drinking alcoholic beverages instead. . . . Clothing is of the most meager sort. . . .
>
> The rural community is poor, poorer than most Europeanized, city-dwelling Mexicans realize. In fact, Mexico comprizes two civilizations, living side by side but neither one fully conscious of the other.[33]

We have now finished our all too brief review of the historical background of the Mexican agrarian problem. The outlines of the story are relatively clear. Just when the seeds of land monopoly were first planted in Mexican soil we do not know. But by the time of the Conquest they had already sunk their roots in the earth and produced the first crop of vested interests. To these native growths were grafted ancient and hardy plants brought by the Spaniards from the old world and for three hundred years they were watered with greed and nourished with rapacity. The result was one of the most luxuriant harvests of the weeds of special privilege the world has ever seen. In 1810 the people rose in arms determined to clear the land, to pull up root and branch the noxious plants which threatened their ejidos, indeed, their very existence. But to no avail. The roots were too deep, the branches too thick. In 1857, there was a

[33] Frank Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 86-90. Reprinted by permission of the Brookings Institution.

great laying about with legal implements. But again with little result, for the weeds had become a sturdy forest and the feeble instruments of the Reform turned in the hands of those who tried to wield them. Then came the thirty years' rule of Porfirio Díaz—concessions, land grabbing, spoilation, fraud, and lo, the forest was a vast tropical jungle in whose tangled depths there dwelt a race of slaves—sunless, airless, landless, and hopeless. The ejidos gone forever or gasping for breath; the hacienda triumphant and master of all it surveyed.

Thus the story from "in the beginning" down to the year 1910. In that fateful year a spark was struck, a fire was lighted. Suddenly the whole rotting jungle of privilege and preferment was a mass of raging flames. For almost a decade the holocaust of revolution. . . . Then, at last, the fires burnt out, the land swept clean and bare. Reform. Reconstruction. Rebirth of the ejidos. Thus the story from 1910 on.

CHAPTER IV

REVOLUTION AND AGRARIAN REFORM

THE REVOLUTION of 1910 is usually referred to in Mexico as *the* Revolution with a capital "R." The intention here, of course, is to distinguish the revolution of 1910 from the numerous *cuartelazos* (barracks uprisings), coup d'états and other forms of military intervention which all too often have accompanied a change of government in Mexico. The distinction is just. The revolution of 1910 was a real revolution in its aims as well as in its results. It was a movement in which to an appreciable degree social institutions and practices were turned over and not just the political "ins" turned out. There is ample reason for the opinion, as it is in part the purpose of this book to demonstrate, that the revolution judged in terms of its net results to date, has been somewhat less revolutionary,[1] has involved fewer fundamental changes in the social structure than some of its more fervent admirers would have us believe. Nevertheless, enough has been accomplished and the ground has been prepared for sufficient additional achievements to make this qualification a question of degree rather than kind.

CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

It is customary to say that the 1910 revolution was an agrarian revolution; in the sense that the fundamental social disequilibrium preceding the movement was at bottom due to inequalities in the distribution of landholding and to the evil effects of the hacienda system, this statement is true. Also, it is true in that land reform has been the outstanding achievement of the revolution. It would be a mistake to assume, however, that the agrarian complex was the only cause of the revolution, or even a cause at all, if by this term is meant a precipitating force. Land monopoly and peonage, while reaching unprecedented proportions under the Díaz administration, were

[1] "We need not manufacture illusions. The Mexican revolutionary . . . may well be considered a reactionary when judged by European standards. If we examine the conquests of our Revolution by such standards it turns out that we have done nothing more in Mexico than a work of moderate reform. . . . Many of our brand-new conquests have been realities in other nations for a long time. The only difference is that in Mexico we had to have a revolution [to achieve them]." Silva Herzog, "¿ Quiénes son los revolucionarios?" *El Universal*, Oct. 23, 1928.

hardly new phenomena in Mexico. The problematical aspects of the agrarian situation might have remained as they had been for thirty years and more, largely matters of academic or, at most, parliamentary interest, had it not been that certain other factors and forces combined actually to start the avalanche moving.

Paradoxically enough, but by a process familiar to students of mass movements, social revolutions apparently do not take place at the time when the reason for them appears to be most urgent. As long as the oppressed classes are completely ground under heel, as long as the masses are held in absolute subjection, nothing happens. It is only when the proletarians perceive that some other way of life is possible, only when they become acutely aware of the contrast between their own situation and that of some other class, that ambitions are stirred and hopes revived. From then on revolt, the translation of predisposing factors and sufficient reasons into efficient causes, becomes largely a matter of the appearance of leaders.

This is not the place to analyze in any detail the manner and the extent to which the Mexican revolution of 1910 fits into the foregoing sociological dicta. That it does fit more or less neatly, the curious may discover by a consideration of such matters, for example, as: (1) the repercussion on Mexican life of Mexican emigration to the United States in the latter years of the Díaz regime, or, perhaps, better said, of the effect of the returned Mexican emigrants who brought with them new ideas on the subject of a just standard of living; (2) the social reverberations of higher wages paid, and the opportunity of escape from the hacienda offered by the new industries (especially the railroads),[2] the development of which was so

[2] This idea, first raised to a sociological generalization by Sombart, finds its particular application to Mexico as follows:

". . . The United States, for a number of reasons, had the greatest interest in prolonging . . . [into Mexico] the iron ribbons of its railways. And this carried with it the rupture of our semi-feudal economic organization in three of its essential aspects: in the first place, buyers had to be found for [the American] manufactured products and these could only be obtained by invigorating the acquisitive capacity [of the masses] . . . ; in the second place, it was indispensable that labor should be free to move about . . . ; and, third, it was necessary . . . to bring about a radical change in a political structure [in Mexico] which stood in the way of and made difficult the achieving of the first two objectives. The dynamite of the railways charged the mine which later the Revolution was to set off.

"The construction of the railways . . . involved the employment of laborers who . . . for the first time received real [i.e. cash] wages, wages which radically improved their economic condition. Along the whole length of the railway lines which traversed the county gathered laborers, peons who had escaped the yoke of our great *hacendados*.

"Naturally, the immediate result of the distribution of wages by the great railway companies . . . was an increase in the purchasing power of the wage earners . . . commerce

marked in Mexico just before and after the turn of the century; (3) the unsettling effects of the fact that, although concomitant with the Díaz industrialization, wages for the industrial workers rose somewhat (just enough to whet their appetites for more), the wages of agricultural laborers remained stationary or declined[3] between 1900 and 1910, thus impressing on the hacienda peon the difference between his situation and that of his more fortunate brother who had escaped to the mines, railroads, or city factories; and (4) the distress caused by the fact that from about 1900 on prices began to outrun wages at an accelerating rate thus increasing the misery of the agricultural laborers, on the one hand, and thwarting the hopes of the industrial proletarians, on the other, just as these hopes were on the point of being revived under the stimulation of better nominal wages.

Such factors as those just mentioned help to account for the discontent of the oppressed classes and explain in part how the unrest of the people was finally brought to the boiling point—or, to repeat a phrase used before, how sufficient reasons for revolution were translated into immediate efficient causes.

But revolutions do not start without leaders and leaders seldom are recruited in the first instance, at any rate, from the lowest economic classes. While it is true, as McBride has pointed out, that "the revolution [of 1910] would have been impossible but for the vast army of Indians and mestizos who had neither soil, crops, houses nor cattle that would suffer in the turmoil and who welcomed the chance to gain plunder or perhaps a confiscated hacienda by rousing other landless hordes against the government that made such conditions possible,"[4] still, even slaves with nothing to lose but their chains wait upon the man with the magic word.

It was no accident that the first leader of the Mexican revolution was an *hacendado*, and a member of one of the richest landholding families in the country. The slave may be miserable and discontented, but his misery is inchoate and his discontent undirected. It is the upper class and middle class "misfit" who is at once both conscious of his thwarted ambitions and able to clothe his dissatisfaction with significant meaning. And so it was in Mexico. The intellectual

benefited because the laborers could now buy articles . . . which they never before had been able to enjoy. . . . The temporary bonanza, produced by the millions invested in our railways, constituted for a few years the true secret of the Porfirian peace. . . . [But] at the same time, the profound modifications which it introduced in the conditions of production in our nation prepared the way for the future revolution." R. Molina Enríquez, "La revolución y los ferrocarriles en México," *El Economista*, IX, 291.

[3] See Table 90, Appendix A.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 158.

leaders of the revolution sprang from the upper and middle classes, from those who could not (or would not) find a place either in the closed circle of the Díaz bureaucracy or in the foreign-dominated new industries. For it was this group which was caught between the upper and nether millstones. There was an ever increasing pressure to emulate the high standards of conspicuous expenditure introduced by the inner circles of the Díaz bureaucracy, fattening on the new industrialism, while, at the same time, the wherewithal to keep up with the procession was made more and more difficult to come by. The rationalization of the unrest and discontent engendered in the breasts of the misfits by this unhappy situation produced first complaints and eventually revolutionary formulas.[5]

One more generalization before we turn to a brief review of the actual events of the 1910 revolution. As the Mexicans themselves have been the first to point out, the revolution of 1910 both in its inception and during much of its course (some would say right down to the present day) was innocent of either doctrine or theory.[6] In the beginning it was largely a blind, blundering, haphazard, spontaneous outbreak. The revolutionary formulas, the magic words and the slogans of the intellectual leaders meant as little to the masses as they had relation to reality.[7] Only gradually did the movement

[5] The review in the foregoing paragraphs of the factors contributing to the outbreak of the revolution in 1910 is intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. No attempt is made, for example, to explore in relation to Mexico the truth of Lenin's hypothesis that revolutions depend upon an "all-national crisis."

For a subtle and incisive analysis of how the Díaz system prepared its own downfall, see Handman, The Mexican Revolution and the Standard of Living, *Proceedings of the American Sociological Society*, XV, 90-101.

[6] See León, *La doctrina, la táctica y la política agraria de la revolución*, pp. 6-8; and Villaseñor, "La revolución y los técnicos," *El Universal*, Oct. 18, 1928.

[7] The failure of the intellectuals to have a program or at least a social theory ready finds its explanation on the one hand in the stultifying effects of the widespread acceptance in prerevolutionary Mexico of a mixture of French positivism, Spencerianism and the "mouthy sophisms of Le Bon"; and, on the other hand, in the lack of any freedom of thought or speech:

"The position in which the honest intellectual [under the Díaz regime] found himself was this: his common sense and his innate human decency made him realize the perfect sham of the existing liberal regime. Being an artist and therefore exceedingly sensitive, the shamelessness, the cruelty, the indecency, the repulsiveness of that regime could not but affect him very keenly. These were the facts. For an explanation, he was sent to this [Spencerian et. al.] pseudo-science, convincing enough to him who wishes to be convinced, but anathema to him who is honestly seeking after the truth. Furthermore, if he tried to raise a voice of protest against the iniquity under his very eyes, the heavy hand of the dictator immediately fell upon him, while if he kept quiet and followed the line of least resistance, he was more or less sure of finding a place, even though a humble one, at the feasting table of the Dives. Outside of that, there was no room for him unless he chose to

crystallize around even so vague a formula as "Land and Liberty." Only during the course of the actual struggle did the problem of the unequal and unjust distribution of land achieve a reality and become imbued with an urgency which could not be denied. The French revolution had its Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Encyclopedists; the Russian soviet revolution its Marx and Engels; even the Fascist revolution received some philosophical comfort from the writings of Sorel, Corradini, and Pareto. But the "Mexican revolution had no prophet and no body of positive theory; it was obliged to formulate its own ideology and own program as it went along, a halting, fumbling, misdirected series of experiments. . . ."[8]

Francisco I. Madero and the Early Reform Proposals

And yet, despite what has just been said, hindsight shows that some of the early intellectual leaders of the revolution were far from being unaware of the real motivating drive of the movement.[9]

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share the running sores of Lazarus and the comforts of the licking dogs. It was a foregone conclusion that few, if any, would choose this heavy road to martyrdom. The upshot of the matter was that they compromised with the devil, took their share of the spoils, which even at that were small enough, and groaned dolorously under the double burden of misery and dishonesty." Handman, "Studies in Contemporary Mexican Literature," *Texas Review*, VI, 6. (Reprinted by permission of the author.)

[8] Beals, *Mexican Maze*, p. 45.

[9] No attempt will be made here to follow in any detail the ins and outs of the events of the revolution during its first decade except in so far as they bear directly on the agrarian reform and more particularly on the ejido. Those interested in the political and miliary history of the period will find the main outlines set forth in a number of places (see, for example: Priestley, *The Mexican Nation*, Chaps. XXIV-XXVII; Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage*, pp. 91-108; and Tannenbaum, *Peace by Revolution*, pp. 115-75). The reader may find the following dates useful for reference:

Oct. 4, 1910.	The Chamber of Deputies declares Porfirio Díaz elected President for the seventh consecutive time.
Oct. 5, 1910.	Francisco I. Madero Jr., in his *Plan de San Luis Potosí*, formally proclaims a revolution against the Díaz government.
May 25, 1911.	President Porfirio Díaz and Vice-president Ramón Corral resign in accordance with the Pact of Juárez signed on May 21, 1911, by representatives of Díaz and Madero.
May 25, 1911.	Francisco León de la Barra becomes Provisional President.
Nov. 6, 1911.	Madero assumes the Presidency following general elections held in October 1911.
Nov. 1911.	Emiliano Zapata starts a revolt in Morelos.
Feb. 19, 1913.	Madero resigns following his arrest by General Victoriano Huerta; Pedro Lascurain, Secretary of Foreign Relations, acts as Provisional President from 7:00 p.m. to 7:46 p.m.; he then resigns in favor of Huerta.
Mar. 26, 1913.	Venustiano Carranza launches a revolt against Huerta.
July 15, 1914.	Huerta resigns and is succeeded by Francisco S. Carbajal as Provisional President.

Madero himself, it is true, as the slogan—"Effective Suffrage and No Reëlection"—which carried him into power indicates, was blinded by his preoccupation with the immediate and derivative political problem.[10] But even Madero did not put his entire faith in democratic dogmas. Some have held that the following plank in Madero's revolutionary *pronunciamiento* was merely "molasses to catch flies"; a careful examination, however, of its meaning reveals at least the germ of Carranza's famous Decree of 1915.[11]

In abuse of the law on public lands numerous proprietors of small holdings, in their greater part Indians, have been dispossessed of their lands by rulings of the department of public development (*Fomento*) or by decisions of the tribunals of the Republic. As it is just to restore to their former owners the lands of which they were dispossessed in such an arbitrary manner, such rulings and decisions are declared subject to revision, and those who have acquired them in such an immoral manner, or their heirs, will be required to restore them to their former owners, to whom they shall also pay an indemnity for the damages suffered.[12]

Whatever may have been Madero's understanding of or attitude toward this plank in his program, a number of his supporters and other leaders in the revolutionary movement were not slow to realize the importance of agrarian reform. Of the numerous proposals

Aug. 12, 1914.	Carbajal resigns and leaves Mexico City the following day. After this, as one general after another gains the upper hand, Eulalio Gutiérrez, Roque González Garza and Francisco Lagos Chazaro serve as "President" for varying periods of time.
Aug. 22, 1914.	Carranza assumes the Executive Power as First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army.
May 1, 1917.	Carranza becomes Constitutional President following general elections held during April 1917.
April 1920.	The so-called "revindicating revolution" under the leadership of Alvaro Obregón, Plutarco Elías Calles and Adolfo de la Huerta overthrows the government of Carranza and Carranza is assassinated, May 21, 1920.
May 25, 1920.	De la Huerta appointed Provisional President by Congress and assumes office on June 1. Elections are held with the result that on:
Dec. 1, 1920.	Obregón, backed by the Liberal Constitutionalist Party, the Labor Party and the agrarians, takes office as Constitutional President. *The* Revolution officially over.

[10] "Madero believed in good faith that the problem of Mexico was essentially political; and for that reason he failed. In a speech which he made in San Luis Potosí in 1910 in answer to a heckler he said: 'The people do not ask for bread; they ask for liberty!' This phrase should be saved for history, for it synthesizes the thought of the Apostle." Silva Herzog, "¿Quiénes son los revolucionarios?"

[11] A discussion of this decree will be found in the following chapter.

[12] Quoted in Charles W. Hackett, *The Mexican Revolution and the United States, 1910-1926*, p. 342. Reprinted by permission of the World Peace Foundation.

made both within and without Madero's official family only passing mention will be made of the most important.

Soon after Madero's call to revolt was issued (Oct. 5, 1910), Juan Saravia and Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama (the latter destined to become one of the outstanding agrarian leaders) submitted to project for a law which not only called for the restoration of illegally usurped lands, but definitely proposed that villages again be given the right to hold and exploit ejidos. The law also envisaged the expropriation of lands near villages for the reconstitution of communal properties or for the creation of new ejidos, and the setting of a limit to the amount of private property any individual could own.[13]

Soto y Gama's ideas were later picked up and incorporated in the propaganda[14] of the Liberal Party. However, without question, the most important of the early projects for agrarian reform and the one which most completely foreshadowed the actual direction which the reform finally took was that made by Luis Cabrera in his speech to the Chamber of Deputies on October 3, 1912.[15] Inspired by some of the ideas presented in Andrés Molina Enríquez's famous book, *Los grandes problemas nacionales*,[16] Cabrera, after pointing to the "slavery and feudal servitude of the peons" and criticizing the timidity and misdirected efforts of Madero's Minister of Public Development in dealing with the agrarian question, stated that the problem must be solved by restoring the ejidos to the villages, for only in this way could large numbers be benefited and a system of land tenure familiar and appropriate to the indigenous groups be

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[13] Gama, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

[14] The following manifesto, sponsored by the Liberal Party, was published on April 3, 1911:

"Comrades: A little more than four months ago the Red Banner of the Proletariat floated on the battle fields of Mexico, sustained by emancipated workers, whose aspirations are epitomized in the sublime cry—'Land and Liberty!'

"The Liberal Party . . . is not struggling to overthrow the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, in order to put in his place a new tyrant. The Liberal Party is taking part in the present revolt with the firm and deliberate proposal of expropriating the land and the means of production in order to give them to the people. . . . [We propose] the abolition of privileges by means of a system which will guarantee to every human being Bread, Land and Liberty." Quoted in Magariños Torres, *op. cit.*, p. 108. See also the speech delivered on Dec. 6, 1911, by the Liberal leader, Felipe Santibañez, in Santibañez, "El Carrancismo no fué sinceramente agrarista," *El Excelsior*, Feb. 19, 1931.

[15] For a reprint of parts of this speech, see Cuadros Caldas, *México soviet*, pp. 151-58. See also Gama, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

[16] This book, published in 1909, is one of the few really serious attempts at social and economic analysis made during the Díaz period, and was one of the most important sources of such "philosophy" as the 1910 revolution could boast.

established. Cabrera further stated that it was foolish to think that anything could be accomplished by the slow process of legal revindication; the ejidos must be reconstituted by outright expropriation and for this purpose the president should be empowered to declare all private property necessary for the restitution and dotation of ejidos subject to seizure on the grounds of public necessity.

Cabrera and the Reform Party he represented were not successful. Madero, already caught up in the web of compromise, and surrounded by conservative and die-hard leftovers of the Díaz regime,[17] could not see beyond his formulas for free speech, free elections, and free initiative in Congress.[18] The president did finally get around to trying to recover some of the public lands lost under the Díaz administration, only to come to grief in the state of Chihuahua when the rich and reactionary Terrazas-Creel group bribed the ignorant "General" Pascual Orozco to turn against the administration. When the governor of Coahuila attempted to inaugurate a few mild reforms in the system of taxing rural properties he was opposed and thwarted in his plans by the members of Madero's own family who were the owners of a large part of the state.[19] The concrete net result of Madero's halfhearted attempts to deal with the agrarian problem were exactly nothing.[20]

Disillusioned and discouraged, the small minority of liberal supporters of Madero began to drop away. The masses, tired of waiting for the rewards of their struggle and baffled and irritated by the delays, compromises, and obstructionist tactics of the Madero government, only needed new leaders to express their discontent in direct action. Nor were such leaders slow in appearing.

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[17] One of the most intransigent of which was his Minister of Public Development, Rafael Hernández.

[18] "Madero regarded it [the law proposed by Cabrera] as very dangerous and in numerous personal interviews with the Deputies of the Reform Party definitely declared the project inopportune and stated that he really did not believe that there existed an agrarian problem of such a nature in Mexico." Cabrera, "Texto de la conferencia de Lic. Cabrera," *El Hombre Libre*, Feb. 8, 1931.

[19] Phipps, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

[20] Referring to the Agrarian Commission created by Madero, González Roa states:

"The Executive Agrarian Commission formulated various projects, some of them very interesting; it proposed to establish the family patrimony, the protection of communal property and, timidly, the restoration of the ejidos, although without, in the latter case, suggesting any method for bringing pressure to bear on the *hacendados*. It also suggested . . . the encouraging of large irrigation works. In fine, the Madero government placed the solution of the rural problem in the hands of those who were not interested in solving it. With their habitual diplomacy, the conservative classes did not deny the existence of the problem but, recognizing it, in practice they succeeded in making the new situation serve their own purposes. . . ." Quoted in Cuadros Caldas, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

Emiliano Zapata and the Crystallization of the Revolutionary Ideals

Emiliano Zapata was a peon[21] who could neither read nor write. But he was also a born leader who knew what he wanted and how to strike directly and savagely to get it. One of Madero's most ardent and useful supporters in the revolt against Díaz, he had but one idea: the return of the land to the people. When it became evident that Madero was not going to redeem what Zapata and his followers regarded as his promise to restore the ejidos to the villages, Zapata turned against the government. The peasants flocked to support him and before long he controlled the states of Morelos, Jalisco, Guerrero, Puebla and, at times, even the Federal District. Madero sent troops to Morelos to put down the rebellion and it was then that Zapata published his *Plan de Ayala*, one of the most famous documents of the revolution and the first crystallization of the real aims of the struggling masses.

> Let Señor Madero—and with him all the world—know that we shall not lay down our arms until the *ejidos* of our villages are restored to us, until we are given back the lands which the *hacendados* stole from us during the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, when justice was subjected to his caprice. We shall not lay down our arms until we cease to be the unhappy tributaries of the despotic magnates and landholders of Morelos. . . .[22]

After the foregoing preamble and after denouncing Madero as a traitor who upon achieving power had forgotten his promises to the people, the *Plan de Ayala* then proclaimed that the people should enter into immediate possession of the lands of which they had been illegally deprived and for which they could still show title. For those individuals and villages which had neither lands nor titles thereto, the *Plan* proposed the expropriation of private properties "to the end that the pueblos and citizens of Mexico may obtain ejidos, colonies, *fundos legales*, and crop lands." The owners of such properties were to be previously indemnified to the extent of one-third the value of the land taken.[23]

Zapata's famous *Plan* was hardly a program of agrarian reform

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[21] As a matter of fact, Zapata was a little higher in the social and economic scale than the term "peon" indicates: "he was a *mediero*, that is a cultivator on a fifty-fifty basis, of lands belonging to the hacienda of Tenextepango. . . . In the social scale he ranked between the hacienda peon and the independent *ranchero*." Ernest Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage*, pp. 141-42. Reprinted by permission of the Century Company.

[22] Quoted in Helen Phipps, *Some Aspects of the Agrarian Question in Mexico*, p. 137. Reprinted by permission of the University of Texas Press.

[23] The *Plan de Ayala* is reprinted in Cuadros Caldas, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-34.

and certainly not a well-integrated plan of action. As a battle cry, as a statement of revolutionary sentiment, however, it was infinitely more realistic and closer to the hopes and aspirations of the down-trodden masses than Madero's pale and empty slogan of "*Sufragio efectivo y no-reelección.*" In defense of his *Plan* and of his ideals Zapata held the field against all comers for the better part of a decade. Madero, Huerta, Carranza—Zapata, surrounded by his devoted peasants singing

> If *tequila* I drink today
> Then tomorrow I'll take sherry,
> If death is to come my way
> Let it come now I'm merry,[24]

defied them all until finally he fell by an assassin's bullet in April, 1919. Little wonder that Zapata has already become a legend in the minds of the common people, a superman, a symbol of *agrarismo* in its purest and finest form. Tannenbaum's judgment that "This Indian leader . . . stands today as the most powerful single influence in the shaping of the agrarian program of the revolution. . . ."[25] is both accurate and just. Zapata died with his boots on; his monument is Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917.

Carranza and the Triumph of the Revolution—on Paper

The coup d'état by which the reactionary Victoriano Huerta in February 1913 overthrew the Madero government and the subsequent eighteen months during which the country was "inundated in blood and terror," interrupted but did not stay the progress of the social revolution. Opposed from within by the turbulent, disappointed, land-hungry masses, and from without by the determined opposition of the United States government, Huerta was doomed from the very beginning.[26] The agrarian-libertarian revolution had gone too far to be stopped by a would-be Dictator aping the ways of Díaz; the restoration of the old church and landholding aristocracy was a forlorn hope. Soon the true revolutionary forces were gathered

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[24] Si porque bebo tequila,
Mañana tomo jerez,
Si me han de matar mañana
Que me maten de una vez.

Quoted in Dromundo, "Los cantos de la revolución mexicana," *Universidad Nacional*, II, 218.

[25] Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 161.

[26] Hackett, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

together once again—this time under the leadership of Venustiano Carranza aided by the *caudillo* Francisco Villa—and Huerta was obliged to flee for his life.

It would be hard to find two more contrasting figures than Emiliano Zapata and Venustiano Carranza. Zapata : the Indian idealist ; the poor peon ; the peasant with his back to the wall fighting for the only perfection he knew—land for the people and freedom from economic bondage ; and dying for the only "country" he recognized—the *patria chica*. Carranza : landlord, man of the world, shrewd politician ; Senator from the great state of Coahuila during the last decade of the Díaz regime, provisional Minister of War in Madero's cabinet, and Governor of the state of Coahuila ; opportunist and child of fate, fighting in the name of the Constitution to rescue the country from reaction and dying in an effort to maintain himself in power. A revolutionary, if you please, but with a difference. And yet it was Carranza who became, in spite of himself, the instrument of the radical will symbolized by Zapata. It was under Carranza that the agrarian revolution finally triumphed—at least on paper.

Of the details of the ways and means by which Carranza between 1913 and April, 1917 (when he was officially "elected" President of the Republic) was able to dominate the chaos into which the country was thrown after the flight of Huerta in July, 1914 and, by defeating one faction after another, gradually to consolidate his power, we need not be concerned here. A few of the steps in this process, however, must claim our attention.

The revolt Carranza headed against Huerta was in its inception purely a political movement.[27] Carranza's *Plan de Guadalupe* (March 26, 1913) was simply a denouncement of Huerta and contained not a word about, not a single reference to, the social and economic objectives of the revolutionary movement. Whether at the time Carranza was in sympathy with these objectives, or was even aware of them,[28] is not clear. But political expediency is a good teacher and Carranza was an apt pupil. In less than a year Carranza drove Huerta into exile. The revolution was triumphant, but the fighting had just begun ; for no sooner was Huerta disposed of than Villa and Zapata took up arms against Carranza. It was in this dark and uncertain period when almost every weekend saw a new victorious

[27] Gama, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

[28] As bearing on this point, the following statement is enlightening :

"[Zapata's] *Plan de Ayala*, although dated November 28, 1911, was not [generally?] known in Mexico until after the victory of the Constitutionalist [Carranza's] forces in 1914." Cabrera, *op. cit.*

army enter Mexico City and "Presidents" were succeeding one another with breathless rapidity that Carranza finally spoke in the tongue of the true revolution.

On December 12, 1914, the "First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army Charged with the Executive Power" (for thus Carranza styled himself) issued his *Plan de Veracruz*—his first specific recognition and formulation of the social, economic, and political objectives of the revolution. This pronouncement, among other things, announced Carranza's intention to restore the communal lands to the villages unjustly deprived of them; to enact laws which would break up the *latifundia* and encourage small rural properties; to establish free municipal government as a constitutional institution; to inaugurate an equitable system of taxation for rural property; and, in general, "to expedite and put in force all of the laws, measures and means . . . and to effect the reforms necessary for the purpose of establishing a regime which will guarantee the equality of Mexicans among themselves."[29]

The first fruits of the declaration of intentions contained in the *Plan de Veracruz* was the decree of January 6, 1915. The decree of 1915 was the "first[30] constructive act" of the 1910 revolution in the sense that it was the first specifically legal statement of and answer to the agrarian aspirations of the masses of the people. As such, it marks a definite stage in the revolutionary movement. Because of this and because of the fact that, embodied in Article 27 of the 1917 constitution, it became with that Article the Magna Carta and fountain-head of the whole legal program of the agrarian reform, an exposition and interpretation of the nature and contents of the decree of 1915 will be reserved for the next chapter.

The revolution of 1910 did not end with the decree of 1915—far from it. But it is not too much to say that this decree marks the end of a phase of the revolution. Up to 1915 it was nip and tuck, an even chance, whether or not out of the tangle of events, the conflicts of personalities and purposes, and the spilled blood of endless battles, there was to be brought forth a real social revolution or another one of those military abortions which had so often disfigured the pages of Mexican history. After 1915, although at times leaders (and not the least of them Carranza himself) faltered and traitors betrayed the cause, generally speaking, the social and economic objectives

[29] See Article 2 of the *Plan de Veracruz* in Carvajal, *Al margen de las resoluciones presidenciales sobre la cuestión agraria*, pp. 25-26.

[30] There was, however, at least one state law (Durango, October 1913) providing for the distribution of land to villages which preceded the degree of 1915. See Tannenbaum, *Peace by Revolution*, pp. 199-200.

of the revolution were definitely in the ascendancy.[31] The decree of 1915, although it long remained a paper victory, was a triumph nonetheless; for it became a standard against which thenceforth the acts of the revolutionary leaders were to be measured.

[31] Hackett, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

CHAPTER V

THE LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE REFORM

THE AGRARIAN reform in Mexico rests in the first instance on two legal foundations: the decree of January 6, 1915 and Article 27 of the federal constitution which went into effect on February 5, 1917. In point of fact, subsequent to February 5, 1917 there has been only one basic legal source of the reform, for the decree of 1915 was incorporated in the constitution in that part of the text of the decree was repeated in Article 27 and also in that Article 27 specifically reaffirmed the force and validity of the decree and gave it the status of constitutional law. However, in view of the fact that the decree of 1915 preceded the constitution by a little more than two years, and that Article 27 was in reality, and, despite what has just been said, a separate disposition of much wider import and in important respects differing from and at times even conflicting with the decree of 1915, it will be necessary to treat the two dispositions in the order of their precedence.[1]

THE DECREE OF JANUARY 6, 1915

The preamble to the decree of January 6, 1915[2] in setting forth the raison d'être of the law stated: (a) that "one of the most widespread causes of discontent in the agricultural communities" was the fact that a large number of villages (*pueblos*) endowed with communal properties by the Colonial government, as well as a "multitude of other agricultural communities" (*congregaciones*, *rancherías*, and *comunidades*), which "following ancient and general custom" had held and worked land in common, had been despoiled of these lands; (b) that in some cases the villages in question had lost their lands through the misapplication of the laws of the Reform[3] while in others the despoilment had taken place as the result of concessions to land

[1] Quite recently the differences and conflicts between Article 27 and the decree of 1915 have been ironed out by a redrafting of Article 27 in such wise that the decree has actually been made an integral part of the constitution and no longer exists as a separate law. See Appendix C.

[2] Bolaños V., *Codificación agraria*, pp. 136-43. This collection includes all of the principal agrarian laws, decrees, etc., up to December, 1924, and will be referred to hereinafter as Bolaños, *C.A.*

[3] See above pp. 24-25.

companies, illegal sales by political authorities, surveys, and so forth[4]; and (c) that the inhabitants of the villages, unable to defend their property, had had no other "recourse but to hire themselves out at ridiculous wages to the powerful landlords . . . with the inevitable result that the vast majority of agricultural workers lived in a state of misery, abjection and *de facto* slavery. . . ."

In view of the foregoing facts, continued the preamble of the decree of 1915, "the necessity for returning to the villages the lands of which they have been despoiled is evident, as an act of elementary justice, as the only effective way of insuring peace and as a method for promoting the welfare and improvement of our poor classes."

Finally, the introduction to the decree recognized the fact that "probably in some cases," either because titles had been lost, or because ostensibly the alienation of property had taken place legally, or for other reasons, villages would not be able to sustain a claim for the restoration (*restitución*) of their lands, even though their need for land was evident. In such cases, the decree held out the possibility of land being given to villages by outright grant.

The specific provisions for restoring land to the villages set forth in the decree itself state, first, that all alienations of village lands, forests, and waters effected by the misapplication of the law of June 26, 1856,[5] through illegal acts of surveying companies, through enclosures, or other illegal means are null and void.

Second, "villages which, needing them, do not have ejidos[6] or which cannot secure their restoration because of lack of titles, difficulty of identification, or because they have been legally alienated shall have the right to obtain a sufficient portion of land to reconstruct them [the ejidos] in accordance with the necessities of the community, the National Government expropriating the necessary lands (*terrenos indispensables*) to that effect from those immediately adjoining the communities in question."

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[4] See pp. 29-31. It will be recalled that the Constitution of 1857 deprived the villages of the right to hold land as well as of their juridical personality for its defense.

[5] This was the first of the Reform laws. The law prohibited both civil and religious corporations from holding land, but (Art. 8) expressly stated that "ejidos and land dedicated exclusively to public service" belonging to towns should not be subject to its provisions.

[6] The term "ejidos" is apparently used in the law to cover all classes (crop lands, forests, pastures, etc.) of communal lands. As has already been noted, this was the meaning which the term eventually came to have in use and wont during the Colonial regime and is the implicit definition of ejidos in all agrarian legislation following the decree of 1915. The only exception to this generalization is that the town site (i.e., the space occupied by streets, houses, public buildings, etc.) is sometimes spoken of separately and designated as the *fundo legal*.

The legal machinery for putting the decree into effect consisted of a National Agrarian Commission, State Agrarian Commissions for each state and as many Special Executive Committees (local village committees) as might be necessary. Petitions for either the restoration or dotation of ejidos were to be presented in the first instance directly to the governors of the states (or in their absence, or because of a "state of war," to the nearest military authority). Upon being approved by the governor after due investigation by the State Agrarian Commission, the petitioning village should through its Executive Committee be given immediate possession of its land. This possession, however, would be considered provisional until such time as the case could be reviewed by the National Agrarian Commission. Final title would be granted by the President of the Republic upon the recommendation of the National Commission.

The decree also provided that persons considering themselves injured by the action of the government in granting or restoring land to villages should have the right to resort to the courts within a period of one year after such action had been taken. Owners of expropriated land were allowed one year to present claims for indemnification.

COMMENT ON THE DECREE OF 1915

The decree of 1915 as an instrument for dealing in a comprehensive fashion with the agrarian problem in Mexico left much to be desired:

1. The decree had only one string to its bow—land to villages. Moreover, even this string was weak, for the emphasis in the decree was on the *restoration* of village lands. The donation or outright grant of lands to villages in need was an after-thought and it is obvious that the authors of the decree contemplated that only a few such cases would arise. In short, the decree of 1915 was primarily a "negative" program, a procedure for righting past wrongs, and not a "positive" attempt to face the land problem as a whole.

2. Only certain types of villages could petition for land (whether by restitution or by dotation), namely, those which had *categoría política* (political status). This automatically ruled out practically all of the *acasillado* communities (settlements of resident hacienda laborers) which, as has already been noted,[7] at the time formed a very large percentage of the agricultural villages in the Republic. A further restriction was involved in the fact that the decree specifically enumerates the types of villages having a right to petition for land—

[7] See above, pp. 36-37.

to wit: *pueblos*, *rancherías*, *congregaciones*, and *comunidades*. These names are only several out of a hundred or more traditional names applied to inhabited places in Mexico and, whatever their original significance may have been, do not now represent any definite type of community.[8] Many states have few communities with the names in question; and in the states where these names are common it is largely a matter of historical accident whether a village will be known under one or the other, or none of these terms.

3. The decree of 1915 both in its language and in its spirit definitely put the emphasis upon the individual[9] and not upon the

[8] Since the names here in question occur a number of times in the various agrarian laws a word should be said about their history.

Pueblo (town) was the generic term usually applied by the Spaniards to the Indian settlements in Mexico; as such the term was in contradistinction to the word *villa* which was reserved for new communities founded by the Spaniards. In more recent years *pueblo* has been used to indicate the relative political importance of a community in terms of its area and population—thus the hierarchy in order of importance: *ciudad*, *villa*, and *pueblo*.

Ranchería (little ranch, or settlement). Traditionally this word has had a number of different meanings. Sometimes it is applied to settlements of independent farmers working small privately-owned properties; at other times it is used to designate settlements of peons on haciendas; and at still others, communities holding their lands collectively.

Congregación (congregation) was originally applied to communities made up of formerly more or less migratory Indians settled (in the sense of "settled down") by the Spaniards. Later the term apparently came to be used interchangeably with *comunidad* (community) to mean any small agricultural village in which the inhabitants held all or part of their land communally.

Condueñazgo (joint-ownership) which is mentioned in Article 27 of the constitution and succeeding agrarian laws is a somewhat more involved concept. Concerning the *condueñazgo* McBride (*The Land Systems of Mexico*, pp. 103-4, published by the American Geographical Society of New York) states:

"The basis of the joint ownership is a property, originally held by a single individual, which has been divided and subdivided by inheritance, sale, or other process of transfer, until now it is owned in shares by a number of persons. One title still covers the entire property, since the transactions by which it has been partitioned have been carried out without the prescribed legal formalities. The purchaser of a share in one of these holdings obtains the right to occupy and cultivate any unused portion of the property and to enjoy the use of pastures, woods, waters, forests, or other common resources of the place. In the event of such a property being broken up each shareholder receives his proportion of the land or of its purchase price. In some instances these *condueñazgos*, through a long process of division and subdivision, have lost title under the original holding and consist at present of more or less irregularly held individual plots of cultivated land, with common possession and use of the pastures, woodlands, and waste."

All of the above indicated types of communities have in common the fact that in the majority of cases they have held land in their collective or corporate capacity. As such, villages of this type are to be distinguished, in theory at least, from *ranchos*, *barrios*, *fincas mineriales*, and the several score of other types of rural communities found in Mexico.

[9] Bassols, *La nueva ley agraria*, p. 23.

village or group in its corporate capacity. That it was not the ejido as a communal unit which the framers of the law wished to reconstruct is clearly shown by the following important paragraph in the preamble:

> By making it possible for the numerous pueblos to recover the land of which they were despoiled or to acquire the lands which they need for their welfare and development it is not proposed to revive the traditional landholding villages (*comunidades*) nor to create others similar to them, but solely to give the land which it lacks today to the miserable rural population in order that it may develop fully its right to life and free itself from the economic servitude to which it is reduced; moreover, it must be noted that proprietorship to the land will not be vested in the pueblo in its corporate capacity but will be parceled out in full dominion [to the inhabitants] with only the limitations necessary to prevent avid speculators, especially foreigners, from monopolizing such property . . . as has almost invariably occurred in the past when legal subdivisions of the town site (*fundo legal*) and the ejidos have been made. . . .[10]

4. The decree placed the burden of initiative on the villages and not on the government. The villages in need of land must themselves petition for it and support their petition by proof of necessity. In a country where an overwhelming percentage of the rural population is illiterate, where the majority of the villages are isolated and cut off from access to any convenient means of communication and transportation, and where intimidation on the part of landowners likely to be affected by ejido grants is difficult to control—to mention only a few of the relevant factors—the requiring of the villages to take the initiative in petitioning for land not only opened the door to a variety of abuses, but meant that many villages, and more often than not precisely those in the greatest need, would never receive lands.

5. One of the worst blunders in the decree of 1915 was the insertion of the provision recognizing the right of injured parties to have recourse to the ordinary courts against the actions of the government. In Mexican law this meant that an *amparo* (roughly, an "injunction") could be obtained stopping the procedure of restoration or dotation

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[10] Bolaños, *C.A.*, p. 139.

The decree itself makes no statement concerning when the distribution of land to individuals is to take place or the nature of the limitations to which the individual parcels are to be subject. However, Article II does state: "A regulatory law shall determine the condition in which the lands restored or adjudged in behalf of a village shall remain and the manner and time in which they shall be distributed among the inhabitants (*vecinos*), who in the meantime shall enjoy their possession in common." This whole question is treated in detail in Chapter XVIII.

of land in any of its stages up to and including the definitive grant by the President of the Republic himself. As later events proved, during the first decade and more of the reform there was hardly a case in which the right of recourse to the courts was not exercised. Sometimes this meant only that the villages seeking land were submitted to the annoyance and delay of long-drawn-out legal battles. In a great many cases it meant that the purposes of the agrarian reform were completely defeated by the courts refusing to recognize the legality of the government's action in making a grant of land.

Any commentary on the decree of 1915 must emphasize the fact that the law was an emergency measure avowedly provisional in nature. Carranza, with Villa attacking him from the north and Zapata from the south, was in dire straits. His only hope was to find some way to crystallize revolutionary sentiment in his own behalf. Out of this necessity was born the decree of 1915. And whatever its vagueness, incompleteness and other shortcomings, it apparently did serve Carranza's purpose. As soon as the decree became known there was a definite change in Carranza's fortunes. Villa suffered a crushing defeat in the battle of Celaya in March 1915. Seven months later, and ten months after the promulgation of the decree of January 6, 1915, Carranza was formally recognized as head of the *de facto* government by the United States and several of the Latin American republics.[11]

Although the promulgation of the decree of 1915 strengthened Carranza's cause, it by no means achieved its avowed object of restoring and "insuring the peace." On the contrary, the immediate effect of the decree was to increase and intensify the anarchy and chaos into which the country had been thrown after the downfall of Huerta. Especially unfortunate in this connection was the legal right the decree gave to the many military leaders to dispose of land practically at their pleasure. As one student puts it: "Everything that could happen, did. Violence bred violence and illegality further illegality."[12] Lands were seized by peons with or without even the most sketchy compliance with the formalities of the law. Military *caudillos* and civil authorities, anxious to gain the support of the peasants, expropriated lands right and left.[13] Bribery, fraud and treachery were rampant and not a few "revolutionary" leaders took advantage of the situation to carve out properties for themselves. To add to the confusion and disorder, the *hacendados* stubbornly refused to acknowledge the legality of the decree of 1915 or any of

[11] Hackett, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-46.

[12] Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

[13] Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

the acts it sanctioned, and with guns in hand desperately defended their property. The result was an epidemic of little wars, pitched battles and assassinations. Hardly was there an hacienda in the whole Republic which was not in a state of virtual siege, or a village which did not live in mortal terror.

The 1917 Constitution

Carranza's second bid for the support of the people and his second campaign to consolidate revolutionary sentiment was started on September 15, 1916. On that date a proclamation was issued calling for a convention to reform the Mexican Constitution of 1857. The convention met on November 21, 1916 and closed on January 31, 1917. The result of its labors was a new Mexican constitution, officially promulgated on February 5, 1917.[14]

All the evidence available, including the draft of the proposed changes in the Constitution of 1857 which Carranza submitted to the convention, indicates that he originally had no intention of introducing into the fundamental law of the land any of the radical social and economic doctrines which eventually came to distinguish the Constitution of 1917. Most of the reforms suggested by Carranza were political in nature. Article 27 as it appears in the Carranza draft, although containing some provisions for agrarian reform, was, on the whole, narrow in conception. Article 123, the basis of Mexico's advanced labor legislation, is missing entirely. If the Constitution of 1917 as finally adopted contains, as it does, basic principles for economic and social reform, this achievement is to be credited to men and events in the constitutional congress itself rather than to the leadership of Carranza. That Carranza saw the wisdom of accepting and giving his official sanction and support to the radical changes and revisions made in the original document which he submitted to the convention is to his credit, but not to his glory. As in the case of the decree of 1915, Carranza found himself caught up in a current which could not be resisted. What political expediency dictated Carranza

[14] The literature on the Constitution of 1917 has in recent years grown to sizable proportions. The best commentaries on the constitution in general and more especially on its two most famous articles—27 and 123—will be found in the several articles by Andrés Molina Enríquez and the other documents appearing in the special *Boletín de la Secretaría de Gobernación* (Sept. 1922), entitled: "El Artículo 27 de la Constitución Federal" (hereafter cited as "El Artículo 27 . . ."); in González Roa, *Las cuestiones fundamentales de actualidad en México;* and Magariños Torres, *El problema de la tierra en Méjico.* A convenient summary and interpretation of Articles 27 and 123 is given in Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution,* pp. 172-83, and 188-222. To the last mentioned work this section is especially indebted.

accepted; what the will of the people demanded Carranza embraced.[15]

The Constitution of 1917 has been justly recognized as one of the most important social documents of modern times. The ideas embodied therein, to be sure, were not entirely new nor extremely radical; on the contrary, the conceptions regarding property and the rights of labor had long been commonplaces in the western world and many of them were to be found on the statute books of other countries. What gives the Mexican constitution its general importance is the number and variety of advanced social and economic doctrines brought together in one place and set down as the basic law of a country. Mexico, in theory at any rate, achieved at one bound what many other countries have been struggling step by step to obtain. The particular importance of the constitution derives from the fact that whatever their source, or however familiar they may have been in other parts of the world, many of the ideas written into the 1917 constitution were, so far as Mexico was concerned, both novel and radical. The framework of the 1917 constitution is essentially the same as that of 1857. The political structure of the government—with such characteristic democratic features as the separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches; universal suffrage; periodical elections with a president as the highest executive officer, and so forth—is the same under the Constitution of 1917 as it was before. The Constitution of 1857 was not destroyed; nor was it, strictly speaking, reformed. It was added to. The additions, however, were of such a nature as to shift the whole emphasis and meaning of the document.

Torn by revolution at home and living in a world bent on its own destruction, Mexico in 1917 was sucked willy-nilly into the currents of social change she had so long resisted. Quickened to life after the long "sleep of death" under Díaz, Mexico, with her accustomed hospitality, opened wide her doors and in walked Henry George, Peter Kropotkin, Karl Marx and the familiar host of their followers and interpreters. These gentlemen, in all truth, were little more than tourists, strangers in a strange land, known only to a few of the Mexican intellectuals. Nevertheless, they had their effect. Their ideas and theories, together with those of the much more familiar and influential figure of Auguste Comte[16] all went into the pot to-

[15] Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 172-74.

[16] See footnote 7, Chapter IV.

". . . During the greater part of the Diaz period, the intellectuals of Mexico were under the dominance of Comte. It was in the name of positivism that many of the things which a later generation repudiated were done, but it was also to this positivism that the

gether. To these were added rediscovered principles and precedents from Spanish Colonial law,[17] theories of "rights and justice" derived from a naïve (e. g., Zapata) reaction to the industrial and agrarian exploitation which reached such heights under the Díaz government, and doctrines of social control learned from observation of the belligerent nations in the World War. The resultant brew was served up in the 1917 constitution in concentrated form in Articles 27 and 123.

The essence of the basic changes introduced into Mexico's fundamental law by Articles 27 and 123 has been summarized as follows:

> The spirit of the Constitution of 1857 was essentially individualistic, that of 1917 is eminently collectivistic.
>
> Under the Constitution of 1857, in the case of a conflict between the individual and society, or the individual and the state, the first mentioned had the advantage; under the Constitution of 1917, it is the second which should dominate.
>
> Under the Constitution of 1857, in conflicts between vested interests and private individuals, it was the interests which prevailed; under the Constitution of 1917, the private individual should triumph.[18]

One final word about the constitution as a whole is perhaps not

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authors of the social program of the Constitution of 1917 turned for support when they were seeking an intellectual justification for their land and agrarian programs. It was in Comte's emphasis upon society, it was in his subordination of the individual to the organic group, that they found an intellectual justification for their platform." Frank Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 178-79. Reprinted by permission of the Brookings Institution.

[17] Molina Enríquez makes out a case to the effect that the "new" and "exotic" ideas of property in Article 27 were neither new nor exotic, but simply revivals and adaptations of conceptions which find ample precedent in Spanish Colonial law in Mexico:

"The Nation's primordial right over property . . . existed originally in the King of Spain; the rights of ownership of property in the sense of the private property of particular individuals . . . were derived from the titles first extended to private persons in the Colonial epoch . . . ; the subordination of the rights of ownership of private persons . . . to the social rights which the Nation now represents, also come from the Colonial epoch, for the Nation has taken the place of the King; the application of these social rights now represented by the Nation to impose on the rights of private ownership such limitations as the public interest may demand, likewise comes from the Colonial period; the division of the rights of ownership of private parties between the rights pertaining to many separate individuals, and the rights of a communal character of the bodies of population generally termed *pueblos* in the same way are derived from the Colonial epoch; the dispositions . . . designed to balance the rights of individual private property with those of communal ownership such as those involved in the restitutions and dotations in favor of the *pueblos* also have Colonial precedents. None of the juridical elements in Article 27 was new or unknown at the time in which that article was elaborated." Molina Enríquez, in "El Artículo 27 . . . ," *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3.

[18] "El Artículo 27 . . . ," *op. cit.*, p. 21.

inappropriate before we pass on to a brief summary of Article 27. The Constitution of 1857, compounded as it was of notions derived from the French Revolution, the Spanish Constitution of 1812 and the Constitution of the United States, however liberal it may have been in intention, turned out in practice to be a charter to laissez faire and a bulwark for what in recent times has come to be known as "rugged individualism."[19] A certain amount of both the letter and spirit of the Constitution of 1857 was carried over into the 1917 constitution. This fact, while true, is unimportant. The struggle and compromises attending the birth of the Constitution of 1917 inevitably left their mark in the shape of conflicts and inconsistencies. Eventually the latter will have to be harmonized if Mexico is to "live up" to her new theories of social justice. Meantime, as long as the revolutionary spirit prevails, the courts will continue to interpret the constitution with reference to that spirit. If other sections of the constitution are in conflict with Articles 27 and 123, then so much the worse for the other sections.

Article Twenty-Seven—Exposition

Generally speaking, the authors of Article 27 undertook to do three things: (1) to define and limit the nature of property; (2) to define the persons and other legal entities having the right to hold property; and (3) to devise a set of principles and, to some extent, a procedure for the solution of the agrarian problem.[20] This classification as a description of the contents of Article 27 suffers from the fact that the categories are not mutually exclusive; but in view of the number and variety of the concepts contained in the article and of the fact that the several provisions overlap and are sometimes rather vague, it is perhaps the best that can be devised. Accordingly, in the following presentation of Article 27 an effort will be made to regroup the principal sections under the headings just indicated. Wherever appropriate, comments and notes will be inserted for the purposes of clarification or of calling attention to significant features of the article.[21]

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[19] Just how this rugged individualism worked out for the landholding villages has already been noted in some detail.

[20] ". . . Article 27 . . . covers the following fundamental questions: should property be considered as a natural right; what should be the extension of this right; who should be recognized as having capacity to acquire real property; and what should be the general basis . . . for the resolution of the agrarian problem." "El Artículo 27 . . . ," *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[21] It appeared to be the better part of valor, even at the risk of overburdening the reader with legal citations, to present Article 27 by the method of direct quotation rather

1. *The Nature of Property*

a. Private title to lands and waters is not "original" but results from an act of the Nation.

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. [Par. 1.]

b. In constituting private property the Nation reserves the right to impose certain limitations in the public interest:

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 [1] to divide large landed estates; [2] to develop small landed holdings; [3] to establish new centers of rural population with such lands and waters as may be indispensable to them; [4] to encourage agriculture and to prevent the destruction of natural resources, and [5] to protect property from damage detrimental to society. [Par. 3.]

c. The power of the Nation to expropriate private property is restricted.

Private property shall not be expropriated except for reasons of public utility and by means of (*mediante*)[22] indemnification. [Par. 2.]

d. The liability of the Nation in cases of expropriation is strictly limited:

The Federal and State laws shall determine within their respective jurisdictions those cases in which the occupation of private property shall

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than to presume upon the functions of a Supreme Court by attempting the interpretation necessarily involved in a simplified summary. The direct quotations are based on the translation made by H. N. Branch and originally published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May, 1917) under the title: "The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared With the Constitution of 1857." This translation, in the opinion of the present writer, contains several distortions of the meaning of the original Spanish. These have been corrected (see especially the translation of the word *ranchería*). Italics call attention to important sections and numbers in brackets at the end of each quotation indicate the original order of the paragraphs and fractions.

[22] This one word—*mediante*—has given rise to almost as much discussion as all the rest of the constitution put together. It obviously may be interpreted as meaning that the government may indemnify owners of expropriated property "before," "at the time of," or "after" the act. In the case of land expropriated for ejidos, the government has chosen the last mentioned interpretation. See pp. 226-28.

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 (*cosa*) shall be based on the sum at which the said property shall be valued for fiscal purposes in the cadastral 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 ten 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, [Par. 8.]

e. The Nation's ownership of waters and minerals is direct and imprescriptible; only the "right of exploitation" of the Nation's waters and subsoil may be conceded to private parties—and that only on the condition that the resources be regularly developed and the right legally exercised:

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 metaloids 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. [Par. 4.]

In the Nation is likewise vested the ownership of the waters of territorial seas to the extent and in the terms fixed by the law of nations; those of lakes and inlets of bays; those of interior lakes of natural formation which are directly connected with flowing waters; those of the 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. [Par. 5.]

In the cases to which the two foregoing paragraphs refer, the ownership of the Nation is inalienable and may not be lost by prescription; conces-

sions 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 the said resources be regularly developed, and on the further condition that the legal provisions be observed. [Par. 6.]

2. *Legal Entities Having the Right to Hold Private Property and the Nature of their Rights*

a. Legal capacity to acquire ownership of lands and waters is not a "uniform" capacity automatically bestowed upon all and sundry alike. On the contrary, certain individuals and corporate entities may not hold property at all while the rights of other individuals and corporations are definitely limited, to wit:

(1) Mexicans vs. foreigners.

Only Mexicans by birth or naturalization and Mexican companies have the right to acquire ownership in 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 . . . to be considered Mexicans in respect to such property, and accordingly not to invoke the protection of their Governments in respect to the same. . . . Within a zone of 100 kilometers from the frontiers, and of 50 kilometers from the seacoast, no foreigner shall under any conditions acquire direct ownership of lands and waters. [Par. 7; fr. I.]

(2) Religious institutions.

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 on such real property; all such real property or loans as may be at present held by the said religious institutions, either on their own behalf or through third parties, shall vest in the Nation. . . . [Par. 7; fr. II.]

(3) Charitable institutions, schools, etc.

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. . . . [Par. 7; fr. III.]

(4) Commercial stock companies.

Commercial stock companies shall not acquire, hold or administer rural properties. . . . [Par. 7; fr. IV.]

(5) Banks.

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. [Par. 7; fr. V.]

(6) Communal groups.

Properties held in common by co-owners (*condueñazgos*), settlements (*rancherías*), towns (*pueblos*), congregations (*congregaciones*), tribes and other bodies of population 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. [Par. 7; fr. VI.]

3. *Principles and Procedures for the Solution of the Agrarian Problem*

In addition to reaffirming and strengthening the provisions of the Constitution of 1857 designed to prevent the Church from monopolizing rural property, to forbidding commercial stock companies from holding or administering rural property and to reëstablishing the rights of villages to hold and enjoy property in their corporate capacity—all of which represent more or less negative contributions to the solution of the agrarian problem—Article 27 also sets up a body of positive principles and procedures designed to rectify the inequalities in the distribution of rural property. These may be classified under three heads: (a) the creation by restoration or by outright grant of village lands (ejidos); (b) the recovery of national lands and waters illegally alienated or held "in prejudice of the public interest"; and (c) the destruction of *latifundia* through limitations on the extent of private holdings. In general the federal government is charged with carrying out that part of the agrarian program concerning ejidos and the recovery of national lands while the states are entrusted with the duty of forcing the dissolution of large landed estates.

a. Villages which have been deprived of their lands shall have these lands restored to them according to the provisions of the law of January 6, 1915:

All proceedings, findings, decisions and all operations of demarcation, concession, composition, judgment, compromise, alienation, or auction which may have deprived co-owners, settlements, towns, congregations, tribes and other bodies of population 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 communities 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 of lands, by way of restitution be not legal in the terms of the said decree, which adjudication has been requested by any of the above entities, those lands shall nevertheless be given to them by way of grant* (dotación), *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 50 hectares. Any excess over this area shall be returned to the community, 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 community 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.* [Par. 9.]

But villages shall also have the right to receive lands by outright grant solely upon the demonstration of need without reference to any question of restitution.

Towns, settlements and communities which lack lands or water or do not possess them in sufficient quantities for their needs shall have the right to be provided with them from the adjacent 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.* [Par. 3.]

b. The Nation shall undertake to recover the public lands and waters alienated under the Díaz regime in prejudice of the public interest.

All 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 corporation, are declared subject to revision, and the Executive is authorized to declare those null and void which seriously prejudice the public interest. [Par. 12.]

c. The "Federal Congress and the State Legislatures shall enact laws" within their respective jurisdictions for the purpose of forcing 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 shall not exceed five 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. [Par. 11.][23]

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[23] Although this section of Article 27 imposes upon the National Congress the duty of passing a law regulating the division of *latifundia*, no such federal enabling legislation has been promulgated. About two-thirds of the state legislatures, however, have carried out the constitutional mandate and placed what are generally known as "Agrarian Laws" upon their statute books.

Because the fact that these state agrarian laws have been enforced in only a very few cases and hence have had little practical effect in the program for the redistribution of land they will not be the subject of detailed analysis in this book. For the purposes at hand a brief word concerning the nature of these laws will suffice.

Practically all of the state laws allow the landlords to retain possession of their properties until they are expropriated; give the owners the right to choose what part of their property they will retain; and make some provision whereby the owners may themselves voluntarily divide their estates and sell any lands in excess of that allowed under the law. But when it comes to the definition of just how large a large estate (*latifundia*) shall be and what shall be the method of reducing and limiting the size of those properties which bound an area greater than that defined as permissible, the laws exhibit wide diversity.

Ten states, in one fashion or another, establish a classification of lands according to the nature of the soil, rainfall, etc., as the basis for determining the maximum area a single owner may hold. The state of Guerrero, for example, has decreed that one person may not own more than 1,000 hectares of "irrigated" farm land, 2,000 hectares of "non-irrigated" farm land, 6,000 hectares of "pasture and mountain" land, and/or a total of 9,000 hectares of all classes of land. Veracruz, on the other hand, does not classify its lands and simply places a flat limit of 200 hectares as the total amount of any kind of land permissible in one estate. Again, Chihuahua would allow a single owner to possess as much as 44,000 hectares—i.e., 40,000 hectares of "pasture and mountain" and 4,000 hectares of other types of land. Some 15 states set no limit at all on the amount one person may own.

Article Twenty-Seven—Comment

R. H. Tawney in his thoughtful little book, *The Acquisitive Society*, makes a distinction between what he calls the "functional conception of property" and that based on the theories of natural rights and the doctrines of the English utilitarians. The last mentioned conception "implies . . . that the foundation of society is found, not in functions, but in rights; that rights are not deducible from the discharge of functions, so that the acquisition of wealth and the enjoyment of property are contingent upon the performance of services, but that the individual enters the world equipped with rights to the free disposal of his property and the pursuit of his economic self-interest, and that these rights are anterior to, and independent of, any service which he may render."[24]

This distinction of Tawney's suggests one of the best ways of describing the general import of the theory of property which Article 27 attempts to formulate. What the authors of Article 27 were struggling towards was a functional concept of property rights. They have tried to substitute for the doctrine that property rights are a kind of unlimited and unlimitable original endowment the notion that the right to have and hold property, and more especially real property, shall be contingent upon its use in ways which are subordinate to the public interest. This intention is clearly seen in the case of the provisions regulating the Nation's rights in waters

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All the laws call for a minimum number of competent purchasers before condemnation proceedings can be initiated, but there are wide differences between the states with respect to the amount of land any one purchaser may acquire. Michoacán permits any given individual to buy from 50 to 75 hectares of irrigated land and up to 600 hectares of pasture. Guerrero, on the other hand, only allows to one purchaser a maximum of 20 hectares of irrigated and 60 hectares of pasture land. Purchasers in all states are obligated to put their lands under cultivation (or to stock them) within a reasonable period of time, on pain of loss of title and dispossession.

For financing the sale of properties from large estates the laws provide under authority of the constitution and of the federal decree of January 7, 1925, for issues of twenty year, 4 per cent bonds. These bonds are given to the landowners whose properties have been expropriated and also to holders of mortgages (if any) on the properties in question. The expropriated value set on land is always the tax value plus 10 per cent. The state acts as agent in the transactions. The recipients of expropriated land may pay in cash, or in installments spread over twenty years which are used by the state to amortize the bonds. Penalties are provided to force the landlord to accept the bonds and the purchasers, in turn, to cover their annual payments.

(For further details with reference to the state agrarian laws see: Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 429-50; also Howland, *Survey of American Foreign Relations*, pp. 94-96. A collection of state agrarian laws up to 1925 will be found in Bolaños, *C.A.*)

[24] R. H. Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society*, p. 20. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt Brace, and Co.

and subsoil; it is present, although somewhat less apparent, in the restrictions both actual and potential placed upon the rights of private individuals in the surface of the land.

The conception of property rights established in Article 27 is functional in another sense: it encompasses and gives equal standing before the law to the several varieties of property concepts which in practice exist in Mexico; instead of seeking to impose a single theory upon a society in which in fact a wide range of forms of landholding and perceptions of property rights exist side by side, the authors of Article 27 undertook to devise an eclectic formula that would meet the actual functional reality. Specifically this means that the constitution recognizes all forms of property concepts: those of wandering Indian tribes knowing only the ownership based on temporary occupation; those of communal groups holding their land collectively; and those of ordinary private individuals, or modern corporate ownership.[25]

It should be noted, however, that, although Article 27 in the extremely wide powers which it grants to the Nation "to impose on private property such limitations as the public interest may demand,"[26] opens wide the door for the development of almost any conceivable system of landholding, and, although in the specific limitations which it places upon ownership it definitely qualifies the traditional understanding of private property, nevertheless, the article falls far short of the complete socialization of real property. Advanced as were the ideas of the authors of Article 27, private property was still the point of departure in their thinking and private property, albeit controlled in the public interest, was their ultimate goal.[27] In approving the right of villages to hold land collectively, the fathers of the constitution did not set out to establish a form of land tenure in opposition to private property. Rather they thought of themselves as simply recognizing the social necessity of giving legal status to the only kind of property familiar and comprehensible to one rather backward section of the population. The ejidos were to be in the nature of temporary expedients, bridges over which certain groups were eventually to pass to private property.[28]

If the revolutionary leaders in the Constitutional Congress had

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[25] See Molina Enríquez, in "El Artículo 27 . . . ," *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[26] Par. 2.

[27] The resolution presenting Article 27 to the Constitutional Congress states in its preamble: "The ambition to abolish individual real property cannot be considered . . . as anything more than utopian. . . ." "El Artículo 27 . . . ," *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[28] Hence the several references (Par. 7; fr. VI and Par. 9.) to the ultimate division of communal lands. See also "El Artículo 27 . . . ," *op. cit.*, p. 15.

been united, or if the more radical delegates had had the courage of their convictions,[29] Article 27 might have "gone whole hog" at once and had done with it. Indeed, with regard to national waters and the subsoil the goal of complete socialization was in theory almost reached; but when it came to applying the same logic to the surface of the land, the leaders faltered and finally straddled the fence. And that is one of the reasons, as we shall see in the next chapter, why the agrarian reform has pursued such a zigzag course during the last decade and more.

Meantime, before leaving the subject, we may note that Article 27 in so far as it is concerned with the matter of specific interest in this book represents a considerable advance over the decree of 1915. First, and most important, is the fact that the creation of ejidos by outright grant (*dotación*) takes equal rank with restoration (*restitución*) as a method for endowing villages with communal lands. The right of villages to petition for land solely on the evidence of need no longer exists as an afterthought but is a definitely recognized part of the ejido program. Moreover, where a petition for the restitution of lands fails for lack of proof, the procedure of dotation is automatically involved.[30] In the second place, Article 27 provides that lands for ejidos may be expropriated from private properties adjacent to (*inmediatas*), in the sense of neighboring or near by the petitioning villages. This greatly extends the conception of the "range" of properties subject to expropriation; for the decree of 1915 states that lands for villages should be taken from *terrenos inmediatamente colindantes*—that is, immediately contiguous or adjoining. Finally, by defining rather than by mentioning them by name, Article 27 settles once and for all the question of what is meant by ejidos. It is the clear intention of Article 27 to give villages any and all classes of "waters, woods and lands" which they may need. These waters, woods and lands, title to which is vested (temporarily, at any rate) in the village as a whole and which are enjoyed by the members of the village in common *are* the ejidos.[31]

[29] "The ideas of the Constitutional Convention, as they developed, came from scattered sources. The soldiers wanted, as General Mújica said to me, to socialize property. But they were frightened—afraid of their own courage, of their own ideas. They found all of the learned men in the Convention opposed to them. Article 27 was a compromise." Reprinted from Frank Tannenbaum, *Peace by Revolution*, pp. 166-67, by permission of the Columbia University Press.

[30] See Bassols, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 17. See also the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of the President of the Republic and the National Agrarian Commission vs. Rafael G. de Salceda y Echave, "El Artículo 27 . . . ," *op. cit.*, p. 98.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY COURSE OF THE REFORM

ATTENTION HAS already been drawn to the fact that the Mexican revolution of 1910 was conceived in confusion and prosecuted in disorder. In the beginning there was neither philosophy for guidance nor doctrine for direction. The point of departure for the revolution, the raw material of causation, was the cumulative misery of the disinherited masses. Significant meaning was introduced into the revolution for the first time when its objectives were formulated in terms of agrarian reform. But the agrarian reform did not spring full grown, armed with a program and a procedure. Like the revolution itself, with which it became identified and from which it was soon indistinguishable, the reform came into being as the result of a slow and painful process of trial and error—a process, be it noted, which is still under way, with the end not yet in sight. The agrarian reform has throughout its course been characterized by stops and starts, ups and downs, ins and outs. One day timid experiment; the next day, bold statesmanlike action. One day the *agraristas* at the wheel with the throttle wide open, the next day the conservative reaction—the brakes jammed on and the whole movement headed for innocuous desuetude.

There are many reasons why this has been true: the stubborn opposition of the reactionary elements; the contrast between the Mexican's ability to formulate the most beautiful *proyectos* for social reform and his lack of enthusiasm for the prosaic business of actually putting these projects into effect; the pressure brought to bear on Mexico by other nations (in a friendly way, of course); the confusion which has existed in the minds of the leaders of the reform and the fact that as the principal leaders have grown older they have also grown more conservative—these and many other factors have entered into the situation to cloud the issues and obscure the objectives of the reform.

One need not, however, seek beyond the fact of the urgency and magnitude of the undertaking to find good and sufficient reasons for the many difficulties the reform encountered in its early years. Mexico was confronted with a fact: the country was in revolt; the people were crying for land. This reality could not be denied, sidestepped or slurred over. It had to be faced and faced quickly. That

giving the people land would eventually involve nothing less than a complete reorganization of the economic and social life of the nation, had to be subordinated, even in the minds of the few to whom it was apparent, to the necessity for action. If Mexico in its agrarian reform has resembled the general who got on his horse and rode off in all directions at once, it is because that has been the only thing to do under the circumstances.[1]

The story of the course of the agrarian reform is written in its laws.[2] Out of the cornucopia of Article 27 a bewildering number of laws, decrees, executive orders, and sundry varieties of other legal enactments have poured in an unceasing flow. Since 1917, nearly a round hundred laws have been promulgated under the single division of the reform directly relating to the distribution of lands and waters. If one adds in the laws relating to other aspects of the reform —irrigation, agricultural credit, markets, agricultural education, and so forth—the number is more than doubled. So fast and furious has been the pace that, on occasion, a law has been passed, signed and sealed twice over, apparently without anyone's noticing that the only difference between the first and second law was in the title.[3] Generally speaking, the process in all divisions of the reform has been to pass a law and then, on the basis of the experience derived from attempting to put it into effect, to enact a number of amendments, reforms and additions. When the whole body of legislation thus accumulated became too cumbersome and confusing for efficient administration, a fresh start would be taken in the shape of a new law embodying all the previous modifications and such new

[1] "During the Revolution . . . although there was some perception of the realities, it was forgotten that intuitive action even though well intentioned . . . and the brief reflection allowed to the executives by the pressure of the daily situation, would not suffice to control these realities. The men of the Revolution knew that they had to break up the concentration of rural property and to restore the land to the peasant masses, and the [simple] recognition of this fact seemed more than sufficient [reason] for increasing their activities based on scarcely even the most cursory study and thought.

"The facts . . . that the first agrarian laws . . . did not reveal any clear intention, that their inspiration was not uniform, that their consequences were not foreseen, nor their objectives fixed with any precision are not only explainable but . . . completely logical." Fabila, "El ejido," *El Nacional*, May 26, 1934.

[2] In Appendix B will be found a classified and numbered list of the principal federal laws relating to the various aspects of the agrarian reform discussed in this book. All footnote references to laws cited in the text will be made by the numbers appearing in this list.

The phrases "agrarian reform" and "agrarian revolution" are used to refer to the movement as a whole in all of its aspects, while the phrase "land reform" is reserved for that part of the movement specifically concerned with the redistribution of landholding and ownership.

[3] Appendix B, VI, 9.

principles as seemed appropriate at the time: the good old "democratic dogma"—pass a law and if it doesn't work, then pass another law and if that doesn't work then . . . and so on ad infinitum.

It would be a mistake to assume, however, that this process of trial and error pursued over seventeen years has not produced any results. Concepts have been clarified, administrative procedure and machinery simplified and, to some extent, the various aspects of the reform brought into relation with each other. It cannot be said that Mexico has yet achieved a clearcut agrarian policy and a definitive agrarian practice, but very appreciable progress has been made.

In ideology and in practice, the principal evidence of progress has been the emergence of the ejido as the major objective of the agrarian revolution as a whole and as the fundamental method and immediate aim of the land reform in particular. Article 27, it will be recalled, in its formula for dealing with the primary problem of a more equitable division of the nation's lands and waters, established three procedures: (1) the distribution of lands (ejidos) to villages either by the method of restoration or by that of outright grant; (2) the reduction of landed estates through limitation of the size of holdings and the forced division and sale of all properties in excess of the amount allowed by law; and (3) the recovery of national lands and waters, the regulation of their use and their redistribution in the interest of the public. All three of these methods have been followed, but more and more the emphasis has been placed on the first mentioned. There is still a lack of comprehension on the part of all but a few of the revolutionary leaders of the role which the ejido, if the land reform is carried out to its logical end, is destined to play in the social and economic reorganization of the country. But, be this as it may, the fact is that, as the movement has developed, the distribution of land to villages has come to be the principal technique for dealing with the agrarian problem in the narrower sense. For all practical purposes, the land reform has come to mean ejidos. Laws have been passed and some effort has been exerted to make effective the other procedures for redistributing land envisaged in Article 27 but the results achieved so far are not to be compared with those obtained under the ejido program.

In the remaining chapters of this section, in order to get a bird's-eye view of the whole movement, some attention will be given to the history of the agrarian reform in all of its phases from 1917 down to the present time. Our principal concern, however, will be with that part of the reform related to the redistribution of land, and more especially with the ejido program. After seeing how the "blooming, buzzing confusion," the narrow conceptions, and the timid outlooks

characterizing the distribution of ejidos in the earlier stages of the movement gradually have given way to a relatively logical doctrine and procedure of restitution and dotation, we will be in a position to consider in detail the ejido program in relation to those temporally secondary aspects of the agrarian reform having to do with such matters as agricultural credit, irrigation, education, and the economic and social organization and control of the ejido villages.

Reaction and Confusion

Carranza swallowed the pill of the decree of January 6, 1915, because he was a "sick" man leading what seemed to be a lost cause. He even downed the larger and bitterer pill of the Constitution of 1917. But he did not like the one or the other. Hardly had a year passed after the promulgation of the decree of 1915 when Carranza began to pull the teeth out of the land reform. On June 19, 1916, he dictated a resolution[4] that reduced the authority the decree of 1915 had vested in the State Agrarian Commissions and greatly increased the number of formalities the villages had to go through with in order to get their land. This was followed, on September 19, 1916, by a decree[5] even more emasculating in its effects. By this law the power originally given to local authorities to make provisional grants of land to villages was taken away entirely and only the National Agrarian Commission[6] could sanction the distribution of ejidos. Given the unsettled state of the country at the time and the difficulty of communications with the capital, this practically meant that the whole ejido program was brought to a standstill.

Still another monkey wrench was thrown into the machinery by an official circular[7] sent out by the Agrarian Commission in January 1919 requiring all villages to agree to pay the Nation for any lands they might receive by dotation. This circular, of course, changed the whole notion of the reform as it had been conceived up to that time. Even if the other reforms of the decree of 1915 had not been made, the circular here in question would have been enough to reduce the distribution of ejido lands to a mere trickle; for the number of villages which could afford to pay for lands expropriated on their behalf was hardly worth considering.

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[4] Appendix B, II, 2.

[5] Appendix B, II, 3.

[6] The Commission was established in January 1916; see Appendix B, II, 1.

[7] Quoted in Bolaños, *C.A.*, p. 273. Many of the circulars of the National Agrarian Commission have had something of the character of court decisions; for, although theoretically they possess only the legal status of the administrative orders of any government department, in fact they have been accepted for all practical purposes as law.

CARRANZA'S LOST OPPORTUNITY

From every point of view the actual, as opposed to the paper, achievements of the Carranza regime so far as the land reform was concerned were negligible. A certain number of the Díaz colonization contracts were revoked, various monopolistic grants for the exploitation of forests were annulled and a few land concessions given out by the reactionary Huerta were declared void. But the real problem of dividing up the large estates and giving land to the villages was hardly touched. In the period of a little less than five years

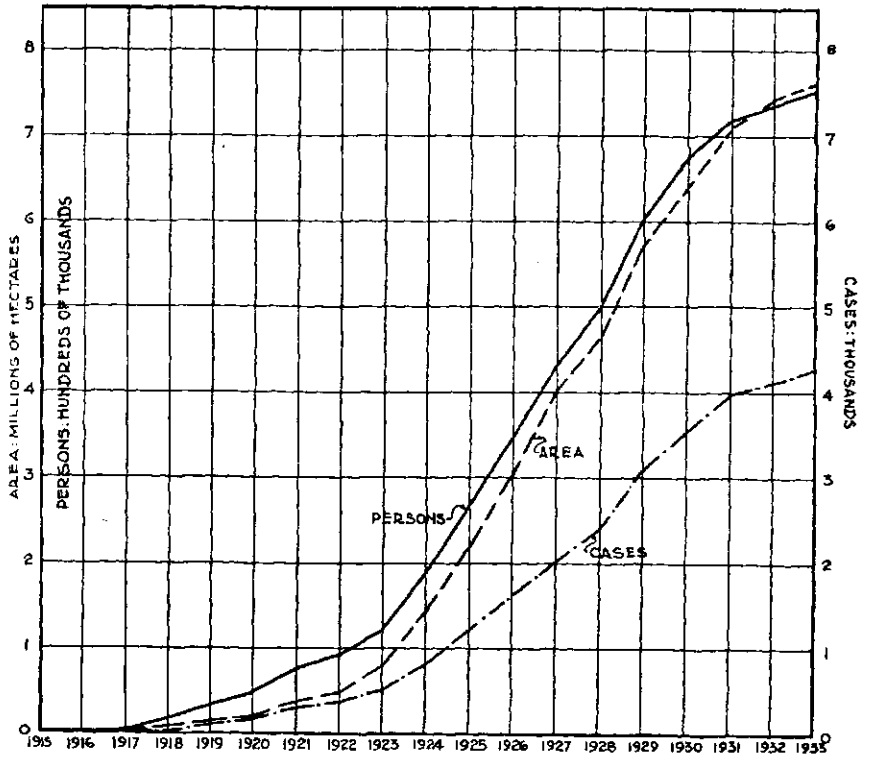

FIG. 2.—Cumulative results of definitive distribution of land in ejidos, 1915-1933. (See Appendix A, Table 18.)

during which Carranza remained in power after the promulgation of the decree of January 1915, only 190 villages received definitive possession of land. The total amount of land distributed was around 180,000 hectares to the benefit of some 48,000 ejidatarios.[8] The land

[8] See Fig. 2 and Fig. 28, p. 194; also Tables 17 and 18, Appendix A.

reform that had aroused such high hopes seemed to have died a-borning and the people were disillusioned and disheartened. Little wonder that Zapata in March 1919 was moved to write an open letter to Carranza which said in part:

As a citizen; as a human being with the right to think and speak out; as a peasant knowing the necessities of the humble people to whom I belong; as a revolutionary . . . who has had an opportunity to know the national soul . . . with its miseries and hopes . . . I address myself to you Citizen Carranza for the first and last time.

I do not address you as the President of the Republic because I do not recognize you as such. . . . I speak to you as a Mexican, as a man of reason and sentiment whom I believe it possible to move . . . with the anguish of mothers, the suffering of orphans and the discontent and sorrow of the Fatherland. . . .

Since you first had the idea of rebelling . . . since you first conceived the project of making yourself the Chief and director of the misnamed "constitutionalist" cause, you . . . have tried to convert the revolution into a movement for your own gain and that of your little group of friends . . . who helped you to get on top and are now helping you to enjoy the spoils of war: riches, honors, business, banquets, luxurious fiestas, Bachanalian pleasures, orgies of satiation, of ambition, of power and of blood.

It has never crossed your mind that the Revolution was for the benefit of the masses, for that great legion of the oppressed which you aroused with your preachings. . . .

In the agrarian reform [you have betrayed your trust]; haciendas have been given or rented to [your] favorite generals; the old landlords . . . have been replaced in not a few cases by modern landholders dressed in *charro* costumes, military hats, and with pistols at their belts; the people have been mocked in their hopes.

The ejidos have not been returned to the villages . . . nor have lands been distributed to the workers, the poor peasants and those truly in need. . . .[3]

And so on through a long and eloquent list of condemnations of the Constitutionalist cause and all its works: disorganization and oppression of the nascent labor movement, disruption of the country's finances, corruption of every kind and in every imaginable place, election frauds and the imposition of favorites—these and a host of other charges Zapata marshaled against the unhappy Carranza. The case was undoubtedly overstated and the personal responsibility of Carranza was not so great as it was made to appear, but of the essential justice of the accusations made by Zapata there seems to be no reasonable question. Otherwise it is hard to understand why,

[3] Quoted in Cuadros Caldas, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-99.

when a few months later[10] General Alvaro Obregón and the Sonora group declared themselves in rebellion with the announced intention of defending the principles of the true revolutionary movement, they should have encountered almost no resistance. And yet this was the case. In less than eight months, the so-called "revindicating revolution" had swept the decks clean. Carranza had paid for his mistakes with his life. Obregón sat in the president's chair and the Revolution which for a decade had bathed Mexico in blood was officially ended.

Alvaro Obregón and the Reform Under Way

When Obregón came marching into Mexico City at the head of a victorious army singing one of the most famous of the revolutionary songs—

> Only four little patches remain to me
> of all that beloved ranch of mine, Ay!
> And the little white house so sweet to see
> is filled with sadness now—[11]

the Revolution was over; reconstruction and the land reform were just beginning. But this time there really *was* a beginning in fact as well as in theory—and without further ado or delay.

THE FIRST LAW OF EJIDOS

On December 28, 1920, less than a month after he took office, Obregón signed a law, known as the *Ley de Ejidos*.[12] This law, the first attempt to regulate in any detail some of the principles laid down in the Decree of 1915 and in Article 27 of the constitution, was notable chiefly for the confusion of its concepts, the vagueness of its language and its general incompleteness.[13] It complicated the legal formalities and other requisites attendant upon the distribution of land to villages to such an extent that not even the agrarian authorities could discover what it was they were supposed to do, and the poor peasants who attempted to get land found themselves bound hand and foot in a tangle of red tape.[14]

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[10] On April 22, 1920, in the *Plan de Agua Prieta*.

[11] Cuatro milpas tan sólo han quedado
del ranchito que era mío, ¡ay!
de aquella casita, tan blanca y bonita
lo triste que está.

Quoted in Dromundo, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

[12] Appendix B, II, 6.

[13] Bassols, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 39; and Mendieta y Nuñez, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

Clumsy and inadequate though it was, the *Ley de Ejidos* of 1920 was nevertheless significant as an evidence of Obregón's intentions. If it did nothing else, the law of 1920 announced that the days of the vacillation and backsliding which characterized Carranza's regime were over. The land reform, and more particularly the giving of ejidos to villages, was to be removed from the realm of pious promise and placed in the world of emerging fact. The second step in this process was taken on December 10, 1921. On that date, a decree was signed annulling the *Ley de Ejidos* of the past year and empowering the president to enact a new law in this field.[15] A commission was set to work with the result that some five months later there was enacted what was known as the Agrarian Regulatory Law.[16]

THE REGULATION OF APRIL 10, 1922

The Agrarian Regulatory Law (or, for short, the regulation) of April 10, 1922, represents the third milepost in the history of the Mexican land reform: first the decree of 1915, then Article 27 of the 1917 constitution, and next the regulation of 1922. Not only did the regulation of 1922 for the first time introduce a measure of real order and system into the ejido program, but it marked a transition from sentiment to fact. Up to 1922 the spirit of the land reform had been one of revenge and revindication; after 1922 there was a discernible tendency to conceive the ejido program as an economic and social

[15] The decree of December 10, 1921 (Appendix B, II, 7), was important for another reason: it declared that the decree of September 19, 1916 which reformed Carranza's original agrarian law of January 1915 (see above p. 78) had *not* been incorporated into Article 27. In other words, Obregón restored to the State Agrarian Commissions the extremely important right to make provisional grants of land to villages. This meant that villages, which under the Carranza reform of the law of January 1915 had to wait months and even years while the National Agrarian Commission was going through the legal rigmarole incidental to making a definitive grant, could (in theory at any rate) get a provisional grant of land from the local State Commission at once and have the use of it, pending the review of the case and the final decision by the National Agrarian Commission.

The nice legal point of whether Article 27 by stating that the Decree of January 6, 1915, should "remain in force as a Constitutional law" (Par. 9), meant the decree plus its reforms or simply the decree pure and undefiled has been the subject of long and earnest debate. Carranza apparently thought that his reform of the decree of January 1915 was incorporated in the constitution along with his original decree. But the government since 1920 has always sustained the opposite point of view. For material on this point see: Circular No. 45 of the National Agrarian Commission quoted in Bolaños, *C.A.*, pp. 288-90; the debate in the Supreme Court on March 15 and 16, 1928, as reported in *El Excelsior* for March 17, 1928; and, "En defensa de los ejidatarios," editorial in *El Excelsior*, Oct. 27, 1933.

[16] Appendix B, II, 8.

problem, a technical question of how best to redistribute the nation's agricultural resources. In the minds of most people, there was no longer any question of the right of villages to lands; the problem was rather how to make the right effective. What villages should receive land? What land and by what legal processes? How much? And under what conditions?[17]

The regulation of April 1922 answered the foregoing questions as follows:

1. What villages should receive land? In keeping with Article 27 the law first states that only those villages having a certain political status (*categoría política*), to wit: towns (*pueblos*), settlements (*rancherías*), congregations (*congregaciones*), collections of co-owners (*condueñazgos*), and communities (*comunidades*)[18] shall have a right to petition for and obtain land by restitution and dotation. To this list are added two new classes: groups of individuals living on abandoned haciendas "who have had to cultivate the surrounding lands to keep alive"; and towns "whose population has fallen off considerably or which have lost the main source of their wealth and are no longer industrial, commercial, or mining centers." On the other hand, the law specifically rules out certain types of communities from the benefits of the ejido program. One such class is that of suburbs (*barrios*) annexed to and politically dependent upon a village, city, or town government. A much more important class is that of the groups of resident laborers living on haciendas.[19]

2. What land and how much shall be given to villages? In the cases of restitution the petitioning villages shall receive any and all lands to which they can prove title wherever such lands may be located or whoever may own them. The only exceptions to this rule

[17] Fabila, *Ponencia del Diputado Ing. Gilberto Fabila* . . . , p. 23.

[18] See footnote 8, Chapter V.

[19] These are the *acasillado* settlements mentioned before (p. 58). By explicitly excluding this class of communities from the right to petition for ejidos, the regulation here under review goes considerably beyond both the decree of 1915 and Article 27, which only excluded such groups by implication. However, it should be noted in this connection that during the Obregón controlled ad-interim regime of Adolfo de la Huerta a Circular of the National Agrarian Commission (No. 40, October 6, 1920) was sent to the governors of all the states urging "the convenience" of having the state legislatures enact laws at once elevating "the populated places (*poblados*) formed by workers and their families on haciendas (*latifundios*), into 'free towns,' 'settlements' or 'communities' . . . to the end that the State Agrarian Commissions . . . and the National Agrarian Commission [should] proceed forthwith to grant lands to those centers of population. . . ." The fact that this Circular did not fall upon deaf ears and that a number of states passed the laws suggested, somewhat took the curse off of the formal exclusion of *acasillado* communities in the regulation of 1922 and succeeding laws.

are: (a) lands legally distributed under the law of June 25, 1856; and (b) properties not larger than fifty hectares to which the owner can prove a clear title for a period of ten years or more.

In the cases of dotation the amount of land a village may receive is determined by the number of heads of families in the community. Enough land shall be expropriated to provide each family or person over eighteen years of age with from 3 to 5 hectares of irrigated or humid land; or 4 to 6 hectares of seasonal (*temporal*) land receiving regular and abundant rainfall; or 6 to 8 hectares of other seasonal land.[20] The number of prospective ejidatarios (heads of families or persons over 18 years of age) is arrived at by a special agrarian census. In this census the following may not be included: those in the professional class; those who already own more land than they would receive as their share of the dotation; those who possess "an agricultural, industrial or commercial capital of over 1,000 pesos"; and federal, local or municipal government employees, or private employees whose salary is over seventy-five pesos a month.

Dotations are to be made proportionately from private properties surrounding the village to which the land is to be given. Properties, however, of not more than 150 hectares of irrigated and humid land, 250 hectares in regions with regular and abundant rainfall, and 500 hectares of other classes of seasonal land, shall not be subject to expropriation under the law.[21] Also excepted from dotation are: "any property which by its very nature forms an industrial agricultural unit in exploitation," (but: "in such a case the owner must substitute an equal quantity of good land as near by as possible"); buildings of all kinds; orchards of fruit trees; coffee, cocoa, vanilla, rubber, and other such plantations; and water works and canals for the irrigation of lands which lie outside the ejido grant. Provision is made whereby owners of land expropriated shall be allowed time to harvest growing crops. In the case of lands planted in cyclical crops the owner may substitute other lands of equal quality provided they are not more than five kilometers from the petitioning village. Rules are also established for the protection of forests during the period of provisional possession.

[20] These amounts are to be "reduced to the minimum when the villages are not less than eight kilometers away from large centers of population or from the railroads, and one-half the maximum when at a less distance there are other villages also entitled to the dotation and restitution of ejidos," if the surrounding land suitable for cultivation is not sufficient for the needs of all the villages in question. (Art. 9.) In arid or mountainous regions the allotments for each head of a family or person over 18 years of age may be increased up to three times the amounts indicated. (Art. 10.)

[21] When a village is entirely surrounded by properties of the areas indicated, the law provides that the limits of unexpropriatable properties shall be reduced by half.

3. What is the legal process for the restitution or dotation of lands? As in the previous legislation on the subject, the regulation of 1922 sets up three agencies for the distribution of land to villages: a National Agrarian Commission, State Agrarian Commissions, and Village Executive Committees. A petition for the restitution or dotation of ejidos is made in the first instance to the State Agrarian Commission. This Commission, after supervising the taking of an agrarian census and making the other investigations necessary, then turns the case over to the governor of the state with appropriate recommendations. If the governor's decision (which must be made within a period of five months) is in the affirmative, and the National Agrarian Commission concurs in this judgment, the village, through its Executive Committee, is given provisional possession of its ejido lands. The case then goes to the National Agrarian Commission for revision and final decision. This decision is made by the president of the Republic upon recommendation of the National Commission and, if favorable, the village is given definitive possession of its ejido. Owners of properties affected are allowed one month before the final decision is handed down to "make any statement concerning their rights before the National Agrarian Commission."

The regulation of April 10, 1922 has been presented in some detail because with its modifications, amplifications, and reforms[22] it is the basis of the ejido dotation and restitution legislation developed during the next five years. The regulation of 1922 sketched in the major outline of the program; the succeeding laws altered, modified, defined, and filled in the picture. The net result was slowly but surely to widen and extend the rights and privileges of the villages under the law and to narrow and restrict those of the landlords.

OTHER AGRARIAN LEGISLATION OF THE OBREGÓN GOVERNMENT

In addition to the ejido legislation reviewed in the foregoing paragraphs, the Obregón administration was responsible for the initiation of two other important efforts to place land in the hands of the people. The first of these—the Idle Lands Law (*Ley de Tierras Ociosas*)[23]—was an emergency measure designed partly to satisfy the demand of the villages for land while the government was engaged in working out a program for the restitution and dotation of ejidos and partly to increase production by forcing unworked areas into use at

[22] In all, before the regulation of April 10, 1922, was finally annulled by the law of April 23, 1927, it was reformed nine times. See Appendix B, II, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, and 20.

[23] Appendix B, IX, 1. The law here in question was in point of fact promulgated (June 13, 1920) during the *ad interim* administration of Adolfo de la Huerta.

a time when the country's food supplies were sadly depleted. The federal law of idle lands and the various state laws which it authorized on the same subject empowered the municipal authorities to turn over to anyone willing to cultivate it privately-owned crop land not planted by a certain date. The individuals receiving the land were required to pay rent (varying up to 10 per cent of the harvest) to the owner. The use of idle land was limited to a period of one year and it had to be "returned to its legitimate proprietors immediately after the last harvest had been [was] gathered."[24]

Of somewhat more permanent significance in the general program of land distribution was a decree promulgated on August 2, 1923.[25] This decree, roughly comparable to the homestead legislation in the United States, was the first of a series of decrees enacted for the purpose of making public lands available to settlers. As such it represented an effort on the part of the Obregón administration to put into effect the third plank of the land reform set forth in Article 27 of the constitution. Briefly, the decree of August 2, 1923, provided that any Mexican over eighteen years of age could obtain title to national lands in an amount varying from 25 hectares of irrigable land up to 200 hectares of nonirrigable, pasture or mountain land, by occupying and tilling it for a period of two years. Title was granted to the individual settler upon the payment of fifty pesos and the presentation of proof of occupancy. After receiving title the only restriction put upon the holder was that he could not sell or transfer his land to anyone already possessing property equal to or greater in area than that permitted to any single person under the law itself.[26]

One other law of the period from 1920 to 1924 should be mentioned: the decree of January 10, 1920, creating the agrarian public debt.[27] This law with its numerous reforms and modifications will be

[24] Although theoretically still in effect, neither the federal idle lands law nor the regulatory state laws have been much invoked in practice during recent years.

[25] Appendix B, VI, 1.

[26] The "homestead" law of August 2, 1923, has been reformed on several occasions. Quite recently (July 27, 1934) a new law in this field has been enacted which modifies in some respects the procedure set forth in the original decree. Since these laws lie outside the field of our major interest no effort will be made to trace their history any further. However, it is important to note that the program of land distribution under the homestead law (in its original as well as in its later formulations) differs both in method and in aim from that of the ejido laws: (1) only public lands are affected; (2) the area allowed to each individual is much larger than the average ejido parcel; and (3) the title received, although subject to some restrictions, is essentially a title to private property.

[27] Appendix B, IV, 1.

treated in some detail in Chapter XIII. Here it is unnecessary to do more than note the fact that the purpose of the law was to authorize the issuance of federal bonds wherewith to indemnify the owners of private property for lands expropriated for dotation to villages.

OBREGÓN'S AGRARIAN ACHIEVEMENTS

As may be seen in Fig. 2 on page 79, the curve recording grants of land to villages took a sharp turn upward during the Obregón administration, especially after the promulgation of the regulatory law of April 10, 1922. In all, during the four years from 1921 to 1924, 624 villages and 139,320 heads of families received around 1.2 million hectares of land. This more than tripled the number of villages and ejidatarios receiving land during Carranza's regime and brought the totals by the end of 1924 up to 814 villages, 187,702 ejidatarios, and 1.4 million hectares of land.[28]

Despite the advances made by his government both on the legal side and from the point of view of putting the ejido program into practice, Obregón can hardly be classified as an ardent agrarian. Indeed, notably in the first years, and to an appreciable extent throughout his term of office, Obregón in dealing with the agrarian problem exhibited a caution which in the face of the high-sounding phrases of revolutionary doctrine and the specific promises of Article 27 amounted to undue timidity if not plain cowardice. A sample of the evidence in support of this statement is found in the declarations made by Obregón at an informal meeting of Congress at which he was invited to express his views on the agrarian problem a few weeks before he was inducted into office as president. The specific subject of discussion was a law, presented by the more radical agrarian leaders, proposing that the government proceed at once to divide up the large estates by prohibiting any one person from owning more than 50 to 150 hectares of land (depending on the class of lands) and expropriating all lands in excess of this amount. Obregón's position with reference to the proposal, and by implication to the problem of land distribution in general, may be indicated by the following excerpts from his speech:

> I quite agree with the agrarian principle, but we must act with great caution; we must act so carefully as to solve the problem without endangering our welfare and our economical interests. If we begin by destroying the big estates in order to create afterwards the small property, I sincerely believe we have made a blunder, because as soon as a law be

[28] Appendix A, Tables 17 and 18.

issued determining the utmost surface to be allowed to each farmer, the Government will lose its right even to levy taxes or duties on the whole of the estate. . . .

. . . We must not destroy big estates before creating the small one, as an unbalanced state might follow leading us to dearth. I am of [the] opinion that we must act cautiously. . . .[29]

Whatever may have been the whys and wherefores[30] of Obregón's attitude, it is clear that he was partly responsible for Mexico's failure to take the quickest and least complicated route to the solution of the problem of land redistribution—general confiscation of the large estates. Under Obregón's leadership, Mexico started on the long and tortuous path of nibbling away at the *latifundia* system by the expensive and long-drawn-out methods of law and order. Mexico lost her great chance to strike while the iron was still glowing with the heat of revolutionary fervor with the result, as we shall see in due time, that now almost nineteen years since the promulgation of the decree of 1915, the ownership of the land is still largely concentrated in the hands of the privileged few.

Plutarco Elias Calles and the Reform in the Balance

Thanks to the lack of singleness of purpose of the Obregón government and the destructive and generally disorganizing effects of the de la Huerta rebellion which took place in 1924,[31] Obregón's

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[29] Obregón, *The Agrarian Problem*, pp. 4-5.

[30] Aside from the fact that Obregón's outlook was essentially that (as he himself liked to say) of "a practical business man," probably the most important reason for the caution with which he proceeded both in his thinking and his action with relation to the agrarian problem, was the fear of intervention by the United States. During the first three years of Obregón's term of office the United States refused to recognize his government and in a series of diplomatic notes expressed in no uncertain terms the American government's displeasure with the agrarian program as affecting the property of American citizens in Mexico. See Hackett, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-71.

[31] This revolt was one of a series of "family quarrels" within the revolutionary group in the decade from 1920 to 1930. Adolfo de la Huerta had with Calles and Obregón been one of the three main leaders of the "revindicating revolution" which overthrew Carranza. Like many another radical leader come to power, however, he forgot his revolutionary principles under the stress of personal ambition. The rebellion in which he was joined by a number of disgruntled generals was finally put down after four months' fighting. Of the effects of the de la Huerta "spree" on the agrarian reform, Gruening states:

"The de la Huerta rebellion . . . had a distinct anti-agrarian and counter-revolutionary aspect. . . . In the renewed chaos of 1923-24 nearly all reconstruction work went by the board. The fruits of agrarianism after ten years were little more than hunger, spilled blood, disillusion, bitterness, and economic prostration." *Mexico and Its Heritage*, p. 145. Reprinted by permission of the Century Company.

successor in the presidency, Plutarco Elías Calles, found himself, so far as the agrarian reform was concerned, confronted with the necessity of beginning practically from scratch. The principle of the reform had been accepted, some basic legislation had been enacted, and a few hundred villages had received land, but these were little more than the bare bones of accomplishment. It still remained to clothe the skeleton in the flesh of reality and to breathe the life of dynamic activity into the whole movement.

Calles took over the reins of government pledged to carry out the agrarian reform in all of its aspects. In numerous campaign speeches and statements to the press he had expressed in unmistakable fashion his agrarian philosophy:

> Agrarianism must be developed with all energy and without vacillation, but within the limits of method and order, so that our agricultural production may not suffer and harm come to those we are seeking to benefit. . . . I speak and fight for the compliance of the agrarian policy of the Revolution, for in this lies the revindication of the right of the people to live. To satisfy this necessity the breaking up of the large estates which are yet intact . . . must be brought about through evolutionary proceedings, amply planned and studied, backed by a firm system of agricultural credit and by the organization of coöperative societies by the small farmers.[32]

Like Obregón, Calles first turned his attention to the ejido. Calles was a firm believer in the idea that the salvation of Mexico lay in the creation of a large body of small landholders. The ejido in his mind was but one step in this direction, albeit a necessary step because of the backward condition of certain sections of the population. The goal, however, was to be private property; the ejido with its communal restrictions and protections was to be a training school from which the ejidatarios were eventually to graduate into the status of peasant proprietors.[33] Because of these beliefs and because of certain irregularities which had arisen in the administration of the ejido lands already given to the villages, the first important law that Calles caused to be enacted in the field of the agrarian reform was a law dated December 19, 1925, and entitled the Regulatory Law Concerning the Division of Ejido Lands and the Constitution of the Ejido Patrimony.[34] In a later chapter the antecedents of this law as well as the law itself and its numerous reforms will be discussed at some length. Here, for the purpose of filling out the outline of the

[32] Calles, *Mexico Before the World*, pp. 7-8.

[33] For the citations in support of these statements see Chapters XVIII and XXIV.

[34] Appendix B, III, 3.

course of the whole agrarian reform, we need do no more than note that this was the first attempt formally and by duly enacted law to regulate and control the internal workings of the new ejido villages. The principal innovation of the law of ejido patrimony is that of providing for the division of the crop lands of the ejidos into parcels and the vesting of title to these parcels not only in the village in its corporate capacity but in the individual ejidatarios as well. In the minds of its framers the purpose of the law was: (a) to curtail the power of the village agrarian authorities; and (b) to take the first step in converting the ejidatarios from members of a commune into proprietors of individually-owned and independent private properties.

REFORM OF THE BASIC LAW OF RESTITUTION AND DOTATION

Both before and after the enactment of the law of ejido patrimony there was considerable tinkering with the legislation concerning the restitution and dotation of lands to villages. The first reform of the basic law in this field under Calles was made on April 23, 1925.[35] This was followed during the next two years by sundry other modifications.[36] The Calles reforms plus the additions and qualifications made during the Obregón regime were beginning to give the basic law, (the regulation of April 10, 1922), something of the appearance of a patch-work quilt. Obviously, the time was fast approaching when it would be necessary to have a general housecleaning and start all over again.

But there were more important reasons for passing a new law regulating the dotation and restitution of ejidos than the fact that the legal machinery had become unwieldy and cumbersome. From the very day that the decree of January 6, 1915 was promulgated the criticism of the agrarian reform and more particularly of the ejido program had been gathering in volume and strength. These criticisms were of two types: those which sought to question the validity and sincerity of the whole ejido program; and those which accepted the program as both legal and just, but attacked the way in which it was being put into effect.

The first type of criticism, for the most part, came from the conservatives and the landowners who were immediately affected and included charges of unconstitutionality, impracticality (the ejida-

[35] Appendix B, II, 17 and 18.

[36] Appendix B, II, 19, 20, and 21. The most important of these laws was that of April 8, 1926, which for the first time introduced into ejido legislation regulations governing the restitution and dotation of water for irrigation purposes. In general these regulations were similar and parallel to those concerning land.

tarios couldn't and wouldn't work the land), fraud and politics (the agrarian authorities were corrupt), and injustice (the payment for expropriated land in bonds of doubtful value after the act was practically no payment at all).

The second type of criticism came from the left wing of the revolutionary group itself. While not denying many of the charges made by the enemies of the reform, the more radical members of the revolutionary party centered their attack on the narrowness of conception of the legal procedure and the failure of the government to prosecute the reform with the vigor and thoroughness the situation demanded.[37]

As a result of the constant agitation both within and without the revolutionary camp, the Calles government, after considerable study and debate, wiped the slate clean and gave the whole ejido program a new and firmer grip on life by enacting on April 23, 1927, a completely renovated Law of Dotation and Restitution of Lands and Waters.[38] With this law the program of distributing land to villages, so to speak, attained its majority. Up to 1927 the ejido program was a sprouting adolescent, gangling, awkward, unformed, and unstable; after 1927 the program may be compared to a full-grown man, maturing, developing, broadening, and settling down. The law of April 23, 1927, did not abandon the fundamental principles or the major categories of the previous law of dotation and restitution of ejidos, but it clarified these principles and filled out these categories so that a new logic and order were introduced into both theory and practice.

The first and most important contribution of the new law was that of settling once and for all the troublesome question of political category. Beginning with the decree of 1915 all of the ejido legislation limited the communities subject to benefit under the law by specifically naming the types of communities (*rancherías*, *comunidades*,

[37] . . . "Agrarianism cannot continue to live on words. The development of the agrarian reform cannot be left any longer in the hands of politicians and the inept. We must entrust the reform to those who are convinced of its justice, but who are at the same time capable and efficient; who are energetic but not robbers; who are decided but not imitators of a false radicalism which only hides a narrowness of purpose.

"In a word, agrarianism needs to be cleaned up and the first thing to do is to disinfect its methods and its leaders. . . . If we continue much longer on the road followed up to the present time, it may be predicted . . . that the agrarian reform will be halted, which is equivalent to saying that the movement will die before ten years have passed.

"And it should be marked well that killing the agrarian movement or distorting it to make it conform to any solution . . . which does not consist in overthrowing . . . the feudal organization in which we live, is to lose the last opportunity given to the nation to solve its problems without resort to dynamite and the machete." Bassols, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

[38] Appendix B, II, 22.

and so forth) having a right to petition for and receive land.[39] This amounted to ruling out arbitrarily a large number of villages and to establishing an entirely artificial system of selection, for the names which communities bore were matters of historical accident and had little relation to the social and economic character or needs of these communities.[40] To get around this obviously unfair rule many villages had tried to have their political status changed. This led to considerable confusion and in many cases to long-drawn-out court actions. To cut this Gordian knot, then, the law of April 23, 1927, states in Article 1 :

> Every populated place (*poblado*) which lacks lands and waters or which does not possess these elements in amounts sufficient for the agricultural needs of its inhabitants, has the right to a dotation of them in the amount and under the conditions set forth in this law.

The law (as was immediately made clear in Article 2) did not by any means universalize the right of villages to petition for land, but it did so far extend that right as to make it possible to say that since 1927 only two important classes of rural communities have been excluded from the benefits of the ejido program : very small villages and settlements of resident laborers on agricultural lands under exploitation.[41]

Other innovations in the law serving to enlarge and extend the rights of the villages were : (a) it clarified the functions of the various agrarian authorities intervening in the distribution of land to villages and definitely subordinated the State Commissions to the National Agrarian Commission ; (b) it simplified the procedure required for the initiation of a petition for land and clarified the manner by which a petition originally made for restitution could be changed into one for dotation ; (c) by regulating and defining the exact procedure to be followed by the agrarian authorities in cases of dotation and restitution (including ample provision for protests on the part of the landowners affected) it reaffirmed and placed on a more secure basis the judicial nature of the decisions handed down by the agrarian authorities ; (d) by establishing the principle that no division, sale, or other modification of the area of a property subject to affec-

[39] See above pp. 58-59 and 83.

[40] Bassols, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

[41] Specifically Article 2 of the law of April 23, 1927, rules out the following classes of communities : the capitals of federal and state governments ; towns of 10,000 inhabitants or over containing less than 200 individuals able to qualify as ejidatarios ; ports engaged in sea traffic ; settlements on land under colonization contract ; communities containing less than 25 heads of families ; and groups of resident laborers living on agricultural lands under exploitation.

tation for the purpose of giving land to villages would be recognized after the date of the publication of a petition for such land, the law did away with one of the favorite means whereby landowners had been able to "defraud the hopes of the people";[42] and (e) the law, by defining clearly what is meant by the phrase "adjacent properties" in Article 27 of the constitution,[43] shut off another cause of friction and avenue by which landlords had been able to escape compliance with the law.

The new law of restitution and dotation of ejidos was not entirely devoted to extending the rights and privileges of the villages. It also made a number of definite concessions to the landlords. One of the most important of these concessions was a new set of rules governing the taking of the agrarian census. The agrarian census is in many ways the crux of the whole matter, for the number of heads of families counted in the census determines the amount of property to be expropriated. Under the new law the owners of land subject to expropriation were given definite representation on the board designated for the purpose of taking the census as well as the right to protest against "padding" and other types of fraud. Closely related to this matter was the protection offered to the landlords by the sections of the law concerning the methods for determining the amount of land which the village had in its possession at the time when a petition was made.[44]

In the second place, of considerable importance to the owners of private property were the sections of the law relating to properties exempted from ejido grants. Departing from the system established in the old regulation of 1922,[45] the new law provided that properties of whatever class of land belonging to a single owner which did not exceed 150 hectares in area should be exempt from actions of dotation.[46] This represented a gain for owners of private property in that the limit set was an absolute minimum—that is, the provision of the old regulation that if a village was entirely surrounded by exempted

[42] There were certain exceptions to this rule covering cases of judicial sales to pay off mortgages contracted before the date of an ejido petition, division of land through inheritance where the death of the owner took place before the initiation of a petition, etc. See Articles 112, 113 and 114 of Appendix B, II, 22.

[43] See above p. 74.

[44] Under the law in any given dotation the land already in the possession of the village was taken into account in the estimate of the total amount of land necessary to satisfy the agricultural needs of the inhabitants of the village and hence had a definite relation to the quantity of land expropriated from surrounding private properties.

[45] See above p. 84.

[46] In cases of properties devoted exclusively to cattle-raising the maximum area not subject to grants was raised to 2,000 hectares.

properties the limits of land not subject to expropriation could be reduced by half does not appear in the new law.

Finally, the new law for the first time established relatively complete rules governing petitions for the amplification of ejidos.[47] These rules were: no village was to be permitted to petition for an enlargement of its ejido until a period of ten years had elapsed from the date of its first dotation; amplifications could be made only for the purpose of establishing new holdings and not for the enlarging of old ejido parcels or for the benefit of any ejidatario figuring in the original agrarian census; a petition for amplification had to go through the same procedure as an original petition for a grant of land.[48]

ROUNDING OUT THE AGRARIAN REFORM

In addition to laws designed to make the ejido program more effective, during Calles' term of office a determined effort was made to implement and give legal definition to a variety of other aspects of the agrarian reform. Indeed, so numerous and varied were the laws enacted that most of them—the several decrees referring to agrarian bonds, the laws establishing the National Bank of Agricultural Credit and the Ejido Agricultural Banks, the Law of Irrigation with Federal Waters, and the laws relating to the development of rural education—will have to be held over for review in later chapters. One law, however, directly related to the redistribution of landholding and representing a line of attack different from the ejido program, must be given brief consideration at this point.

In the Law of Colonization promulgated on April 5, 1926,[49] lies the first attempt to bring into line with the rest of the revolutionary movement the laws which so often in the days before 1910 had served as an excuse for alienating the public domain and encouraging land speculation.[50] The law declares three types of land to

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[47] This matter had been previously dealt with in a preliminary fashion in an amendment to the regulation of 1922. See Appendix B, II, 15.

[48] Only the most important innovations and changes introduced by the law of April 23, 1927, have been reviewed here. For a detailed discussion and interpretation of the law in all of its aspects see Bassols, *op. cit.*

The law of April 23, 1927, was reformed on two occasions during the Calles administration (Appendix B, II, 23 and 24). The most important change made by the reforms was the redefinition (in the law of August 11, 1927) of "very small villages": the limit which excluded villages from petitioning for ejido dotations was reduced from 25 to 20 heads of families. See footnote 41, Chapter VI.

[49] The Law of Colonization was regulated on January 6, 1927. Except for minor reforms the original law is still in force. See Appendix B, VII, 1, 2, 3, and 4.

[50] See above p. 27. For the history of colonization in Mexico, see López Ocampo, "El problema actual de la colonización," *El Nacional*, July 20, 1934.

be subject to colonization: national land; land acquired for the purpose by the National Bank of Agricultural Credit or by the application of the Law of Irrigation; and private property.

Legal sanction for the occupation of private property for the purpose of colonization is found in the "public utility" clause of Article 27 of the constitution. Private property, however, is only to be affected when in any given region there is insufficient national land or land which can be acquired by outright purchase. And in any event, private property is exempted from the operation of the law where half of the arable land is cultivated by the owner or where two-thirds of the arable land is cultivated by the owner with the help of renters or share-croppers.

In the case of national lands, colonization projects may be carried out by the federal government operating through the Ministry of Agriculture or the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, or by private companies under contract with the government. An owner of private property declared subject to colonization is given the privilege of carrying out the project in his own right either wholly or in coöperation with the government. If he fails to exercise this privilege, his property may be expropriated at its taxable value plus 10 per cent. In such expropriation proceedings the property owner affected is compensated either by a direct payment in cash or by 6 per cent bonds amortized by annual payments made by the colonists on their individual parcels. The value of the land in each project is determined by the government and colonists are allowed a period of from ten to twenty-five years to complete their payments.

The extensive and detailed regulations governing the rights and duties of colonization companies, the qualifications of colonists and the control to be exercised by the government need not be reviewed in detail here. Certain points, however, should be noted: (a) The area allowed each colonist is rather liberal as compared with that permitted under the ejido or the "homestead" laws—that is, each individual may acquire up to 50 hectares of irrigated land; 250 hectares of nonirrigated land of the first class; 500 hectares of non-irrigated land of the second class, and 5,000 hectares of pasture land. (b) Colonists are required to have enough capital to see them through the first years. (In the case of foreigners, this means 1,000 pesos). (c) Titles to the properties of individual colonists are issued by the government when the price of the land has been fully paid. Meanwhile, a colonist may not alienate his land in any way. After receiving title a colonist may transfer it only to such persons as meet the requirements for settling in the colony. (d) In no case is the title to colony land ever vested in a company or an individual holding

a colonizing concession from the government. (e) Complete control of a colony is turned over by the government to the members thereof when the payments for the land reach 50 per cent of the purchase price.[51]

AGRARIAN ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CALLES GOVERNMENT

The vast amount of legislation relating directly or indirectly to the agrarian reform enacted by the Calles government mark the years from 1924 to 1928 as years of real reconstruction. Many of these laws, to be sure, proved unworkable and had to be modified by later administrations; but this is as understandable as it was perhaps inevitable. Of somewhat greater import is the apparent confusion which existed in the minds of Calles and his associates with regard to just where the reform was headed. As the very number and variety of the laws enacted indicates, there was a certain lack of coördination, a failure to focus the reform. What was to be the chief method of redistributing landholding: the ejido, colonization, or the direct division of large estates? How was the agricultural economy of the country to be organized: on the basis of communal groups holding and working their land collectively, or on the basis of independent peasant proprietors and small farmers? Was there to be any place at all for the large-scale agricultural enterprise? If so, where, and under what conditions? In short, what was the final aim of the reform: the socialization of land and agricultural production; or private property and laissez faire? And, if something in between these two extremes, what? To these questions the laws of the Calles regime gave, at best, equivocal answers.

Nevertheless, as even the conservatives were forced to admit,[52] under Calles the agrarian movement was distinguished by the fact that it did move. Not only were laws passed, but they were put into effect. Vast tracts of national lands were recovered, thousands of settlers were established on homestead plots, irrigation projects were begun, schools for the agricultural education of the peons were created, and agricultural banks were founded. Of more specific interest here, the program of distributing land to villages was prosecuted with considerable vigor and success. In the four years from January 1, 1925, to December 31, 1928, over 3.2 million hectares

[51] The colonization law differs from the "homestead" laws in that private land as well as public land may be affected, and in that the law operates in the first instance through and to the benefit of a group and only secondarily and eventually in the interest of individuals.

[52] For example, see Esquivel Obregón, "Calles—El 'haber' de su cuenta," *El Excelsior*, September 25, 1928.

of land were distributed to 1,576 villages and 307,607 ejidatarios. This was more than three times as much land (to the benefit of three times as many villages) as had been distributed during the whole period covered by the reform up to the time that Calles took office.

CHAPTER VII

CASE I: SAN JUAN—INTRODUCTION TO EJIDOS[1]

We find in the agrarianism of this region connotations of . . . great value: social organization, incipient, but real, based not on political values but on economic values; in the breasts of those people a feeling that things have changed, that a new era is beginning.

—Moisés Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en San Luis Potosí.*

THE VILLAGE of San Juan is located in one of the principal agricultural states of the central plateau. The nearest town of any size and the nearest point on the railroad is El Centro, about five kilometers away. El Centro is a relatively prosperous agricultural and distributing center with a population of some 13,000. It is the head of the *municipio* (roughly, "township") of which San Juan is a part. This means that to its economic dominance is added political authority over surrounding villages such as San Juan.

Reasonably good dirt roads over which automobiles can be driven in the dry season connect San Juan with El Centro, and with one or two small neighboring villages.

Situated in a broad valley some 5,500 feet above sea level, the climate of San Juan and the surrounding area may be described as temperate. The average rainfall during the year (concentrated almost entirely in the so-called rainy season from June to September) is approximately 37 inches and the mean annual temperature is a little over 65°F. The configuration of the land is flat to rolling. The soil is described as "alluvial clay, black or red with here and there large sandy areas." Water for irrigation purposes can be obtained from shallow pump wells and to some extent from storage of the waters of a small river which runs through the center of the valley.

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[1] This case study is introduced at this point with a view to helping the reader rescue the ejido from the maze of legal history and terminology in the previous chapters and see it as a concrete reality. For this purpose, an effort has been made to select an "average" ejido—in the sense of one which has been neither an outstanding success nor a failure. Also, in this first case it seemed best not to present too complicated a story or one with too many atypical features.

In connection with this case as well as with those which appear in succeeding chapters, the reader is urged to hold in mind the statements which appear in the preface to this book.

However, since the river is dry most of the year, this source of supply is very undependable.

The whole area is devoted almost exclusively to agriculture, the principal crops being corn, wheat, beans, chile, melons, and potatoes. Secondary crops are barley, alfalfa, chick-peas, tomatoes, and various fruits.

San Juan was founded in 1913 on the occasion of the division of one of the large estates and appears in the 1921 census with the political classification of a *rancho* and a population of 289.

As will be noted shortly, the village made its first petition for land in 1923. Before this time and until a grant was finally made by the government in 1928, the only land possessed by the village was 28 hectares including the area occupied by houses. Although this land was planted in corn and frijoles, it was cultivated without irrigation and in any case was obviously inadequate for the needs of the population. This meant that practically all of the villagers were forced to eke out their meager income by working either as renters or as day laborers on the neighboring farms. Wages varied normally between 50 and 75 centavos per day. It is interesting to note that for some time past the private properties surrounding the village of San Juan had been in the *rancho* rather than the hacienda class. That is to say, most of the properties were considerably less than 300 hectares and the largest did not exceed 513 hectares. The majority of these properties were under cultivation of a rather intensive sort and all of them had large areas under artificial (pump-well) irrigation.

San Juan Receives its Ejido Lands

On September 29, 1923, a committee purporting to represent the village addressed a letter to the governor of the state alleging that the village of San Juan had a population of approximately 200 persons of whom 55 were heads of families and that "in order to achieve their economic independence" they petitioned the government to make them a grant of land. This letter was turned over by the governor to the State Agrarian Commission with the recommendation that the case be investigated.

Some nine months later (August 1924) the State Commission sent out an engineer by the name of Carlos González to take the agrarian census and make the other studies required by law. In due time González reported that he had completed the agrarian census and that the village had a total population of 233 with 71 heads of families with rights to receive land. But González also reported that he had not been able to make the other investigations required by law "because the inhabitants of San Juan refused absolutely to assist

him" and that the villagers really didn't want any land anyway. In proof of this allegation he submitted a letter addressed to the president of the State Agrarian Commission and signed by the *Delegado* (the local agent in San Juan representing the municipal authority in El Centro) and the village committee. This letter read in part:

> We have the honor to request that you do not trouble yourself to send anyone to give us lands which we do not now possess because it will be useless for you to take this trouble. . . . No one in San Juan desires or wishes to have that which does not belong to him. . . .

In the face of this unexpected turn of events, the People's Advocate (*Procurador de Pueblos*—representative of the National Agrarian Commission) intervened in the case and reported to the State Commission that the villagers *did* want lands and that the real reason why the people of San Juan had withdrawn their petition was because González had told them that they must pay him seventeen pesos a day for making the plans and other studies required by law. Moreover, it was claimed that González had openly manifested his friendship for and had lived at the house of one of the landlords whose property was subject to expropriation. These accusations were supported by a document signed by the villagers.

Upon the receipt of the above report, the State Agrarian Commission promptly dismissed González. Whereupon González again visited the village and obtained another letter signed by the *Delegado* and others in which the statement was made that the accusations against him were false, that the report of the *Procurador* had been signed "in ignorance of its contents," and that the village did *not* want any land. Armed with this document, González publicly accused the *Procurador* of playing politics, of trying to force the inhabitants of San Juan to accept land and of arousing them against the landlords.

In view of these charges and countercharges, there was nothing to do but send someone to make another investigation. This the State Commission did in the person of one Mario Diego. After a while Diego reported that with the greatest difficulty he had finally held a meeting of thirty citizens of San Juan at which he had pointed out the advantages of their receiving ejido lands and had told them that their "present relatively prosperous condition was due entirely to the good-will of one of the landlords and that this situation might change at any moment." The villagers were not impressed by Diego's reasoning, however, for, according to his report, they "adopted a position of complete hostility," stated that "they were tired of being dragged around to sign documents the contents of

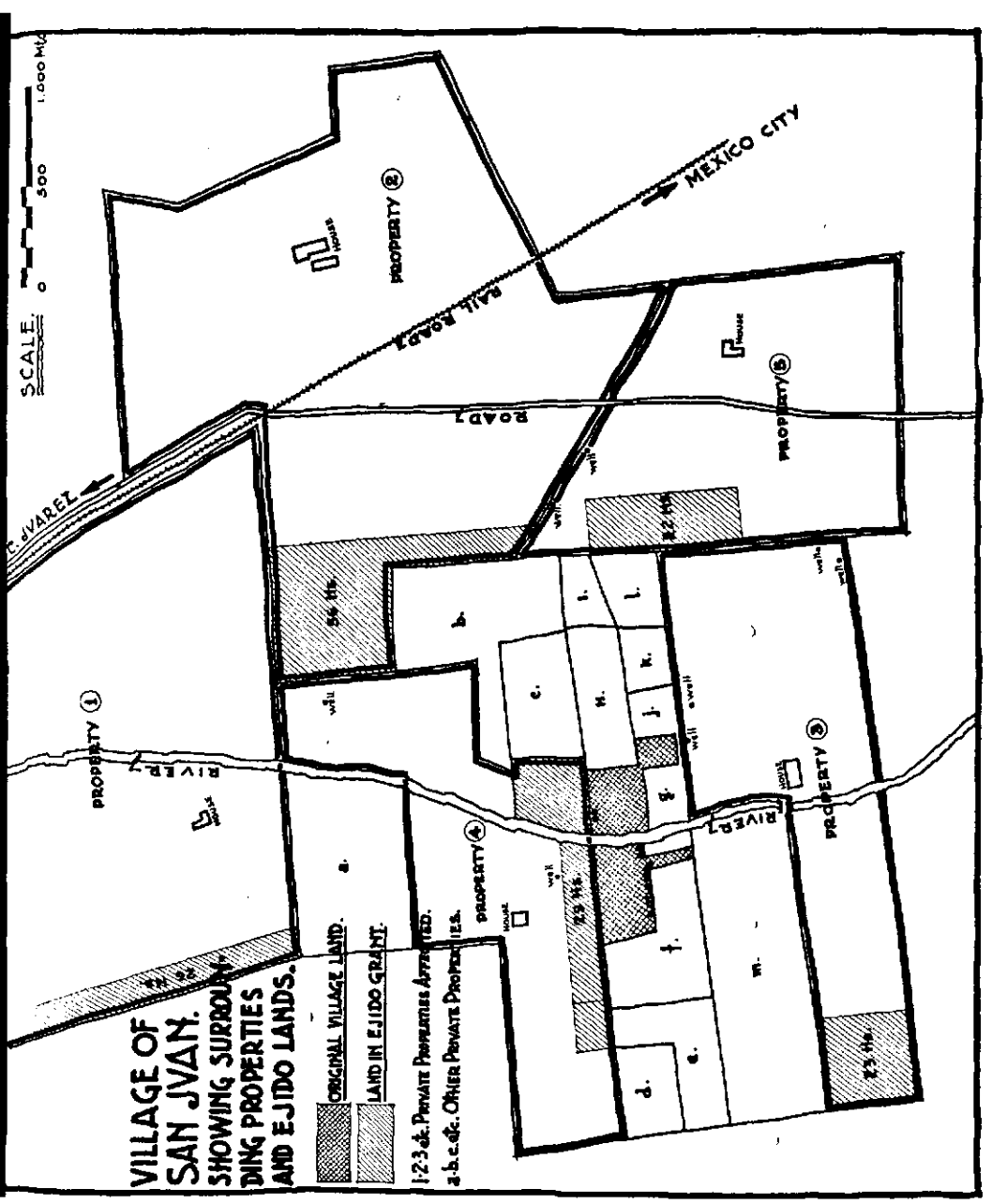

FIG. 3—Village of San Juan showing surrounding properties, properties affected, and ejido lands.

which they could not understand," and reiterated their statement that they did not want any land. Diego explained this attitude on two grounds: (1) that the landlords (and especially the owner of property No. 3—see Fig. 3) were trying to do everything possible to keep the villagers content; and (2) that the people of San Juan were afraid of the municipal authorities in El Centro whom they believed to be responsible for the assassination of an agrarian leader in a neighboring village.[2]

Apparently, the State Agrarian Commission was satisfied that the village of San Juan wanted, or at any rate, needed land, for the machinery of the ejido law continued to grind and on February 24, 1926, the first plan for the expropriation of private properties on behalf of the village was accepted by the Commission. This plan held that for the 71 heads of families with rights to receive land there should be expropriated a total of 255 hectares in proportionate amounts from each of six estates.

As the law required, the Agrarian Commission notified the owners of the property in question of the proposed action. All of the owners (as well as other landlords not mentioned in the original plan but with properties near the village of San Juan) entered protests with the Commission. Some alleged that their properties were exempt because of their small size; others that the village was not of a political category listed in the law as having a right to receive land; others that the agrarian census had been "padded"; and still others that their lands were not in the area defined by the law as "adjoining" the petitioning village.[3]

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[2] As a matter of fact the situation was even more complicated than has been indicated here. Undoubtedly, one of the principal landlords whose property was about to be affected had, in the opinion of those of San Juan who had worked on her place, treated them very well ("she is a very good *patrona* and gives us medicines, has mass said for us, and allows us the use of small garden plots"). Some of the San Juanecans were, accordingly, loath to take away the "good *patrona's*" land. On the other hand, the fact that a representative of the State Agrarian Commission had undertaken to defend this lady's property and had stayed at her house made the rest of the village very suspicious. As for the poor *Delegado Municipal* in San Juan, he was apparently caught between two fires. He wanted to help his fellow townsmen, but, at the same time, he did not want to get into any trouble with the politicians in El Centro. As he said on one occasion: "I don't want to get mixed up in these things because I don't know how to read and write." Incidentally, this explains why the *Delegado* signed so many conflicting documents.

[3] The law applied in this case was that of April 10, 1922. This law (see p. 84), exempted private properties of 150 hectares or less of irrigated land, 250 hectares or less of land dependent upon rainfall and 500 hectares of other classes of lands. However, in any case where all the properties surrounding a given village were of the size just described, the exemption limits were to be reduced by one-half for each class of land.

The objection on the grounds of political category made by the landlords was possible

In view of the protests from the landlords, the State Agrarian Commission made certain further investigations and then on January 6, 1927, turned the whole matter over to the governor of the state for decision. A few days later the governor announced his judgment that: whereas the village of San Juan was a *rancho* and not a *congregación* as had been alleged in the petition; and, whereas, the number of heads of families in the agrarian census had been falsely stated as 71 when it should have been 50; and, whereas, in order to give the village land it would be necessary to take it away from properties already classified as "medium" and "small"; therefore, the petition for lands was denied.

Under the ejido law of 1922, as under succeeding laws on the same subject, the decision of the governor was subject to revision by the National Agrarian Commission and final decision thereafter by the president of the Republic. So again the whole case was subjected to investigation and in due time a report was made by the National Agrarian Commission (hereinafter referred to as the N. A. C.) and submitted to the president. The decision of the president, rendered on May 17, 1928, revoked that of the governor and granted San Juan lands to the amount of 158 hectares. The reasons for this action and the manner in which the grant was made may be briefly outlined as follows:

The presidential decree held that the village of San Juan had a right to receive lands because: (1) Although it was true that technically the village was not listed in the law of 1922 as of a political category having a right to receive land, nevertheless, this was a mere accident; in *fact*, the village differed from many other communities which had already received land only in name and the spirit of Article 27 of the constitution as well as the practice under ejido laws which had supplanted the one of 1922 clearly included villages of the type here in question. (2) In any case, the inhabitants of San Juan were plainly in need of land, "being devoted solely to agriculture and having no other means of subsistence" except the 28 hectares already in their possession. (3) The number of heads of families having a right to land was actually 62 and not 50 as stated in the judgment of the governor. (4) Although some of the properties adjoining the village were clearly small properties and hence exempt under the law, there were a number which were of a size greater than that defined as small properties (that is, in this case more than 125 hectares) and, therefore, were subject to expropriation.

because the law of April 10, 1922, listed by name the types of political entities (*congregaciones, pueblos, comunidades*, etc.) having a right to receive land. This listing did not include *ranchos*—San Juan was given in the 1921 census as a *rancho*.

The grant made affected five properties in the following manner:

Property	*Total Area of Property in Hectares*	*Amount Granted in Hectares*
No. 1	237	26.11
No. 2	513	56.44
No. 3	212	23.82
No. 4	272	29.87
No. 5	202	22.27

The figure of 158 hectares was arrived at by calculating the needs of each of the 62 ejidatarios at 3 hectares—that is, 186 hectares counting the 28 hectares already belonging to the village.

Problems and Progress

In November 1928, more than five years after the first petition was made, the village of San Juan was finally given actual possession of its ejido lands. To what use have these lands been put? And what is the present social and economic situation of the village?

First let us consider the question of capital equipment and production. According to a report made in 1930, in addition to land valued at some 85,000 pesos, the village of San Juan possessed the following equipment: 15 plows (wooden with iron tips), 7 horses, 15 burros, 5 cows, 1 bull, 11 calves, 30 oxen, 54 pigs, 3 sheep, 214 chickens, and 6 beehives.

In the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930, 60 hectares were planted in corn with a total production of 17,000 kilograms and 23 hectares in wheat with a total production of 5,554 kilograms. In addition, there were produced 4 kilograms of wool, 25 kilograms of honey and undetermined small amounts of milk and other animal products.

The figures indicate that in the year in question, only 83 hectares or about 45 per cent of the total area of 186 hectares belonging to the village were planted. Normal production in this region for corn on unirrigated land is 720 kilograms per hectare and on irrigated land 1,200 kilograms. The average production per hectare on the ejido lands of San Juan was a little over 283 kilograms. Normal production of wheat on irrigated land for the region is 600 kilograms per hectare; the production on ejido lands averaged around 241 kilograms.

Statistics obtained from other sources indicate that 1929-1930 was more or less typical of the production in succeeding years. Corn, the principal crop, was reported in 1930-1931 at 15,647 kilograms, in 1931-1932 at 13,104 and in 1932-1933 at 17,049.

In recent years the village has also been raising melons for sale. In 1930, the crop was valued at 600 pesos, in 1931, 750 pesos and in 1932, 345 pesos.

Why is it that the village of San Juan has been planting less than half of its lands each year? Why has the production of its chief crop, corn, been so poor as compared with the normal rate per hectare in the region? Why have the crops not been more diversified? Why, for example, do not the ejidatarios raise chile or potatoes, both of which are common crops in the area and of high commercial value in the market? Why is it that in 1930 only 15 ejidatarios were reported as working their land and that when the author visited San Juan in 1933 he found less than half of the official total of 62 ejidatarios cultivating their parcels?[4]

The answers to these questions are to be found mainly in the following considerations.

In the first place, it will be recalled that the land given the village is divided into five separate parts, only one section of which adjoins the village. This might not be so bad were it not that agriculture in this region without irrigation is necessarily dependent on rains which are inadequate for anything except the most haphazard production. Moreover, the only kind of irrigation possible is by means of wells and electric pumps. The expense of digging four or five wells and installing pumps is quite beyond the resources of the village.[5]

But even if the problem of irrigation works could be solved, there is still the fact that the other farm equipment of the village is limited to a few plows and work animals. This plus the exhausted state of the

[4] So far as the agricultural year 1929-1930 is concerned the following paragraphs from a report made in June 1929 by an agent of the N.A.C. are illuminating:

"When the community received definite possession of its ejido lands [in November 1928] various parts of the property granted were under cultivation by share-croppers. . . . These farmers were given until January 31, 1929 to harvest their crops and vacate the land. Meanwhile, the ejidatarios . . . had to wait [until time for the spring planting]. . . .

"In addition to this obstacle they have been forced to suspend their work because of the constant threats made by the employees of the properties from which their ejido lands were taken and by the gangs of rebels which have been roaming in this vicinity. . . . More than one of the ring-leaders of these bands has promised 'to capture the whole bunch of them and hang them from the highest eucalyptus tree.' [The rebels here referred to were supporters of the reactionary Escobar uprising of March 1929.]

"Moreover, all of the near-by communities regard those who have received ejido lands as being contaminated and they never cease to launch anathemas against them for 'having received stolen land'."

[5] On one of the sections there are two wells already in existence. However, even to repair these wells (abandoned for some years) and install electric pumps would cost over 1,500 pesos.

soil (fertilizers are never used) and the lack of knowledge of how to rotate crops, and so forth, condemns the ejidatarios to a most inefficient type of exploitation.

Some of the difficulties which the ejidatarios of San Juan are encountering could be overcome by a few judicious loans. Obviously, what the village needs is to be financed. The local government agricultural bank in El Centro is doing its best to fill this need, but for many reasons is unable to meet the situation adequately.

The *Banco Ejidal* for this region with a total capital of 257,549 pesos (in 1933) is trying to finance the operations of some 180 villages with a membership of several thousand ejidatarios in the various coöperative credit societies. Under these conditions loans are necessarily small and limited for the most part to short term crop advances. Long term loans for the purchase of farm machinery or for irrigation works of the type so badly needed in the village of San Juan are for the present out of the question.

Even if more money were available it is doubtful whether credit operations with San Juan could be greatly extended at the present time, for the problem of the bank is not only to make loans but also to educate the ejidatarios in the proper use of agricultural credit. The operation of even the simplest kind of credit machinery is still more or less of a mystery to the ejidatarios of San Juan. Although honest and well intentioned in their own fashion, it is very difficult for them to grasp the importance of what may be called business responsibility. In San Juan, as in many another village, loans are regarded as matters of personal favor and political intrigue. Much of the time and energy, not to say money, of the regional bank is consumed in applying the rule, as the Manager of the Ejido Bank expressed it, of "*un pan en una mano y un palo en la otra* (bread in one hand and a stick in the other)."

Another important factor affecting the success of the village of San Juan is the attitude of the owners of surrounding properties, and more especially those whose lands were expropriated to provide the village with its ejido. These people feel that they have been dealt with unfairly. They claim that their lands were taken away from them by political agitation and forced on the village. They have refused to accept government bonds in payment for their expropriated lands, considering this an admission of the legality of the government's action. For the same reason, they have refused to enter into any arrangements for sharing irrigation rights or to coöperate in any other manner with the ejidatarios. They claim that the ejidatarios do not cultivate the land which has been given them and are constantly trespassing on and stealing from the surrounding

private properties. One landlord even claimed that his watchman was killed by the ejidatarios.[6]

Many of the private landowners, both those whose properties have already been expropriated and those who so far have escaped, are, as one of them expressed it, *desilusionado y decepcionado* (disillusioned and deceived). Fearful of further agrarian inroads, they have been unwilling to make new capital investments or to plant more than is absolutely necessary. Some would be glad, if a market could be found, to sell their lands and retire altogether.

The ejidatarios, on the other hand, feel bitterly their inability to compete with what they call the "capitalists." They recall that one of their leaders was killed by the son of one of the principal landowners. They resent the unwillingness of the landlords to share their irrigation waters and claim that they are not even allowed to walk across the private properties in order to reach their ejido lands. Finally, they hold that a large number of the inhabitants of the village have been led to renounce their identity as ejidatarios by attractive offers to work either as renters or share-croppers on the properties of the private landowners.

Because of the recency of its foundation (1913), the commercial and political dominance of the relatively large, near-by town, El Centro, and the meager resources of the few inhabitants, the village of San Juan is as yet little more than a collection of adobe houses. There is no church, no marketplace, not even a store. Sanitation is an almost unknown concept; food is limited to the traditional tortillas and frijoles with occasionally potatoes, melons, and meat. No one in the village receives a newspaper (indeed, only 18 adults are literate) and telephones, electric lights, although power and telephone lines pass right by the village, are undreamed-of luxuries.

However, despite the relatively primitive method of existence, there is evidence that the people are making some progress toward social and economic organization. Notable is the fact that the village has just built with its own funds a new rural school at which 83 children are in more or less regular attendance in the daytime and between 15 and 20 adults at night. This school, to be sure, is almost

[6] Apparently this was true, as may be seen from the following letter from the Chief of the Ejido Zone to the office of the Regional Organizer:

"I am enclosing herewith a letter from the ejidatarios of San Juan in which they request permission to take away the ejido parcels from Carlos and Tomás Chávez. . . . These brothers, as the enclosed letter states, committed a despicable crime . . . killing a defenseless watchman and wounding another laborer . . . on one of the neighboring private farms. . . . The brothers Chávez were friends of the persons assaulted and they attacked them in a most treacherous and unexpected manner in order to rob them of some alfalfa. . . ."

entirely lacking in equipment. There are only three desks and the only books in addition to a few dog-eared textbooks are some Spanish translations of Plato's *Dialogues*, Euripides' *Tragedies* and Goethe's *Faust*! Yet, when one contrasts the present situation with that revealed in the following report written in 1926 by a federal school inspector, one realizes what a tremendous advance this new, clean, well-built school represents.

> . . . Classes are held in a dirty corral . . . with chickens, cows and pigs running around. The children sit beneath two low sheds and have to change their places . . . to keep out of the sun. . . . There is no equipment whatever and the pupils sit on the ground. . . . The teacher stated that not only did the people and the authorities refuse to coöperate with her, but that they were positively hostile.

For anyone who knows the history of Mexico, even more important than the new school is the subtle change which it is possible to detect in the spirit of the people. There is a marked difference in the attitude of the ejidatario in San Juan and the peon, or day laborer. The former exhibits a sense of pride, a spirit of independence, which is in marked contrast to the servility and fatalistic acceptance of things-as-they-are on the part of the peon. These ejidatarios have a stake in the community; they own something about which they can make plans. In a word, however slow the process, these ejidatarios are on the road to becoming something new in rural Mexico—citizens.

If you want a symbol pregnant with the meaning of the new spirit in San Juan and of the new deal in Mexico, consider the following little incident: While gathering the materials for this case study, the writer interviewed the Manager of the Ejido Bank in El Centro. The interview was carried on with some difficulty on account of the fact that a brass band made up of ejidatarios from a near-by village was having its weekly practice in one of the adjoining rooms of the bank. What they played was the St. Louis Blues!

CHAPTER VIII

THE COURSE OF THE REFORM, 1929-1933

The Portes Gil Interlude

When on December 1, 1928 Emilio Portes Gil was designated by Congress to head an ad-interim administration until elections could be called to choose a new president to take the place of the assassinated Obregón,[1] he had the reputation of being one of the most active proponents and advocates of agrarianism in the revolutionary ranks. As governor of the state of Tamaulipas he pushed the reform, and more especially the giving of land to villages, as far as it had been in any other state in the Republic with the exception of Morelos, the home of Zapata. In his inaugural address Portes Gil stated that he did not conceive it as his duty to define the ideology of the Revolution, for that had been done by his predecessors; rather his task was to "carry on"; to continue the work of making the revolutionary platform effective in action.

Portes Gil kept his promise—at least so far as the ejido program was concerned. The year 1929 marked the high point in ejido distribution; 692 villages and 108,846 ejidatarios received more than a million hectares of land.[2]

On the legislative side, also, the year 1929 was distinguished by important advances. In the field of ejido legislation, by a decree dated January 17, 1929,[3] a number of significant changes were made in the basic law: a provision authorizing the reduction of the limits defining exempted properties was reintroduced;[4] an attempt was

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[1] Alvaro Obregón, elected on July 1, 1928, to his second term as president to succeed Calles, was killed by a religious fanatic, León Toral, less than three weeks after his election.

[2] These figures cover only the calendar year 1929. If the figures were available for the whole fourteen months (December 1, 1928 to February 5, 1930) of Portes Gil's administration, his record would undoubtedly be even more impressive.

[3] Appendix B, II, 26.

[4] It will be recalled that the regulation of April 10, 1922, after defining properties exempt from affectation by ejido dotations as those varying in size from 150 to 500 hectares (depending on the class of land involved), then provided that, in case a village was entirely surrounded by properties of the sizes in question the limits determining exempted properties could be reduced by half. This provision for the reduction of the limits of exempted properties did not appear in the basic law of April 23, 1927, which took the place of the regulation of 1922 (see above p. 93).

made to clarify the meaning of the term "communities of resident laborers";[5] owners of private properties who sought to escape the effects of the ejido dotations by dividing up or otherwise reducing the size of their properties after the publication of a petition for dotation were made liable to a fine of from 100 to 5,000 pesos; and, finally, a number of provisions were inserted in the law designed to force the state agrarian authorities to handle ejido petitions with greater rapidity.[6]

THE LAW OF NATIONAL WATERS

Aside from the reforms affecting the program of the distribution of land to villages, the most important single piece of agrarian legislation enacted during Portes Gil's term of office was the National Waters Law.[7] A number of laws of one sort or another were promulgated during the early days of the reconstruction period relating to the subject of federal waters, but most of these laws were simply attempts to patch up the old *Ley de Aguas* of December 13, 1910. It became increasingly clear that a completely new law definitely in harmony with revolutionary doctrines was necessary. This the Portes Gil government undertook to give to the nation in the National Waters Law of August 6, 1929.[8]

Following a restatement and amplification of the very broad definition of national waters given in Article 27 of the constitution,[9] the National Waters Law affirms that the dominion of the nation over the waters (and lands—that is, beds, basins, banks, and so forth) described in the law is "complete . . . inalienable . . . and inherent . . . to the exclusion of every other political or private entity whatever." The nation, however, may grant concessions for the use of its waters to private or public persons. In the regulations governing such concessions every precaution is taken to insure against

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[5] These were the now familiar *acasillado* communities which were excluded from the right to petition for ejido lands. Article 14, fr. 6 of the ejido law as reformed by the decree under discussion reads:

. . . "For the purpose of this law resident peons will be considered as those individuals who, receiving day wages, or day wages and an allowance [of corn, etc.], render permanent service on a rural property and occupy a house belonging to the owner of the property without paying rent."

[6] The decree of January 17, 1929, together with sundry other reforms, on March 21, 1929, was incorporated in a new law of ejido dotation and restitution (Appendix B, II, 27) which took the place of the basic law of April 23, 1927.

[7] Appendix B, V, 12.

[8] Appendix B, V, 12. The National Waters Law was subsequently regulated on January 31, 1930, and reformed on several occasions. *Ibid.*, V, 13, 15, 16, and 17.

[9] See above p. 67.

any monopoly or unfair use of national waters whether in irrigation, for the generation of power, or for any other purpose. Not only are limitations of various sorts placed on the concessions in the first place, but whenever there is evidence of a "concentration or 'cornering' of the water supply," or of a "tendency to prevent free competition to the economic detriment of any region of the country," the federal executive may resort to the expropriation of privately held water rights or works. Finally, the law provides that all concessions in existence before August 6, 1929, are subject to review and confirmation.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the importance of the National Waters Law in a country where, for the most part, land without access to water for irrigation is practically useless for agricultural purposes. The National Waters Law is a recognition of the fact that irrigation works for the regulation of water supply and the proper and just distribution of water rights are in Mexico matters of the same importance as the equitable distribution of the land itself.[10]

Pascual Ortiz Rubio and the Reform in the Ditch

In general . . . Ortiz Rubio, a methodical administrator rather than an initiator of policies, represents the close of the revolutionary epoch. . . . His personal temperament, his training, plus the psychology of the hour, would indicate that he will move further to the right than his immediate predecessors; that he will strengthen administrative control, decreasing the emphasis upon peasant and labor reform and land distribution to the peasants. . . . He will probably swing closer to the United States . . . and will abandon the attempt begun by Calles to create a native bourgeoisie. . . . In other words, the Mexican regime has reached the middle of the road.[11]

These words written by the well-known writer, Carleton Beals, shortly after Ortiz Rubio took office as president on February 5, 1930, proved to be both an accurate characterization of the man and a good prophecy of the course of events during his two years and ten months in office. Certainly, so far as the agrarian reform was concerned, Ortiz Rubio moved as far right as he dared; the result was that the reform not only took the middle of the road but for a time ran off the road altogether.

[10] As has been noted (p. 90), all of the ejido legislation after the decree of April 8, 1926 (Appendix B, II, 21), provided for the dotation and restitution of water to villages on similar terms to that for land. With the National Waters Law the right of the nation to give water to villages became only one of the many rights which the nation could exercise over its waters in the public interest.

[11] Beals, "Mexico's New Leader," *The New Republic*, December 11, 1929, p. 64. Reprinted by permission.

The truth of the matter is that Ortiz Rubio, notwithstanding the fact that he had fought in the revolution and had been governor of the important agricultural state of Michoacán, possessed only a vague conception of the meaning of the agrarian reform and little or no understanding of the rule of the ejido in the reform. For him the ejido was a sort of a side-show, an act of justice, to be sure, but as a form of land tenure something to be left behind as soon as possible—that is, as soon as the ejidatarios could be educated to an appreciation of the virtues of private property. Nor must one forget that private property had its virtues. Even the hacienda had its good points and should be protected. In fact, everybody should be protected—the ejidatario, the peon, the small property owner, and the big *hacendado*.[12]

Despite his lack of any firm or very clear convictions on the subject of the agrarian reform and despite his inherent conservatism, it is doubtful if Ortiz Rubio would have had the courage to throw sand in the gears of the ejido program had he not received what he took to be an "all clear ahead" signal from the power behind the throne.

The latter part of December, 1929, ex-President Plutarco Elías Calles, officially recognized as the Supreme Chief of the Revolution (*Jefe Supremo de la Revolución*), and unofficially acknowledged as the

[12] That this is not a caricature of Ortiz Rubio's agrarian outlook may be seen in the following quotation, typical of several similar statements made during his campaign for the presidency:

"I will continue to work for the social and economic liberation of the agricultural worker by means of the restitution or dotation of lands, by the organization and adequate exploitation of small [private] property, and by the regulation of agricultural wage work.

"I wish, nevertheless, to make clear that the ejido as established by the revolution should be considered as a transitory form of the agrarian problem [organization?] in as much as the parcelization of the ejido is just as imperatively demanded as is the division of the landed estates. . . .

"On the other hand, while it is true that I have always proclaimed myself . . . to be a decided partisan of the equitable distribution of the national riches and that my efforts to encourage small rural properties . . . will never weaken, I declare also, and with no less conviction, that the state should recognize the inviolability of private property and, as a natural consequence, the state is obliged to indemnify [the owner thereof] in each and every case in which . . . property . . . is injured.

"While I am disposed to continue the work of the emancipation of our peasant classes, I recognize also that large-scale agriculture should not be judged as essentially contrary to the interests of the nation; whenever it is directed intelligently and carried on by modern methods it contributes powerfully to the resolution of [the problem of] our primary economic necessities and . . . to the general improvement of the nation. Therefore, I am pleased to proclaim that I cherish the belief that large-scale agriculture is a powerful factor of equilibrium in our economy and for that reason it will merit my decided help. . . ." Speech in Toluca, as reported in *El Universal*, June 3, 1929.

"boss" of Mexico, had just returned from a trip to Europe. Apparently the General's grand tour, and more especially his visit to France, had given him to think: Maybe the agrarian reform as it was being worked out in Mexico wasn't such a good idea after all. Take the ejidos, for example. Wasn't Mexico by destroying the large estates and splitting up the land in a lot of little ejido parcels headed for the same difficulties in which France found herself with her overdivision of the land and her little peasant proprietors unable to take advantage of modern machine methods of agricultural exploitation? Maybe Mexico ought to take a more practical view of her agrarian problem. Perhaps the government ought to go a little more slowly with its ejido program. Such questions as agricultural credit, and, for that matter, the general credit of the country ought to be considered. It might even be a good thing if the government as soon as possible would undertake to pay in cash for any lands expropriated for dotations to villages. . . .

At any rate, these were reported in the newspapers of Mexico[13] on December 26, 1929, as the thoughts of the returned traveler, expressed in an interview in New York City. As might have been expected, although some of the General's purported new views on the agrarian problem were promptly denied and others were considerably softened as soon as he returned to Mexico,[14] those in opposition to the agrarian reform persisted in regarding the New York interview as a victory for the conservative cause.

If the reactionaries found reason to rejoice in the event just described, their enthusiasm knew no bounds when a few months later Calles delivered himself of another "opinion" on the subject of the agrarian reform:

> If we want to be sincere with ourselves we will have to confess as sons of the revolution that agrarianism, as we have understood it and practiced it up to the present time, is a failure. The happiness of the peasants cannot be assured by giving them a patch of land if they lack the preparation and the necessary elements to cultivate it. . . . On the contrary, this road will carry us to disaster, because we are creating pretensions and fomenting laziness.
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> It is interesting to observe the great number of ejidos in which the land is not cultivated; and, still, it is proposed to enlarge these ejidos. Why? If the ejido is a failure, it is useless to enlarge it. If, on the other hand, the ejido is a success, then it ought to have money to buy additional land needed and thus relieve the nation of further costs and promises to pay.

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[13] See the article by Esquivel Obregón, "Una nueva fase del problema agrario," *El Excelsior*, January 13, 1930.

[14] See the letter from Calles published in *El Universal*, January 29, 1930.

. . . Up to the present we have been handing out land right and left, and the only result has been to load the nation down with a terrific financial burden. . . .

What we must do is to put an "up to here and no further" to our failures. . . . What was done during the [revolutionary] struggle in the name of the supreme necessity of life, should be left as it is. The pariah who grabbed off a piece of land should keep it. But at the same time we must do something about the present situation [of the reform]. . . . Each one of the state governments should fix a relatively short period within which the communities still having a right to petition for lands can do so; and, once this period has passed, *not another word on the subject.* We must then give guarantees to everybody, little and big agriculturalists [alike], so that initiative and private and public credit will be revived.[15]

This pronouncement by no less a person than the *Jefe Supremo de la Revolución* himself, was the signal for renewed attacks from all sides. Articles, editorials, and news stories designed to point a moral appeared daily in the principal newspapers of the capital; Chambers of Commerce, agricultural associations and other interested bodies memorialized the president and the Minister of Agriculture, all repeating the general theme-song that the ejido was a failure and that only drastic curtailment of the ejido program could save the country from ruin.[16]

It may have been that the revolutionary leaders were weary of good works, or perhaps the world-wide economic depression just beginning to make itself acutely felt in Mexico had something to do with the matter. Whatever the causes, it is clear that the year 1930 saw a change of attitude toward the agrarian problem; and from attitude to action was a short step soon taken.

THE DECREE OF DECEMBER 26, 1930

The return to normalcy was heralded by a new reform[17] of the law of the dotation and restitution of ejidos. And lest there should be any doubt about the intention of this reform, the president sent a

[15] Conversation of General Calles "with a group of friends" as reported in *El Universal*, June 23, 1930. It was later claimed that Calles had not spoken for publication, that his opinions were expressed privately "in the heat of friendship and comradeship" and that, in any case, the person who overheard his remarks and gave them to the press had "distorted" and "misrepresented" what had actually been said. (See *El Universal*, June 26, 1930.) However, Calles himself, although his conversation as quoted above was given wide publicity, did not issue a denial.

[16] For example, see the memorandum of "Cámara Nacional de Comercio," in *El Economista*, September 16, 1930, p. 16.

[17] Appendix B, II, 29.

message to Congress explaining its whys and wherefores. This message read in part:

> The development and improvement of the nation demand of the Government of the Republic the *stabilization* of economic values and the implantation of methods of Government which will produce renewed *confidence* in investments in general and especially in those of an agricultural character. . . . It is necessary to establish bases which will *normalize* agriculture in accordance with the exigencies of our economic situation and [to enact] concrete laws for the *protection* of the development of agriculture in the Republic.[18]

The reforms proposed by the president were three:

1. A redefinition of the *acasillado* communities.

As the Minister of Agriculture pointed out to Congress, "the Revolution did not set out to divide up private properties among the peons working on them";[19] hence it was necessary, in order to prevent misunderstanding and fraud on the part of the agrarian authorities as well as by the *hacendados*, to establish a clear and unmistakable definition of the *acasillado* peon. It was proposed, therefore, that henceforward *acasillado* peons or resident laborers should be known as "those individuals who live gratuitously in houses constructed within the limits of an hacienda and who *with a previous contract which determines their status*, depend habitually for their means of subsistence on wages or salaries which they receive for work related to the cultivation of the land."[20] The novel feature in this definition of the *acasillado* peon, as compared with the definition given in the previous law,[21] was the labor contract. Communities of resident laborers were still to be excluded from the right to petition for ejidos; the proposed reform (it was claimed) would simply make it less difficult to identify such communities.

2. A redefinition and extension of the notion of properties exempted from expropriation for the purpose of giving land to villages.

Under the law in force, said the president, no adequate provision existed for the protection of certain types of agricultural exploitations in which both industrial and agricultural features were intimately connected. The failure to protect these exploitations from possible expropriation for ejidos inevitably must mean uneconomic methods

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[18] Exposition of motives in *Ley de crédito agrícola . . . y decreto que reforma los capítulos II, VI y XV de la ley sobre dotaciones y restituciones de tierras y aguas*, pp. 83-84. Italics inserted.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[20] Article 14, fr. VI, *ibid.*, p. 115. Italics inserted.

[21] See above p. 110.

and hence higher cost of living for the majority of the population. Wherefore, the properties involved in such agricultural-industrial undertakings as those designed to produce sisal fiber, milk, sugar, and so forth, should in the future be excluded from expropriation under the law of ejido dotations.

3. Restriction of rights *in re* the amplification of ejidos.

Here the argument ran: the agrarian reform has saddled the nation with a large and growing internal debt; if the country is ever to balance its budget an effort must be made as soon as possible to bring this debt under control lest the government be embarrassed in its other reconstructive activities and the interests of the public be prejudiced. As a first step in this direction petitions for the amplification of ejidos should be subjected to the following rules in addition to those already established:[22] (a) no petition for the enlargement of an ejido should be valid unless it could be demonstrated that efficient use had been made of the land previously granted to the village; and (b) expropriations for the purpose of making additional grants of land to villages with ejidos should be made only "after payment . . . and for this purpose provision shall [should] be made each year in the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Development for the corresponding amounts."[23]

A few of the *agraristas* when the foregoing changes in the ejido law were introduced in Congress had the courage to enter strenuous protests. They pointed out that in view of the state of the public finances the reforms practically meant that the amplification of ejidos, urgently necessitated by the growth of population and the fact that in many cases the original grant of land had been completely inadequate, would be greatly restricted. They also held that the exemption of the so-called "industrial-agricultural units" from ejido grants would mean that many villages would not be able to obtain lands.[24] But these protests were unavailing. The budget (said the spokesmen for the administration) must be stabilized; confidence must be restored; honest *hacendados* must be protected. Land and liberty were all right in their way, but the time had come when

[22] See above p. 94.

[23] Appendix B, II, 28, Art. 130, fr. IV, and Art. 131.

[24] See the memorial presented by the Congressmen from the state of Veracruz as reported in *El Excelsior*, December 5, 1930.

In order to explain the significance of the protests against the exemption of sugar and henequen (sisal) plantations, for example, it may be noted that if the proposed reform had been in effect from the beginning very little land would have been distributed in the states of Morelos and Yucatán, for these states were given over almost entirely (Morelos to sugar and Yucatán to henequen) to just such agricultural-industrial exploitations as the new law would undertake to protect.

revolutionary fervor should be seasoned with common sense. The agrarian reform must be brought into line with the principles of "good business."

And so the decree of December 26, 1930, became the law of the land and normalcy was just around the corner.

THE "STOP" LAWS OF 1930 AND 1931

Serious as was the set-back given to the ejido program by the decree of December 6, 1930, it was not nearly so important a portent of the future as a series of other laws promulgated during the Ortiz Rubio administration. Whether Calles in his conversation of June 1930, actually said that it was time for the country to put "an up to here and no further" to the failures of the agrarian reform and that "each one of the state governments should fix a relatively short period within which the communities still having a right to petition for land could do so, and once this period has passed, *not another word on the subject*," may or may not be true. But apparently Ortiz Rubio, the good administrator, believed that the oracle had spoken in some such fashion as that just indicated. Otherwise, the political setup being what it was at the time, it is difficult to understand how on May 7, 1930, the president could have signed an official resolution addressed to the president of the National Agrarian Commission as follows:

In view of the report which has been presented to me concerning the small number of petitions pending before the Agrarian Commission . . . of the State of Aguascalientes you will please fix a period of sixty days beginning the 20th day of the present month during which all communities which consider that they have rights to the restitution or dotation of ejido lands may present their petitions.

Upon the termination of this period, if no petitions are presented, or, when the handling of petitions made by reason of this resolution has been completed, the State Agrarian Commission will be dissolved, thus bringing to an end the problem of the restitution and dotation of lands.[25]

[25] Appendix B, II, 28.

As a matter of fact the "stop" law for Aguascalientes was not the first legal regulation of its kind. Similar resolutions were passed by the National Agrarian Commission and approved by President Portes Gil for the state of Morelos (July 22, 1929) and for the Federal District (August 29, 1929). However, Morelos and the Federal District were rather special cases in that few, if any, villages having a right to land in these entities had not been given land at the time the resolutions were approved. In these political divisions the ejido distribution program had really been completed under the laws as they then stood; this was not the case in Aguascalientes or the other states for which the Ortiz Rubio "stop" laws were enacted. (The resolutions referring to Morelos and the Federal District are not included in Appendix B on account of the fact that they were never published in the *Diario Oficial*.)

The movement to have done with ejidos did not end with Aguascalientes. In the course of the next year and a half similar presidential resolutions were signed for the states of Tlaxcala, San Luis Potosí, Coahuila, Zacatecas, and Querétaro. These, added to the states acting on their own responsibility, brought the number of states with "stop" laws up to possibly a dozen or more by the end of 1931.[26]

The effect of Ortiz Rubio's agrarian policy on the statistics of ejido distribution was immediate and marked. From the high peak of 1929 (see Fig. 28, on p. 194) when 692 villages received land totalling more than a million hectares the number dropped in 1930 to 462 villages and 744,091 hectares; in 1931 still further down to 373 villages and 610,304 hectares; and in 1932[27] to 208 villages and 384,401 hectares.

THE DECREE OF DECEMBER 23, 1931

From the foregoing it would appear that the Ortiz Rubio administration was entirely reactionary and wholly devoted to bringing about the swift interment of the ejido program, if not the untimely decease of the entire agrarian reform. It would be both unfair and inaccurate, however, to leave the reader with the impression that this was the whole story. That, despite its undoubtedly reactionary trend, the nullification of the agrarian reform was not the conscious purpose (and certainly not the accomplishment) of his administration is evidenced by the fact that under Ortiz Rubio agrarianism achieved one[28] of its greatest victories. In order to explain the nature of this victory it will be necessary to go back and review a little of the history of agrarian jurisprudence.

Beginning with the enactment of the decree of January 6, 1915, the courts were called upon to render decisions and hand down judgments with respect to almost every article in the numerous agrarian laws which have been the subject of such prolonged con-

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[26] Eleven states were reported in the press by the end of July, 1931. See *El Excelsior*, July 23, 1931.

On June 19, 1931, a proposal was made in Congress by Alfonso Francisco Ramírez that the "stop" laws should be made general—i.e., that a term of ninety days should be fixed after which no more ejido petitions would be received in any of the states. This proposal was defeated by a unanimous vote. See the reports in *El Universal* for June 19, and June 20, 1931.

[27] Ortiz Rubio's administration ended "by request" on September 4, 1932.

[28] There were also other positive contributions to the agrarian reform made during the Ortiz Rubio regime—notably the reform of the regulation governing the National Bank of Agricultural Credit. For a discussion of this reform see Chapter XXII.

sideration in these pages. Most of these decisions were concerned with defining and interpreting the language of the laws. But one point on which the courts were forced to act touched the very heart and soul of the whole land distributing program. The question at issue was: did it lie within the power of the judicial branch of the government to review the decisions of the state and national agrarian authorities in ejido cases and to grant temporary or permanent "injunctions" (*amparos*) restraining or prohibiting the government from expropriating private property in the manner and for the purposes stated in the laws governing the restitution and dotation of ejidos?

The courts answered this question in the affirmative with the result that for a decade and more, *amparos* were the chief instruments used by the landlords to combat the ejido program. According to one authority[29] up to December 1928 petitions had been made and accepted by the courts for some 5,500 *amparos* against acts of government authorities granting or restoring land to villages; decisions had been handed down in some 2,000 cases of which approximately 1,800 were favorable to the landlords.

These figures indicate that up to the end of 1928 the landlords possessed in the *amparo* a most effective weapon for protecting themselves against the ejido. Indeed, the charge was freely made that the courts were sabotaging the land reform; that the president of the Republic would hand down a decision granting land to a village and a week later the courts would turn around and restore the land to the *hacendados* from whom it had been taken.[30]

During the first part of 1929, soon after Portes Gil became president, for reasons unknown (but not difficult to guess), the Supreme Court of the Nation suffered a sudden change of heart with reference to matters agrarian and in five decisions[31] handed down in rapid fire order during the last days of January and the first days of February, the *hacendados* were dealt a severe blow. For these five decisions in Mexican practice established what in the United States would be termed a precedent and in effect served notice that *amparos* would no longer be granted by the Supreme Court in ejido cases. This meant, according to some authorities, that so long as the government did not violate the principles and procedures set forth in the ejido

[29] Senator Lauro G. Caloca, as quoted in *El Universal*, December 3, 1931.

[30] See the debates in the Cámara de Diputados as reported in *El Excelsior*, December 4, 1931.

[31] For a list of the cases see article in *El Universal*, February 6, 1929.

laws themselves, no legal recourse (other than that provided in the laws in question) would be available to landowners whose property was taken for ejido grants.

According to other interpretations[32] the action of the Supreme Court only ruled out *amparo* petitions made directly to that body and did not affect the possibility of lower courts granting *amparos* to "injured" landlords who could then carry their cases to the Supreme Court for review and final decision. Apparently, this latter interpretation was correct, for by 1931 the Supreme Court was again jammed with ejido *amparo* cases, and once more (so the agrarian leaders claimed) the Court had become "the refuge of reaction," undoing the work of the National Agrarian Commission almost as fast as it was completed.

In the face of this situation, the *agraristas*, led by Senator Lauro G. Caloca, decided that only one path remained open: the courts must be shorn of their power. To this end, before the conservatives could gather their forces, the agrarian leaders shoved through Congress the decree of December 23, 1931. This decree, which had no less a purpose than that of reforming the basic law of January 6, 1915, declared:

> Landowners affected by orders granting or restoring lands or waters in ejidos, which have been, or which in the future may be, dictated in favor of villages, shall have no right of legal recourse to *amparos*.[33]

Proprietors whose land had been taken away from them for ejidos might solicit indemnification (agrarian bonds) from the government, or, any individual who felt his land or other effects had been unjustly subjected to action under the ejido laws could appeal to the National Agrarian Commission or to the president of the Republic, but not to the courts. *Amparos* already granted and executed before the promulgation of the decree of December 23, 1931, would be respected; all others would be declared null and void.

THE FEDERAL LABOR LAW OF AUGUST 18, 1931

One other important step taken by the Ortiz Rubio administration was the enactment of the Federal Labor Law of August 18, 1931.[34] This law was a somewhat belated enabling act governing the famous Article 123[35] of the 1917 constitution. As such it contains

[32] See, for example, that of Arturo Cisneros Canto in *El Excelsior*, February 8, 1929.

[33] Appendix B, II, 30, Art. 10.

[34] Appendix B, IX, 5.

[35] Article 123 was for labor what Article 27 was for the peon. One of the most complete charters to labor ever written into the fundamental law of a country, it provided for an

the detailed regulations concerning the conditions of employment of all types of labor including agricultural labor. The most important provisions relating to farm workers are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Agricultural labor, like all other labor, has a right to receive a minimum wage (to be established by special committees in each municipality) "sufficient to satisfy the normal needs of life of the workman, his education and honest pleasures, considering him as the head of the family and taking into account that he should have sufficient resources for his maintenance during the weekly rest day on which he does not receive salary."[36] In the case of farm workers the law further states that the minimum salary shall be determined with due regard to the facilities which the employer furnishes the workman such as land for cultivation, wood, housing, and so forth. The minimum wage is not subject to discount of any sort.

All wages must be paid in legal tender and debts contracted in favor of an employer may only be charged against the workman himself and under no circumstances against the members of his family. Moreover, workmen may not be required to "purchase their articles of consumption in a determined store or place"; and employers must allow a weekly marketplace on their properties where licensed traders may enter freely without the payment of fees.[37]

For all workers there is established the eight-hour day with one compulsory day of rest in every seven. Overtime work is limited to not more than three hours and may not be required on more than three occasions in any one week. Laborers may not be required to work on legal holidays (except under certain special conditions)

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eight-hour day and a six-day week; employers' liability for industrial accidents; compulsory arbitration of labor disputes; minimum wages and the right of laborers to participate in profits; legal strikes, etc., etc. Although primarily designed to "free the city proletariat," the article also contains a number of provisions bearing directly on the situation of the rural farm laborer. The nature of these provisions is made clear in the summary of the enabling legislation given herewith. For a discussion of Article 123 and the enabling act of August 18, 1931, see: Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 203-20; and *Peace By Revolution*, pp. 236-42 and 251-56.

[36] Quotations made here from the law under review are from the translation published by the American Chamber of Commerce of Mexico under the title: *English Translation of the Federal Labor Law of the United States of Mexico.*

[37] These provisions are aimed directly at the *tiendas de raya* and the related vicious system of debt slavery practiced almost universally in prerevolutionary times. See above p. 39.

Transitory Article 13 of the Constitution of 1917 freed the agricultural laborer from past debts by stating: "All debts contracted by laborers on account of work up to the date of this constitution with masters, their subordinates or agents are hereby declared wholly and entirely discharged."

and must be paid their full salary for these days. Agricultural laborers must be allowed to celebrate their religious festivals in the accustomed places.

Agricultural laborers share with all other laborers the right to organize, to bargain collectively, and to strike. Moreover: no landowner may impede the free access to his property of "political propagandists, or representatives of labor unions or associations provided they neither assume hostile attitudes, nor present themselves in a state of gross intoxication, nor interrupt routine operations on the property."

Employers of agricultural workers are liable, as are other employers, for accidents or sickness arising from "professional risks" and must indemnify their workers in the manner and to the extent stipulated in the law.

Agricultural workers are divided into classes: permanent and temporary. Permanent (*acasillado*) workers are defined as: "those who live gratuitously in houses built within the boundaries of a property and, through prior contract determining their condition, customarily depend for their sustenance on the wages or salary they receive for work in connection with the cultivation of the land. A permanent worker is understood to be one who, under the conditions mentioned, remains on a property continuously for three months or more."[38] A temporary worker is one who does not fulfill the requirements of a permanent worker.

For all agricultural laborers the obligations of employers are: (a) "to furnish free housing which satisfies the indispensable sanitary conditions for the protection of the life and health of the worker" and land sufficient for the raising of fowls and hogs for domestic uses; (b) to provide medicine and medical attention; (c) to permit free of charge the cutting of firewood and the taking of water for domestic purposes; (d) to allow workers to hunt and fish for their household consumption; (e) to grant grazing rights up to "three head of large stock and ten head of small stock if the condition and extent of the property permit"; and (f) to establish and maintain elementary schools when the number of children of school age is more than twenty and when the community of workers is located more than three kilometers from the nearest town.

The obligations of employers to permanent workers in addition to those mentioned above are: (a) "to furnish each permanent worker gratuitously, when the [employer's] property comprises fifty hectares

[38] Except for the time provision this is essentially the same definition given to *acasillado* laborers as that in the ejido law of December 26, 1930. See above p. 115.

or more under cultivation, a tract to be cultivated for his own account, the area of which shall be determined, lacking express agreement, taking into account the area of the property, class of soil and number of workers in accordance with the customs prevailing in the place. On this tract the permanent worker shall have the right to employ the animals, equipment and agricultural implements of the employer, without prejudice to the cultivation of the [employer's] property." And (b) "to permit permanent workers to take lumber from the woods on the place to repair and enlarge their dwellings."

It is difficult to say whether the Federal Labor Law of August 18, 1931, represents in relation to the agrarian reform an advance or a step backward. Obviously the law in so far as it concerns agricultural labor, is an attempt to better the conditions of rural workers. But at the same time it clearly implies the acceptance of the fact that for some time to come, and perhaps permanently, a very considerable proportion of the population will continue to have the status of peons, landless laborers dependent upon the hacienda. From this point of view the law is essentially an admission of failure; it is in effect an acknowledgment of the abandonment of the putative original aim of the land reform—to give land to everyone who needs it. Had the framers of the law been imbued with the idealism of Zapata, the possibility of a section of the rural population large enough to merit the rather elaborate system of protection envisaged in the law, would not have occurred to them. For it is obvious that if the land reform should be carried out to its logical end, if every rural family should be given at least enough land for subsistence, then the peon as a class would no longer exist. It is possible that the sections of the labor law referring to agricultural workers is simply a recognition of the inevitable imperfection of all schemes such as the land reform designed to produce approximate social and economic equality; it is possible to regard the law as an effort to extend temporary protection to workers pending the complete realization of the land reform. But it is also possible to view the law as a substitute for the land reform, a small sop of liberty to those who would never be given both land and liberty.

Abelardo Rodriguez and the Road Regained

Ortiz Rubio was inaugurated as president of Mexico on February 5, 1930, to serve until December 1, 1934, or to the end of the regular six-year presidential term to which originally the unfortunate Alvaro Obregón had been elected. For reasons not part of our present concern Ortiz Rubio decided after a little more than two and

a half years in office, to resign. This he did on September 3, 1932. The following day Congress designated General Abelardo L. Rodríguez to serve as ad-interim president for the remainder of Ortiz Rubio's term.

The new president had not previously distinguished himself as a champion of the agrarian reform,[39] and during the early part of his administration gave no evidence of any particular interest in prosecuting the reform with any more vigor than his predecessor. Shortly after he took office he made an effort to speed up the parcelization of ejidos as required under the Law of Ejido Patrimony;[40] and on December 27, 1932, a relatively unimportant reform[41] was made in the law of the dotation and restitution of ejidos. There was also promulgated at this time a rather elaborate law providing for the establishing of new centers of agricultural population.[42]

It was not until some ten months after he had taken office that the first really important advance in the agrarian reform, and the first clear indication of the agrarian "philosophy" of the new president

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[39] Abelardo Rodríguez's principal qualifications for the presidency were: (a) he was a General who had earned his title by active service in the field in the revolutionary cause; (b) he was young (43) and in good health (the latter very important for anyone aspiring to "hold down" the presidency of Mexico); (c) he had the reputation of being a practical business man (to the tune of a fortune estimated at several million dollars); (d) as Governor and Military Commander of Lower California (1923-30), Sub-Minister of War (1931-32), and Minister of Industry, Commerce and Labor (1932), he had had a respectable amount of experience in government administration; and (e) he was a friend and business associate of long standing of Plutarco Elías Calles.

[40] See the *Acuerdo a las Secretarías de Guerra y Marina y de Agricultura y Fomento* of September 29, 1932, *El Excelsior*, October 1, 1932; and Appendix B, III, 7.

[41] Appendix B, II, 31.

[42] This law (Appendix B, VII, 5) belongs to the general division of the reform relating to the redistribution of land through colonization. It empowered the government to establish new centers of agricultural population upon its own initiative or upon the petition of fifty or more rural laborers possessing no land, or insufficient land. New centers could be established either on government land or on private property. In the latter case the federal government had to indemnify the owner to the extent of the assessed taxable value of the land plus 10 per cent; this outlay by the government was to be recovered from the colonists in a series of annual payments. Where no private lands were involved the government was given the option of passing title to the colonists after a trial period of three years. Each colonist was to be given no more land than he could cultivate personally with the aid of his family (3 to 25 hectares) and colonists were strictly prohibited from cultivating their land by hired labor or by renting it.

The Law of New Centers of Agricultural Population is supposed to have been designed to take care of those cases where villages cannot obtain ejido lands on account of the fact that all properties surrounding the village are of the class exempted by the law of ejido dotations or where the land is not suitable for agriculture. Just why a new law was necessary, given the comprehensive Federal Colonization Law (see above p. 94) already on the statute books, is not very clear.

was made evident. On July 14, 1933, a decree was signed which set the ejido program free from the shackles with which it had been bound during the administration of Ortiz Rubio. Specifically the decree in question, after stating in the preamble that neither the president, nor the governors of the states, nor the agrarian authorities had the power to restrict in any shape or form the rights granted to villages by the constitution to petition for and receive ejidos, declared all legal regulations of whatever sort establishing time limits after which villages could not petition for land to be null and void. State Agrarian Commissions which had been dissolved under the aforementioned regulations were ordered reconstituted at once.[48] Thus were the Ortiz Rubio "stop" laws quietly thrown into the discard and thus was the agrarian reform brought back to the main highway and once more headed, at least, toward the ejido.

The Crisis in the Agrarian Reform

At this point we come to a rather definite break in our story.

We have passed in review much of the agrarian history of Mexico in the effort to trace out the origins of the modern ejido. We have seen how the prototype of the landholding village is to be found in pre-Conquest systems of land tenure—notably those associated with the *calpulli*. We have observed how some of the customs and practices of land tenure which the Spaniards brought to the new world served to strengthen and develop the institution of the landholding village and how through a process of cultural accommodation there evolved in time new types of villages in which both native and imported traits were mingled, but villages, nevertheless, still characterized by the fundamental fact that they held their agricultural and other lands—now generally called ejidos—in common.

We have also seen how even before the Conquest, and still more clearly thereafter, there developed in Mexico the institution of individual, private ownership of land; and how, again through a combination of indigenous and transplanted customs and practices, this institution evolved along essentially "feudal" lines with the *latifundia* or hacienda as the dominating end product.

We have followed the history of the long and often bloody conflict between the landholding village and the ejido on the one hand and private property and the hacienda on the other hand. We have witnessed the ups and downs of this struggle and noted how gradually the hacienda grew in strength and in power until by the end of the Díaz regime the landholding village had all but vanished.

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[48] Appendix B, II, 32.

We have considered in some detail the story of the revolution of 1910 and the agrarian reform which was its real and principal reason for being and which eventually became its highest aim and greatest achievement. As we have picked our way through the maze of laws by which the revolutionary leaders have attempted to translate the vague promises of "land and liberty" into the realities of accomplished fact, we have noted how in practice it was land to villages, in a word, the ejido, which gradually emerged as the focus and most important concrete objective of the reform. At the same time attention has been called to the fact that, despite the dominant place it came to occupy in the agrarian reform, there was no unanimity of opinion, no clear-cut conceptions, with reference to the ejido either as a method for distributing land or as an institution.

During the early years of the agrarian reform apparently no one was much concerned with the question of just what sort of an institution was being created in the ejido or what the relation of the new ejido was to be to the other traditional types of land tenure existing in the country. No one seemed to be disposed even to raise very seriously the question of whether the giving of land to villages was the best method of redistributing the nation's agricultural resources. As time went on, however, and as the proportions of the ejido program both financially (agrarian bonds) and in terms of the amount of land subject to distribution became clearer, serious doubts began to assail some of the revolutionary leaders.

The nature and content of these doubts, already canvassed in this chapter in the quotations from the several declarations made by one of the principal revolutionary leaders, ex-President Calles, need not for the moment be described in any further detail. What must be noted here, however, is that by the middle of 1933 the *doubts* expressed in the Calles interviews of 1929 and 1930 had become the *doctrines* of a large group of the relatively older and more conservative members in the revolutionary family—a group, which, for lack of a better name, we may designate as the *veteranos* (veterans). Moreover, at about the same time it began to be apparent that another group of the relatively younger and more radical members of the revolutionary party—which we may call the *agraristas*—had also developed a set of principles and concepts with reference to the agrarian reform. Both groups—the *veteranos* and the *agraristas*—were in agreement on the point that the agrarian reform had failed to come up to expectations; they both agreed that something had to be done and that at once. But, and herein lay the crux of the matter, the two groups held almost diametrically opposite views on the subject of *what* ought to be done. The question at issue between the

veteranos and *agraristas* was, and is, nothing less than the future of the ejido program: What shall be the role of the ejido in the land reform? And what part shall the ejido play in the scheme of social, political, and economic organization of the nation?

Over these two questions during the year 1933 there took place something in the nature of a battle royal—a battle nonetheless bitterly fought because in part it took place behind the scenes and nonetheless significant because the issues were not always clearly drawn or the enemy out in the open. As the result of this struggle within the revolutionary group there was enacted in the closing months of 1933 and the first part of 1934 a series of laws relating to the ejido program the most important of which was the Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934 (*Código Agrario de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*)[44]—a complete revision of all previous laws relating to the distribution of land to villages and the regulations governing the organization and functioning of ejidos.

Before undertaking an analysis of these new laws or of the discontent and division of opinion within the revolutionary party out of which they grew, it will be necessary to consider in some detail the facts about the difficulties the ejido program has encountered in practice and the successes and failures experienced in the effort to overcome these difficulties.

In a word, we must now turn from a survey of the history of the origins of the ejido to an analysis of: The Ejido in Being—Problems and Progress.

[44] Appendix B, II, 35.

PART TWO

THE EJIDO IN BEING—PROBLEMS AND PROGRESS

The Ejido of Rancho Nuevo

Gentlemen, your attention:
I'm going to sing a song
About the trials of Rancho Nuevo,
For which we fought so long.

Pancho González Martínez,
With his beast-like neck,
Submerged us all in poverty
And kept the poor in check.

In accord with legal principles
The tyranny of the clan,
Of the ferocious González
Was broken to a man.

Centro Ejidal de Rancho Nuevo

Voy a cantar un corrido,
Señores, pongan cuidado;
Afanes de Rancho Nuevo,
Y lo que hemos batallado.

Pancho González Martínez,
Con su cogote de fiera,
Tenía humillados los pobres,
Sumidos a la miseria.

Con fundamentos legales
Y con crecida alegría
Rompimos la tiranía
De los feroces González.

The law of the sixth of January
Overthrew him once for all;
We seized the land from him—
Ah, mighty was his fall.

Don Pancho Junior said,
As though about to cry,
"The famous *agraristas*
Have come to make me fly."

Don Pancho Senior said,
"They have taken away my lands;
Those agraristas without pants,
They grabbed it with their hands."

With dreadful accusations
They hoped to frighten us away;
Next they fired us from our work,
But we were bound to stay.

Martínez Rojo, an *agrarista*,
Came to remove our yoke.
He sacrificed himself, 'tis true;
González trembled when he spoke.

Proceed with care, my comrades,
You will find yourselves fooled yet;
For that shave-head Pancho Garza
Wishes to catch us in his net.

That damned shave-head knows full well
How to tickle the master's beard;
He throws the lasso over us,
Then hides his hand without a word.

Blessed be the Revolution;
We are independent now.
Long live Portes Gil and Calles;
Death to landlords we avow.

Here I'm going to end my song;
Nothing but the truth I've spoken
About the Hacienda de la Boca
Where our slavish bonds were broken.

Con la ley de 6 de enero
Lo derrotamos todito,
Le arrancamos el terreno
Y se quedó muy contrito.

Don Pancho chico decía,
Como queriendo llorar,
Los famosos agraristas
Me han venido a derrotar.

Don Pancho viejo decía,
Agraristas sin calzones,
Ya me quitaron las tierras
A puros arrempujones.

Con calumnias desgraciadas
Nos quisieron espantar,
Nos quitaron el trabajo
Para hacernos arrancar.

Martínez Rojo, agrarista
Con sacrificios muy grandes,
Nos vino a quitar el yugo
Y hacer temblar los González.

Con cuidado, compañeros,
No se dejen engañar,
Que el pelón de Pancho Garza
También nos quiere enredar.

A que pelón tan maldito,
Navajea muy bien al amo,
Nos avienta la mangana
Y luego esconde la mano.

Bendita Revolución
Que nos hizo independientes;
Vivan Portes Gil y Calles,
Mueran los terratenientes.

Aquí acabo de cantar,
Con la verdad que sofoca,
La esclavitud que rompimos
En la hacienda de la Boca.

—ANÓNIMO

CHAPTER IX

LAND AND WATER—BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

UP TO THIS point we have spoken of the agrarian problem almost exclusively in terms of social movements, laws, reforms and revolutions. It is high time that, quite literally, we should come down to earth, for the agrarian problem in Mexico to even greater degree than in most countries, is intimately related to and in many ways determined by geographical considerations. How many villages may receive land, how much and what kind of land, is in part dependent upon political and social considerations—that is, on the force and impetus of the agrarian reform. But it is also dependent upon how much and what kind of land is available—that is, upon the natural physical endowments of the country. As a background, then, to any further study of the agrarian reform in general and as a basis for a consideration of the problems of the ejido in particular, it will be desirable to review briefly the more salient facts with reference to the character of Mexico's agricultural resources.

THE PROBLEMS

There are two schools of thought on the subject of Mexico's agricultural resources: one which may be called "Mexico-the-treasure-house-of-the-world" and the other, "Mexico-the-pariah-of-Nations." Both schools have had ardent defenders and apologists, but because of the complicated nature of the problem and the lack of adequate statistical information neither party to the argument has been able to claim a complete victory.

It was none other than Cortés himself who, in those glowing letters which he wrote to Charles V describing the fantastic riches of the new world, was the first and most fervent proponent of the thesis, as a later member of the same school of thought expressed it, that "Mexico contains the most enormous and diversified wealth ever bestowed upon a single people in a single area." During Colonial days the legend of Mexico's inexhaustible riches inflamed the imagination of the whole world. The description appearing in Payno's novel, *El hombre de la situación*, of the Spaniard recently arrived in Mexico who planned only to collect gold and to leave the silver to the Indians and slaves, although intended as a caricature,

represented almost the literal belief of many people in Europe.[1] Another mighty contributor to the legend was the German traveler and scientist Baron Humboldt. Carlos Pereyra has said that Humboldt was "the knightly lover of America, the romantic admirer of its scenes, the curious student of its monuments and the sympathetic guest of its society."[2] In a word, Humboldt was "sold" on Mexico and his famous *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* probably did more to strengthen the belief in the treasure-house-of-the-world conception of Mexico than any other one thing. In more recent years it has been the enormous productivity of Mexico's oil wells and mines, the stories of fortunes made overnight and the reports of enraptured tourists which have helped to keep alive the Cortés-Humboldt school of thought. Indeed, the Mexicans themselves under the stimulus of national pride have gradually come to believe in the unlimited natural possibilities of their land. Thus, for example, we find in the preamble to one of the agrarian laws presented to Congress by President Obregón the statement that Mexico "has sufficient capacity to provide the necessities for more than a hundred million inhabitants."[3] Similar ex-cathedra dicta may be found almost any day in the press, in government reports and in articles written by the perennially optimistic.

In opposition to those who have viewed Mexico as an inexhaustible horn of plenty stands a small group of writers and students bent on debunking what they are pleased to call the "myth of Mexico's riches." One of the first and best known of the members of this group was the historian Justo Sierra. Even in the heyday of the Díaz regime Sierra dared to point out on more than one occasion that the riches of Mexico had been greatly overestimated. This conclusion was confirmed later by another Mexican student, Carlos Díaz Dufoo, who summed up the whole matter in his now famous formula "we are naturally rich but economically poor." But even this statement, whatever truth it may contain as applied to mineral resources or to industrial potentialities, according to recent investigators is overoptimistic so far as the agricultural development of Mexico is concerned. "The industry of agriculture," writes the economist Daniel Cosío Villegas, . . . "in our country is deficient not only because our methods of cultivation are backward, . . . but also because the soil itself is poor. In order that our agriculture shall be able to satisfy our necessities . . . costly engineering works, especially of irrigation, will be necessary throughout the whole nation.

[1] Dufoo, *México y los capitales extranjeros*, p. 154.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

[3] Quoted in Bulnes, *Los grandes problemas de México*, p. 125.

A LAND ON END, A TUMBLED DOWN WORLD

(A SECTION OF THE SIERRA MADRE OCCIDENTAL)

We cannot expect anything as a gift of nature ; everything in Mexico depends upon the activity and ingenuity of man. It is for this reason I say 'economically we are poor' ; but, more than this, the origin of our economic poverty is in our natural poverty."[4]

But enough of opinions and authorities. Let us turn to the facts. Is Mexcio, speaking now in terms of physical equipment for agricultural purposes, "God's own country" as some would have us believe ; or, is it one of "God's little ironies" as the iconoclasts would try to persuade us?

THE LAY OF THE LAND

There is a story which relates how a certain member of that hardy band which accompanied Cortés on one of the most amazing military adventures of all times was asked by one of the court officials upon his return to Spain for a map of the country he had helped to conquer. "Here," responded the soldier, crumpling up a piece of paper in his hand, "here you have a map of New Spain." In this story is contained the alpha and the omega and much that lies between of the geography of the land once called New Spain and now known as Mexico.

If the writer may judge from his contacts with scores of tourists during his several years' residence in Mexico, the impression that the average person who has never visited the country has of the topography and climate of Mexico can be summed up in two words—low and hot. For many people it is a distinct shock to learn that the greater part of Mexico is neither low nor hot, but, on the contrary, high and relatively cold. The Tropic of Cancer, it is true, passes almost through the center of the country and thus locates Mexico at practically the same latitude as the Sahara Desert, Egypt, and Arabia. But one must not be misled by this fact or by the common assumption that the farther south one goes and the nearer one approaches the equator, the hotter the climate becomes.

The most important single geographical fact about Mexico is that altitude tends to counteract latitude ; to get a true understanding of the geographical situation of Mexico one must think in perpendicular as well as in horizontal terms. Because of the tremendous upthrust of her mountains Mexico is in the peculiar position of being *in* the tropical and semitropical zones, but, for the most part, not *of* them. Sierras rearing their backs ten, twelve, even at points, seventeen thousand feet and more above sea level ; mountains topsy-turvy, and helter-skelter ; mountains climbing on top of each others' shoulders ; mountains forever and eternally rimming the horizon in jagged

[4] Cosío Villegas, *Sociología mexicana—El territorio*, pp. 26-27.

masses of purple, blue, and brown—this is the dominant geographical note in Mexico, "a land on end, a tumbled down world."

As may be seen from a glance at the map (Fig. 4) the shape of Mexico is roughly that of a great inverted triangle, its base determined by the Rio Grande river and its apex located in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The sides of the triangle are accentuated and thrown into relief by two great mountain ranges—the Sierra Madre Oriental and the Sierra Madre Occidental—running from north to southeast and roughly paralleling the east and west coasts. Spreading out fanwise from the knot of convergence of the two cordilleras and enclosed between the mountain ranges lies the high central plateau of Anáhuac (Northern Mesa and Central Mesa)—an enormous inclined plain which descends by easy grades from its highest point in the region of Mexico City and merges finally into the flat lands of Texas and New Mexico. "Rising from about 4,000 feet in the north to an average elevation of some 8,000 feet in the south-central area, altitude counteracts latitude with such nicety that the mean temperature over the entire plateau is nearly uniform."[5]

The great central plateau of Anáhuac—the third highest in the world and excelled only by those of Tibet and Bolivia[6]—occupies over one-third the total area of Mexico.[7] If to the plateau of Anáhuac there be added the highlands of the states of Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Chiapas—to mention only the most important—it turns out that well over half of the Republic is located at altitudes varying from 3,000 to 9,000 feet and over.[8]

The outer slopes or escarpments of the Sierra Madre Oriental descend precipitously in a series of terrace-like table lands which finally level off into the tropical plains of each coast. The hot low-lying regions which have given Mexico its unmerited reputation for torridity are thus restricted to two relatively narrow ribbons of land skirting the Pacific coast and the coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

The tropical littoral of the east coast extends much farther inland than that of the west coast. Broad in the north, the Gulf coastal plains reach their narrowest point near Veracruz and then widen out again to form a great plain in the states of Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán, and the territory of Quintana Roo. The Pacific littoral attains its greatest area in the long narrow Sonoran desert in the north. In the southwestern Pacific coastal regions the mountains in many places reach to the very sea itself.

[5] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

[6] Priestley, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[7] Galindo y Villa, *Geografía de la República Mexicana*, I, 22.

[8] Appendix A, Table 8.

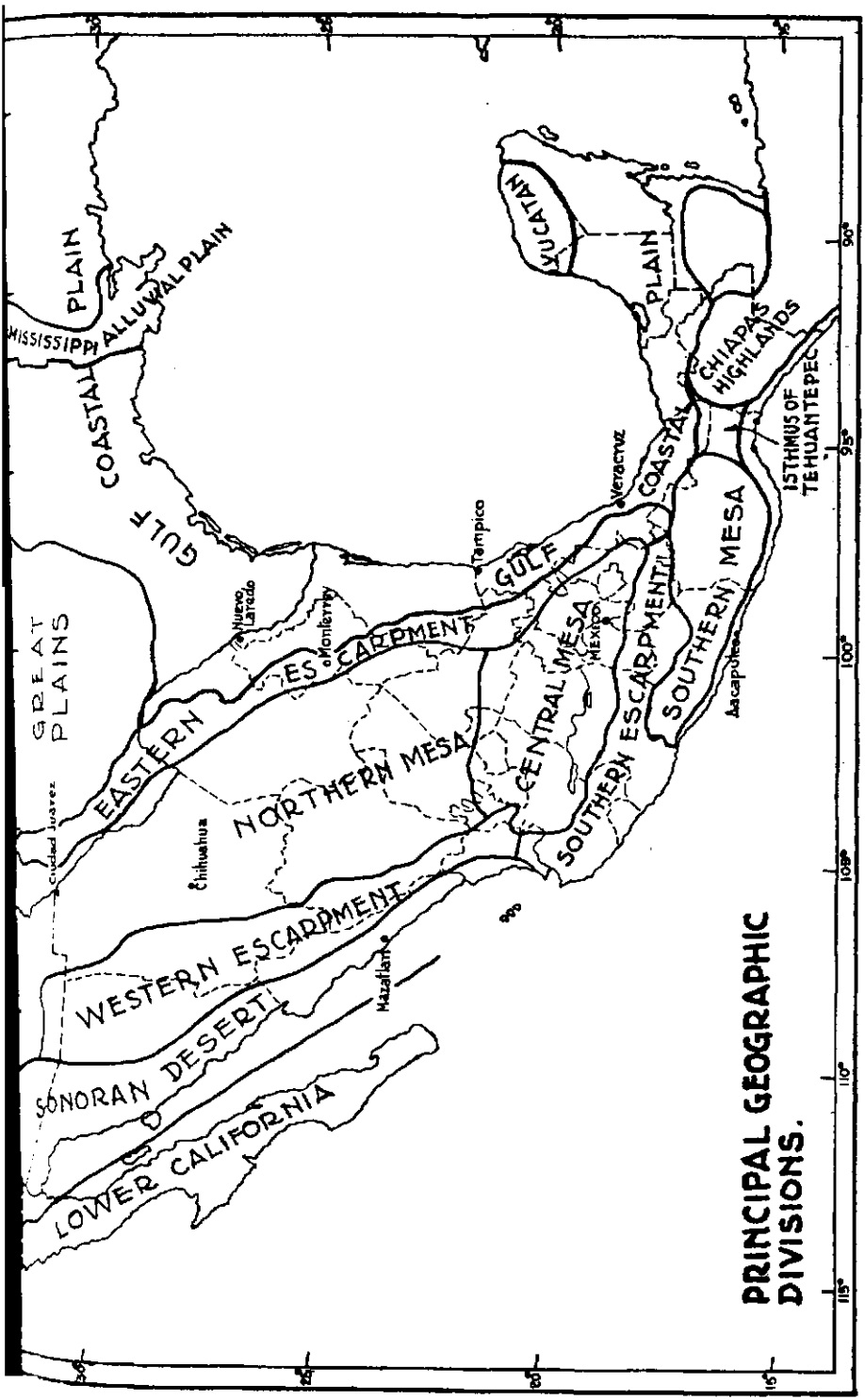

FIG. 4.—Principal geographic divisions or natural regions of Mexico. (Adapted from map in G. M. McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico*, p. 8.)

The general structure, then, of Mexico is not unlike that of a three-story house in the modernistic set-back style of architecture. The ground floor and foundation is represented (Figs. 4 and 5) by an elongated hour-glass shaped strip on the Gulf of Mexico side and a somewhat narrower and shorter strip on the Pacific coast, with parts of Lower California and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec thrown in for good measure. The second floor (rather steeply slanting and uneven) is to be found on the escarpments of the two great mountain ranges which roughly parallel each coast and converge south and east of Mexico City. And, finally, the third floor, or (relatively) flat roof-garden if you like, is located on the great northern, central, and southern mesas.

Because of the differences in topography, temperature, rainfall, and soil formation, these three stories or levels, speaking very generally, determine the three principal types of natural geographical regions in Mexico, to wit: the tropics and semitropics of the low-lying coastal regions; the temperate, steeply terraced mountain slopes; and the relatively cold and relatively flat uplands.

Although it is sufficiently accurate for general purposes to divide Mexico into three main types of natural regions, one must be careful not to oversimplify the matter. Within these areas there are to be found decided local variations and, as between areas of the same type defined in terms of altitude and temperature, there may be great differences in rainfall and soil formation. Moreover, because of the precipitous nature of the descent from the high table lands, in many places the transition from one natural zone to another is very rapid. From Mexico City to the valley of Cuernavaca, for example, as the crow flies is only a little more than 36 miles, but in flying these 36 miles the crow must first ascend from an altitude of some 7,500 feet to one of approximately 10,000 feet and then descend around 5,000 feet or, in terms of temperature and rainfall, from the temperate to the cold, to the subtropical zone.

"LAND ON END"

From the description we now have before us of the general lay of the land in Mexico there emerges the first important geographical factor directly related to the problem of agriculture—namely the relatively small amount of level land in the Republic. Agriculture, to be sure, is not entirely restricted to level land, but farming, and especially farming on anything approaching a large scale, is at least hampered by a broken and mountainous terrain. Where mountains are frequent and high and ravines are common and deep, then farming, if that term be understood for the moment as the raising of

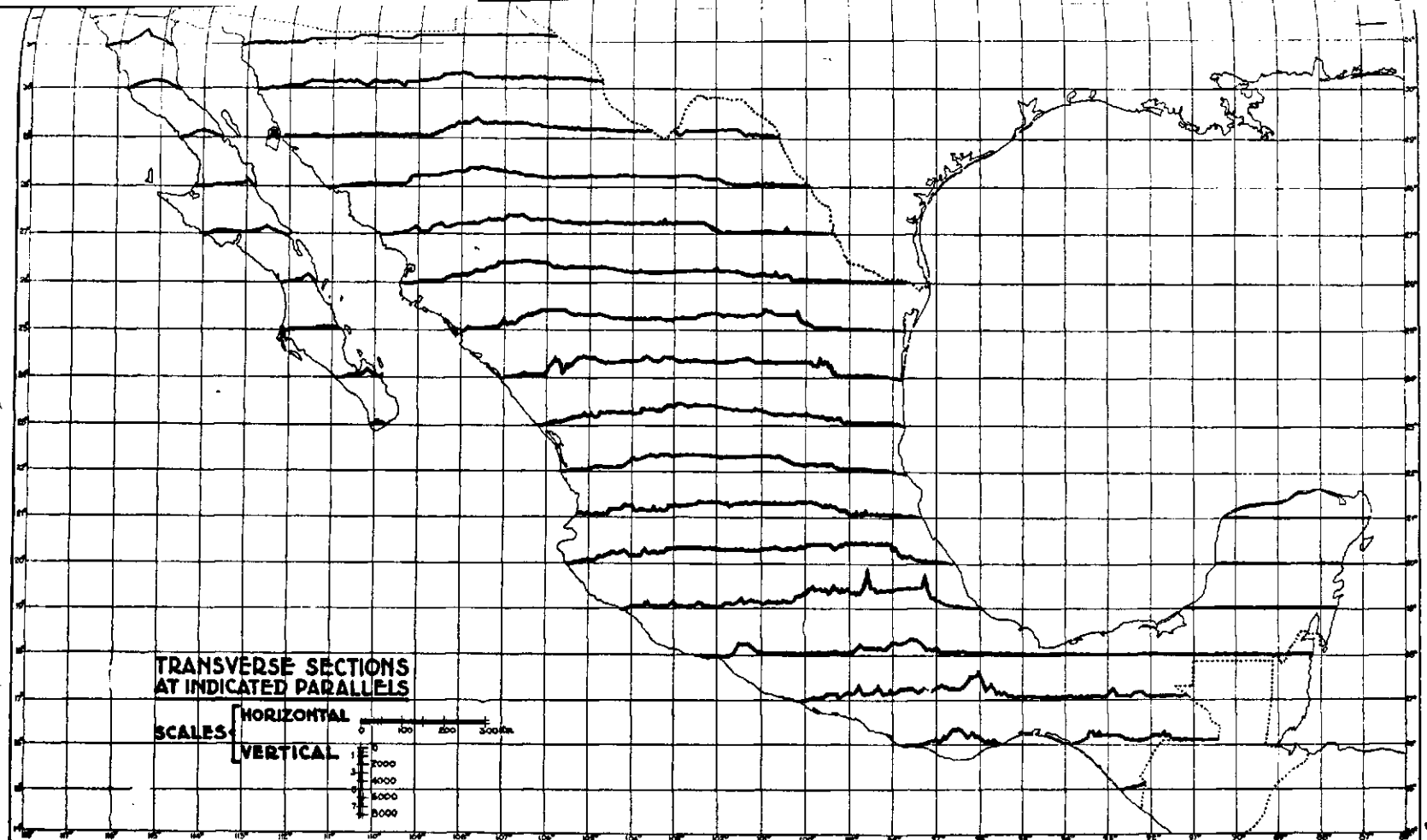

FIG. 5.—Transverse sections at indicated parallels. (Based on map prepared by the *Dirección de Estudios Geográficos y Climatológicos*.)

crops, is likely to be economically impracticable if not completely impossible. For this reason the amount of level land in a country is an important index of its agricultural potentialities.

In view of what has already been said in these pages about mountains the reader is undoubtedly prepared to learn that according to the 1930 census[9] only about half (49.3 per cent) of the land covered by the census is classified as level land.[10] By agricultural statistical zones[11] the proportion of flat land to all other land runs as follows: Gulf 82.0 per cent; North 48.4 per cent; Central 43.7; North Pacific 37.5 and South Pacific 35.9. By states: 8 states show less than 40 per cent of the land covered by the census as level; and 18 states (including those just mentioned) show less than the 49.3 per cent average for the Republic. As a matter of fact even these figures overstate the amounts and proportion of flat land in the Republic, for, except in parts of some of the coastal states and perhaps all of Quintana Roo, Yucatán, Campeche, and Tabasco, the area not included in the agricultural census was left out precisely because it was, for the most part, mountainous. And this holds whether the area was left out because the census takers found it too difficult to reach or because it was not in farms in any case. Since only 66.9 per cent of the total area of the country was covered by the census it follows that the proportion of level land as compared with all land is in all probability considerably less than the figure of 49.3 per cent shown by the census. "One must think in vertical as well as horizontal

[9] Since the 1930 agricultural census forms the basis of many of the statements in the following pages a few words should be said about it at this point. The census was taken as part of the regular decennial census of 1930 and is the first and only census of the type ever taken in Mexico. The year covered is the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930. It is important to note that the census is a census of farms (*explotaciones agrícolas*) and hence, by definition, does not include the entire area of the country. It is believed, however, that with the exception of a few inaccessible regions such as are to be found in Quintana Roo, Tabasco, and parts of the Sierras, the census is fairly complete and that, accordingly, the areas which do not appear are nonagricultural. For the convenience of the reader a comparison between the territorial area and the area censused is given in Table 6 in Appendix A. Thanks to the kindness of the Director and the Chiefs of the various divisions of the *Dirección General de Estadística* the writer was able to obtain the tables worked out from the census data as fast as they were completed. Many of these tables will not be published for some time to come and much of the information given herewith is thus made available for the first time either in Spanish or in English.

[10] Appendix A, Table 7.

[11] The agricultural statistical zones were worked out after careful study by the Direction of Rural Economy of the Ministry of Agriculture in order to provide larger and more convenient statistical units than the individual states. As may be seen by comparing the map (Fig. 40) on p. 585 with Fig. 4 on p. 135 the agricultural statistical zones were designed—in so far as the present state boundaries permitted—to correspond to the natural geographical divisions of the country.

terms" applies not only to an understanding of Mexican geography but also to Mexican farming.

INSUFFICIENT AND IRREGULAR WATER SUPPLY

A country as large as Mexico might be able to get along very well, agriculturally speaking, with half or even two-thirds of its land uptilted in mountains "lovely to look at, if somewhat difficult to plow," providing that the remaining land was good fertile soil with plenty of dependable rainfall and sunshine. Sunshine Mexico has and to spare, but rainfall—that, as the Mexican proverb has it : *es harina de otro costal* (is flour out of a different sack)!

Three points should be noted with reference to the rainfall in Mexico. In the first place the variations in the amount of precipitation in any given year are extremely wide as between different sections. Over half of the country, principally the mesa regions north of the thirty-second parallel, Lower California and the Sonora and Sinaloa coastal plains, receive on the average less than 350 mm. (14 inches) of rainfall a year. Moving south and descending from the plateau either east or west the precipitation becomes heavier and heavier. Thus, at the opposite extreme from the desert-like north and northwest we have the states of Yucatán, Campeche, Chiapas, and Veracruz where the annual rainfall varies anywhere from 1,000 mm. up to 3,000 and over (from 39 to 118 inches and over). By way of comparison it may be noted that in the United States the mean annual rainfall drops as low as 14 inches in only three states, averages around 44 inches for the Atlantic coast states, about 47 inches for the states bordering the Mississippi, and approximately 30 inches for the states on the Pacific coast. The highest annual rainfall recorded in the United States is 57 inches for the state of Louisiana.[12]

Second should be noted the variation in the amount of rainfall as between different years in the same area. La Paz, near the southwestern tip of Lower California, for example, during the ten-year period 1921-1930 received in 1921 precipitation of 33.8 mm.; in 1923 there was registered a high for the period of 296 mm., or about nine times as much rain in 1923 as in 1921. A typical point on the plateau such as León in the important agricultural state of Guanajuato showed a variation of approximately 87 per cent between the low year of 1921 (443.8 mm.) and the high year of 1926 (831.5 mm.). Even in the tropical region of Teapa on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec where the rainfall reaches the torrential proportions on occasions of more than 4,600 mm. (15.3 feet!) in a single year, varia-

[12] *Yearbook of Agriculture, 1932*, p. 922.

tions between given years of as much as 23 per cent are not at all uncommon.[13]

Isaiah Bowman in his book, *The Pioneer Fringe*, calls attention to the fact that: " 'Inches of rainfall' is only a statistical expression. It means little or nothing from the standpoint of plant and animal functioning. A geographer must know how reliable is the rainfall from year to year."[14] If, as Bowman intimates, reliability and dependability of rainfall from year to year are just as important as the amount of precipitation, then, from the figures just presented, it is easy to see why farming which relies entirely upon rainfall is so hazardous a business in Mexico.

Finally, quite aside from any question of regularity or dependability, the average amount of precipitation over a large part of Mexico, and, more significantly, over the greater part of the central plateau, is inadequate for economically efficient agriculture. This point can best be demonstrated by considering not only the average amount of rainfall but also its "efficiency" both in terms of its seasonal regularity and the extent to which it stays in the ground (that is, the rate of evaporation). Fortunately a map (Fig. 6) has recently been published by the *Dirección General de Estadística* based on the interrelation of all three of the factors just mentioned together with the factor of temperature according to a formula devised by the American geographer, C. W. Thornthwaite. The process by which the formula was worked out and the mathematical equivalents for the various descriptive terms need not detain us here.[15] For our purposes it will be enough to call attention to the fact that if the various climatic zones shown on the map be reduced to square kilometers and presented graphically as in Fig. 7, it turns out that 49.9 per cent of the Republic is judged to be insufficiently supplied with humidity.

This does not mean, of course, that half of the country is entirely lost to agriculture, for much of this arid and semiarid area can be used for stockraising and for the production of such special crops as maguey and henequen and some of it can be reclaimed by irrigation. However, the fact is startling enough and all the more so when one reflects that next to the North Pacific zone, the region *least* favored with humidity during all seasons of the year is the Central zone—that is, precisely the area where the highest percentage of land under cultivation is found and the region in which the greatest areas are devoted to the raising of those crops (mainly corn, wheat, and frijoles) for which a large part of the zone is unsuited. On the other

[13] Appendix A, Table 9.

[14] Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

[15] The details here in question will be found in : *México en cifras*, p. 4a.

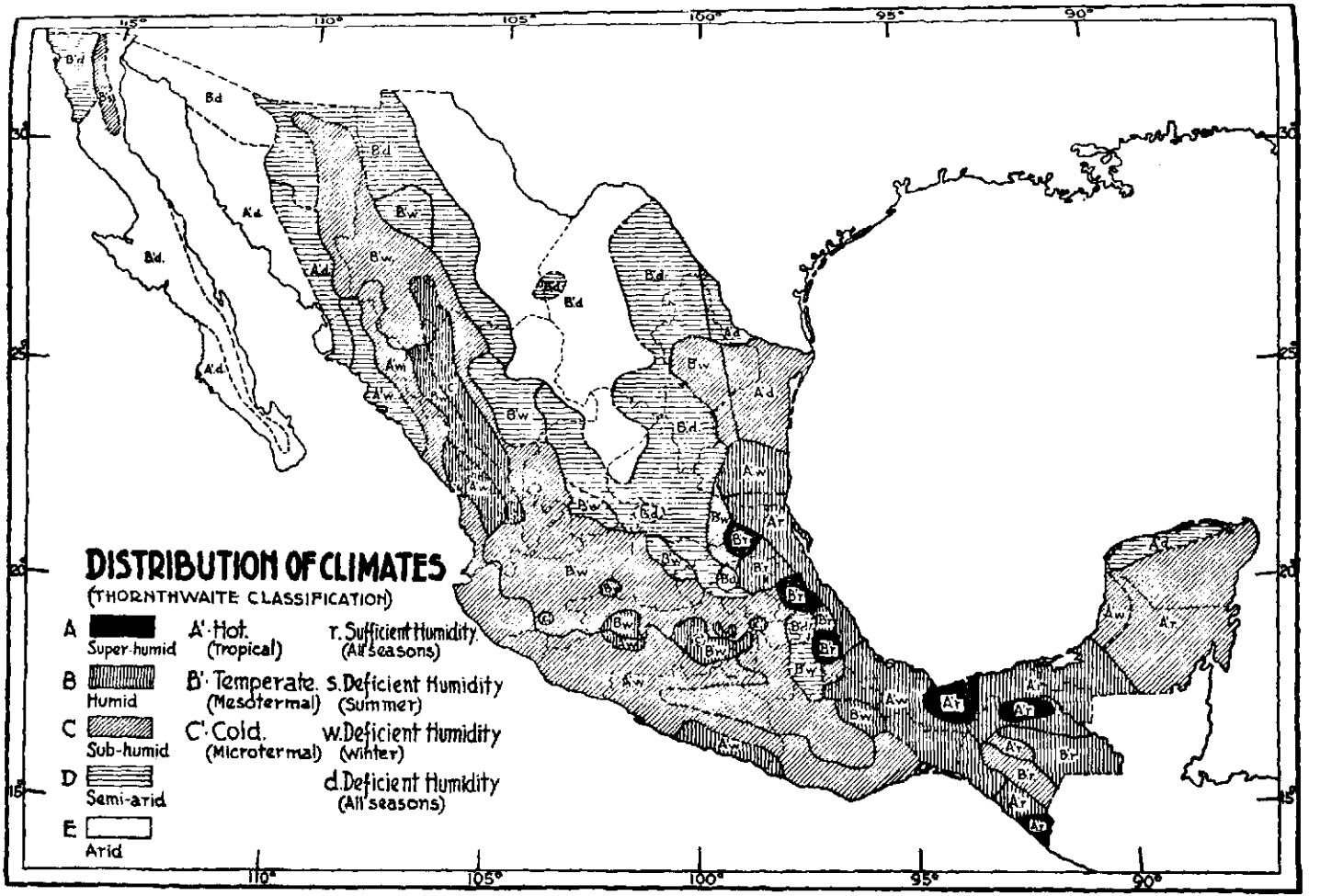

FIG. 6.—Distribution of climates. (Based on Thornthwaite classification as applied to Mexico by the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Classifications A, B, etc., represent rainfall "efficiency"—i.e., the amount of rainfall "weighted" in terms of rates of evaporation; A', B', etc., are limits of mean annual temperatures; and r, s, etc., are measures of the distribution of "efficient rainfall" in the various seasons of the year. For futher explanation see *México en cifras*, p. 4a.)

hand, the *most* favored regions in terms of precipitation are the mountain escarpments and the tropical coastal plains, regions which, either because of the lack of level land, or unhealthy living conditions, or the characteristics of the soil (for example, swamps, as in Veracruz, and limestone as in Yucatán) offer the least, or, at any rate, greatly restricted possibilities for the raising of any but specialized crops under equally specialized conditions.

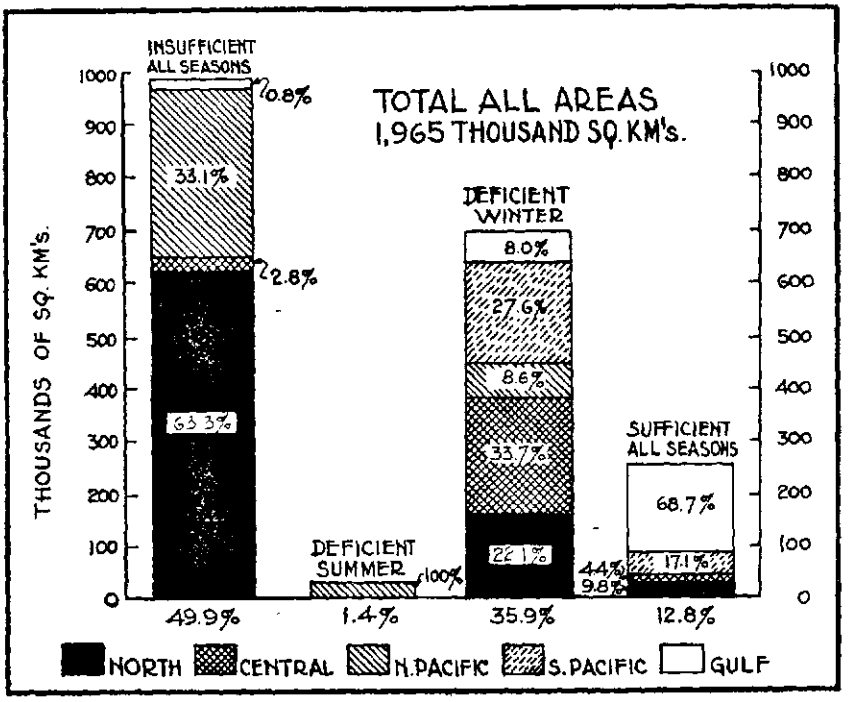

FIG. 7.—Humidity areas by agricultural statistical zones. (See Fig. 6 and Appendix A, Table 10.)

To put the matter more concretely, the Central and North states which all together account for only 14.2 per cent of the total area in the Republic with "sufficient humidity during all seasons," nevertheless have 56.9 per cent of all crop land and 70.4 per cent of all land under cultivation in the country. The South Pacific and Gulf states, on the other hand, which between them account for 85.8 per cent of the total area with "sufficient humidity during all seasons" have only 36.8 per cent of the total crop land and 22.4 per cent of the total land under cultivation.[16]

[16] Appendix A, Tables 10, and 12. See also Fig. 13, on page 155.

The burden on Mexican agriculture of undependable rainfall might be lightened somewhat were the country endowed with an extensive system of rivers. Unfortunately this is not the case. The two great cordilleras which traverse the country from north to south form the principal watersheds and with the exception of a few streams in the plateau region, mostly on the Mesa del Norte, practically all the rivers drain directly either into the Gulf of Mexico or the Pacific Ocean. The great majority of the rivers are, accordingly, relatively short, torrential mountain streams, unfit either for navigation or to provide water for agricultural purposes. "Mexico," writes the geographer Jesús Galindo y Villa, "has many rivers, hundreds in fact; nevertheless, the country occupies a very secondary place in this respect compared with other nations of the new continent. . . . Because of the scarcity of rivers in the plateau region, Mexico can never in the fullest sense of the term be an agricultural nation. The farmers . . . must always depend for their harvests upon the caprices of the rain."[17]

Gruening has summarized the matter of Mexico's water resources in the following vivid paragraph:

> It is nigh impossible for a dweller in a land where water is plentiful and taken for granted much as air and sunlight to grasp the full significance of Mexican waterlessness. . . . Water has been a motive for worship and combat in Mexico from time immemorial. One need but live briefly in one of the countless dessicated, dust-smothered pueblos of the mesa, or note the instant barrenness of every protuberance from even the most fertile valley floor, to sense the profound bearing of Mexico's meteorological and hydrographic heritage. Abundant water would go far to liquidate Mexico's chronic dry rot. Nor is this an unattainable desert mirage, though it calls for a project to dominate nature which would tax the resources of the most advanced civilization of our day. The task is to retain on the plateau the seasonal rains that now spill uselessly through and over the great Sierra Madre rims to the sea.[18]

UNSEASONABLE TEMPERATURES AND FROSTS

A third geographical factor which plays a most important and often villainous role in Mexican agriculture is temperature and more particularly brusque and unseasonable fluctuations of temperature producing frosts, hailstorms and droughts. "Frosts early and late which defraud the efforts and hopes of the farmer and which periodically destroy the harvests; sudden descents in the temperature

[17] Galindo y Villa, *op. cit.*, I, 233-35.

[18] Ernest Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage*, p. 165. Reprinted by permission of the Century Company.

when the corn has just sprouted and is in its most delicate period of growth, or when the fruit trees are in bloom or the wheat earing—these are the factors which do grave and irremediable damage to the crops [of the central plateau]. Everyone knows that in the mesa areas and more particularly in the Mesa Central out of five years only one is good for agriculture. . . ."[19]

Once again it must be noted that nature is most unkind in the regions of greatest agricultural concentration. Thus in the year 1934, for example, frosts during the month of March damaged or destroyed crops in the southern part of the Northern Mesa as follows: 60 per cent of the chick-pea crop in the states of Guanajuato, Querétaro, Michoacán, and Jalisco; 50 per cent of the potato crop in certain parts of Guanajuato, Puebla, and Veracruz; 40 per cent of the early wheat crop throughout the entire area, and so forth. An investigation made recently by the Direction of Agricultural Economy covering almost 700 municipalities throughout the Republic showed that of the total harvests lost in a given year in twenty states 80 per cent or more of the losses were due primarily to frosts, hailstorms, and droughts. In the important agricultural states of Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas the percentage was over 90.[20] For the whole country in the agricultural year covered by the 1930 census out of 7.2 million hectares sown around 1.2 million hectares were lost—largely because of frosts and droughts. As usual the greatest losses were suffered in the Central (44 per cent of the total) and the North (41 per cent of the total) zones. If to the foregoing there be added the areas planted in corn and wheat which on the average yielded 200 kilograms or less per hectare (a yield so low as to be hardly worth the trouble of harvesting) the total crop losses in 1929-1930 are brought up to a little more than 1.8 million hectares or approximately one-fourth of the entire area planted. The year covered by the census was admittedly a "bad" year. But then so are about half the years in the annals of Mexican agriculture.[21]

THE MAN-LAND RATIO

"The ultimate elements offered for a scientific study of the evolution and life of human society are Man and Land; given these, there arises at once the necessity of adjustment between them. How much land there is to how many men is the fundamental consideration in the

[19] Meza, "El ejido y sus relaciones con la agricultura patria," *El Nacional*, May 5, 1934.

[20] Contreras, "La función económica del servicio meteorológico en la agricultura," *El Nacional*, August 14, 1934.

[21] See Appendix A, Tables 72 and 73; and Vargas Chiquini, "Las tierras de labor en la República Mexicana," *El Nacional*, August 7, 1934.

life of any society." As Zimmermann points out in his monumental work on *World Resources and Industries* in quoting this significant passage from Sumner and Keller,[22] the man-land ratio, unqualified by and unconnected with such considerations as the nature of the resources available, the state of the agricultural and industrial arts and population trends (growth or stagnation), is of little use as an economic index. The man-land ratio to be really revealing should take "into account all the human qualities bearing on productivity and all the environmental aspects, both natural and cultural, affecting the availability of resources. A high population density figure may indicate overpopulation; but even a region with low population density may be overpopulated."[23]

Zimmermann's point is well taken. The "carrying capacity" of a given area is a function of the combination and intimate interdependence of three factors: land, man, and culture. Nevertheless, we must proceed step by step. We now have before us some of the most important facts concerning the purely physical aspects of the "land" in Mexico. In order to complete our geographical picture we must turn our attention briefly to the "man" side of the equation. For the moment we will be concerned only with a bare statement of what the ratio of man to land is; later on, an attempt will be made to see how this ratio in Mexico is conditioned by agricultural knowledge and practice.

The 1930 census gives the total population of Mexico as 16.6 million. In other words, Mexico has a population at the present time of something less than three times that of the state of California and about twice that of the New England states in the United States or, to extend the comparison to other countries, approximately 70 per cent as many people as Spain and 40 per cent as many as France.

These 16.6 million people are scattered over the some 2 million square kilometers of Mexico's territory in a very irregular fashion. Thus the central states, although comprising only slightly more than 14 per cent of the country's area, contain almost half (48.6 per cent) of the population. On the other hand, the northern states with approximately 41 per cent of the total area account for only 18.9 per cent of the population.[24]

An even better indication of the irregularity of population distribution may be obtained by comparing economically active population engaged in agriculture with agricultural land. According to

[22] W. G. Sumner and A. G. Keller, *The Science of Society*, I, 4.

[23] Erich W. Zimmermann, *World Resources and Industries*, p. 123. Published by Harper and Brothers.

[24] Appendix A, Table 5.

the 1930 census, a little over 70 per cent (3.6 million persons) of Mexico's total economically active population (5.2 million persons) are engaged in agriculture.[25] The same census shows that approximately 1.1 million square kilometers may be classified as "agricultural land"—that is, crop land, pasture, forest and all other types of land covered by the census except that defined as "waste land" (*terrenos improductivos*). If we make the comparison just indicated, once

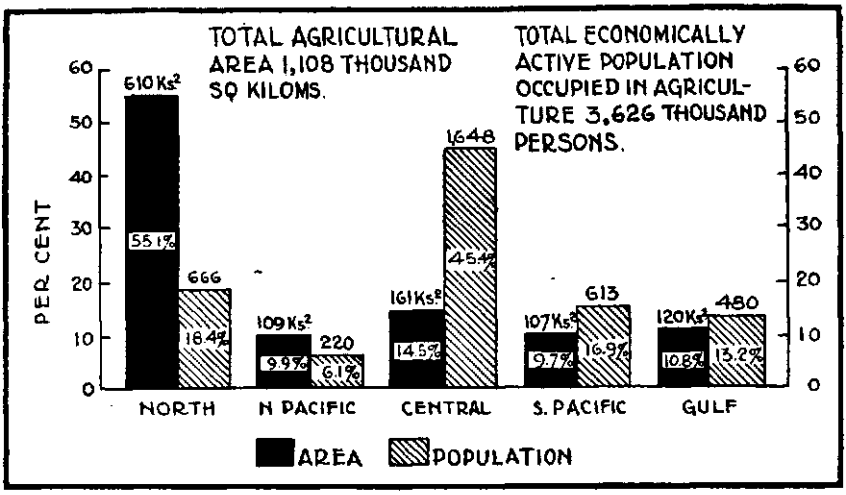

FIG. 8.—Agricultural areas compared with economically active population occupied in agriculture by zones, 1930. (See Appendix A, Table 5.)

more we are impressed with the predominance of the Central zone; for, as may be seen in Fig. 8, the central states with less than 15 per cent of the agricultural land contain nearly half (45.4 per cent) of the total economically active agricultural population, whereas the northern states with well over half of the agricultural land contain only a little more than 18 per cent of the active agricultural population.

As might be expected, if the matter be stated in terms of population density (see Fig. 9), we arrive at very much the same conclusion: the average population density for the whole Republic figures out to be 8.4 persons per square kilometer.[26] But as between the various

[25] Appendix A, Table 3.

[26] Approximately 21.6 persons per square mile. By way of comparison we have: Argentina 10.8 persons per square mile; Chile 15.2; United States (continental) 42.0; France 196.7; and Spain 123.1. *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1933*, U. S. Department of Commerce, pp. 312-13.

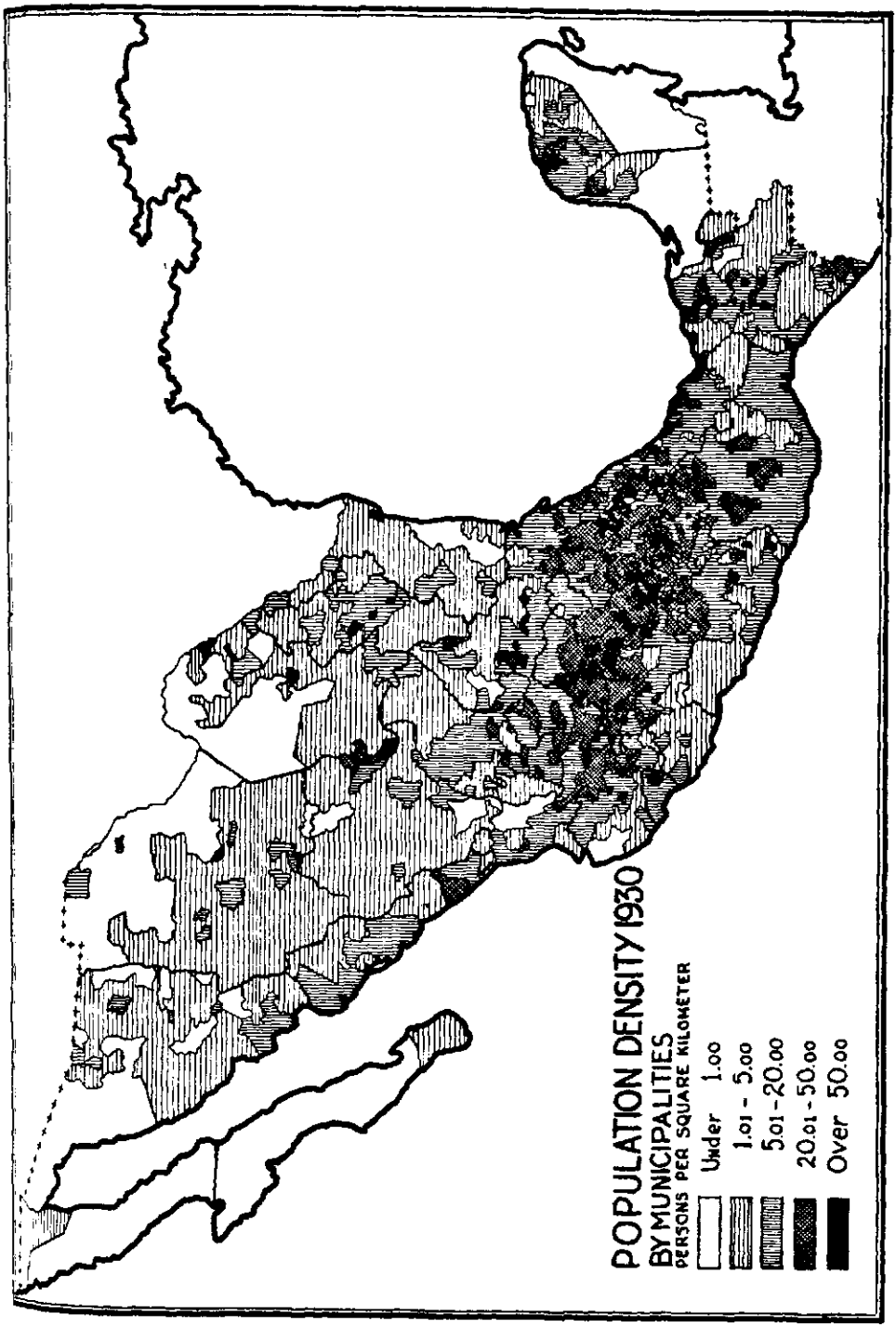

FIG. 9.—Population density by municipalities, 1930. (Based on map of the *Dirección General de Estadística* published in *Mexico en cifras*, p. 9.)

sections of the Republic the density varies as follows: North Pacific 2.4; North 3.9; Gulf 8.8; South Pacific 9.7; and Central 29.1. In similar fashion density figures in terms of economically active population occupied in agriculture per square kilometer of agricultural land show 1.1 persons in the North, 2.0 in the North Pacific, 4.0 in the Gulf, 5.7 in the South Pacific, and 10.2 in the Central states.[27]

It is such facts as those just reviewed which led the geographer, J. Russell Smith, to summarize the outstanding fact of Mexico's social geography—the dominance of the center over the margins—in the following vivid figure of speech:

> The spider's solid body is held up in the center of a far-reaching circle of thin legs. . . . The central plateau of Mexico, heavy with people, the center of population and government, looks out in all directions to thinly peopled corners of the country—empty Quintana Roo, scanty Chiapas, desert Sonora, and Lower California, unexplored western Sierras, dusty Chihuahua and Tamaulipas with its chaparral.[28]

The second important fact about the man-land ratio in Mexico is the close correlation between geographic factors and population distribution. This may be demonstrated in a number of ways. Thus, for example, Tannenbaum has pointed out the significant reciprocal relations between altitude and the concentration of population. The greatest density of population is found in those states —Hidalgo, México, Puebla, Tlaxcala and the Federal District—the capital cities of which have the highest mean altitudes. Although the five states just mentioned comprise only 4 per cent of the total area of the Republic, they contain something more than one-fourth of the total population. On the other hand, the nine states with capitals having the lowest mean altitudes and comprising some 52 per cent of the total area, contain only 12 per cent of the population. The average size of the communities located at over 7,000 feet is at least three times as large as those located between 2,000 and 7,000 feet.[29] Undoubtedly similar correlations could be worked out between population distribution and rainfall or climate.[30] For the purposes at hand the point under discussion will be sufficiently emphasized if the reader will compare the map of population density (Fig. 9) with the

[27] Appendix A, Table 4.

[28] Smith, *North America*, p. 777, quoted in Robert Redfield, *Tepoztlán, A Mexican Village*, p. 15. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

[29] Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 21-22. See also Appendix A, Table 4.

[30] Cushing, "The Distribution of Population in Mexico," *Geographical Review*, II (1921), 227-42.

climate map (Fig. 6) on page 141.[1] It is no mere accident that the great majority of the people in Mexico live in the upland plateau area of the central part of the country while relatively few live in the deserts of the north and northwest and in the tropical coastal states.

It should not be concluded from what has just been said that the distribution of the population in Mexico answers entirely to geographical factors or that the greatest concentration of population is always to be found in the best agricultural areas. Students of Mexican history know that the locations of the present centers of population were determined much more with reference to military, mining, and political considerations than with any idea of seeking out and developing the most fertile agricultural regions of the country. It is fair to say that most of the best agricultural lands in Mexico are located upon the Mesa Central and its adjoining slopes, but it is by no means true that all of the land in that area is good or that all of the good land is to be found in that area. Indeed, a very large part of the Mesa Central, so far as climate and soil are concerned, offers far from even fair-to-middling conditions for agriculture. The inevitable conclusion is that the present concentration of population in the Mesa Central is out of all proportion to the agricultural resources of the region. One is almost justified in the rather cryptic statement that agriculture in Mexico has followed population rather than population agriculture.[31]

One other important fact relating to the "man" side of the man-land ratio in Mexico remains to be pointed out: the slow growth of Mexican population. If we accept the figure of 5.2 million inhabitants appearing in the *Noticias de Intendentes y Gobernadores de Provincias* for the years 1793-1794 as representing the earliest (more or less) reliable population data, it appears that it has taken Mexico 136 years to triple the number of her people. In only a few decades has Mexico gained more than 10 per cent in her population; in some decades the population has actually decreased.[32] With the many reasons—high infant and general mortality rate due to the diseases of poverty, the effect of frequent revolutions, emigration, and so forth—which might be adduced to explain the practical

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[31] ". . . In Mexico . . . the population is disproportionately concentrated in the regions which unite unpropitious conditions for agriculture. The Mesa Central, characterized by an inclement climate of little help in obtaining abundant harvests, a lack of rivers and land exhausted by the uninterrupted cultivation of the same plants, is the most densely populated region. . . ." Lazcano Romero, "¿Hay problema de relocalización de la producción agrícola en México?" *El Nacional*, Aug. 10, 1934.

[32] Pallares, "El elemento humano," *El Universal*, March 3, 1931.

stagnation of Mexico's population growth for long periods of time and its very slow growth at all times, we need not be concerned for the moment. It is the fact rather than an explanation which must be called to attention and this perhaps can be done as well as in any other way by comparing the growth of population in Mexico with that in the southwestern states of the United States and with one of the other Latin American countries—say, for example, Brazil. In 1860 the aggregate population of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California was given as 1.1 millions. At approximately the same time (1862), according to the figures of García Cubas, the population of Mexico was 8.1 millions.[33] Seventy years later the population in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California had grown to 12.4 millions; in the same period of time Mexican population increased to 16.6 millions. In other words, while Mexico was little more than doubling her population, that of the southwestern states in the United States was multiplied more than eleven times! Again: between 1890 and 1930 the population of Brazil increased from 14.3 millions to approximately 41.0 millions, or an increase of around 185 per cent; in the same period Mexico's population grew from 11.6 million to 16.6 million or an increase of slightly more than 43 per cent.[34]

From the foregoing bird's-eye view of the geography of Mexico there falls into perspective a picture of a country characterized by the most extreme climatic and topographical contrasts. As one writer has stated it, "Mexico is the zone where nature has put, one opposing the other, the two most powerful but least controllable elements: the tropical heat and the mountain."[35] Mexico is a land of ups and downs; of sudden heat and sudden cold; of dry deserts in the north and dripping, tropical jungles in the south. It is a land of unexpected extension, tremendous vistas and wearying distances. Within the almost two million square kilometers of Mexico's territory it would be possible to enclose the combined areas of France, Germany, Spain, and Italy and still have room left for Belgium, Denmark, and Switzerland. Mexico, in short, is a land which is all things to all men. Hot or cold, wet or dry, up or down—whatever your heart's desire in the way of climate or topography, Mexico has it. The tourist's paradise; the miner's delight; the oil man's dream come true.

[33] Quoted in *ibid.*

[34] Noriega, *Diversos aspectos del problema agrario*, p. 16; *Foreign Commerce Yearbook 1933*, p. 176; and *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1932*.

[35] Vasconcelos and Gamio, *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*, p. 24.

But an agricultural country? A land of prosperous, contented farmers tilling broad expanses of fertile soil and living on milk and honey?

Well—not exactly. Milk there is, to be sure, and honey also. But much of the milk is thin and sour, the honey hard to come by and more often than not sweeter to the sight than to the taste. And the proof of this particular pudding, like that for most other puddings, is in the eating. In other words, if we turn from generalized description of geographical conditions to a consideration of specific indices of Mexican agricultural resources, we find: (1) that Mexico has a relatively small amount of actual crop land and that such crop land as there is, is not concentrated in the most desirable regions; (2) that of the crop land available at the present time only a relatively small proportion is naturally "good" crop land; (3) that the amount of crop land which can be added to that already in existence is relatively limited; and (4) that the yields from most crops are extraordinarily low.

Before presenting the facts in support of each of these statements, it should be repeated that by no means all of the shortcomings and inadequacies of Mexican agriculture can be charged up to geographical factors. Obviously, the techniques and methods used, the kind of knowledge and processes applied, the amount of capital and labor invested—in a word, the agricultural arts and sciences as they exist at the present time in Mexico—enter in as determining factors all along the line. If agricultural knowledge and practice in Mexico were different, then undoubtedly the present characteristic features of Mexican agriculture would be different. Nevertheless, it would also appear to be true that the extent to which these characteristic features could be changed (improved) is limited by reason of relatively fixed geographical conditions. Almost anything is possible given the expenditure of enough labor and money. Even the cactus-studded deserts of Chihuahua and Sonora might be made to bloom like the proverbial rose. The only contention here is that the law of diminishing returns in Mexican agriculture is enforced by nature more rapidly and more inexorably than has been generally believed or than is the case in geographically more favored regions of the world. In Chapter XV the present state of Mexican agricultural technology and the room for its improvement will be considered in some detail. Meantime, we may continue to explore the evidence in support of the dictum that in Mexican agriculture "the origin of . . . economic poverty is in . . . natural poverty."

RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT OF ACTUAL CROP LAND

If the total land in Mexico (196.5 million hectares) be divided up as between crop land[36] under cultivation, fallow crop land, pasture, forest, and all other land, the resultant distribution is approximately[37]

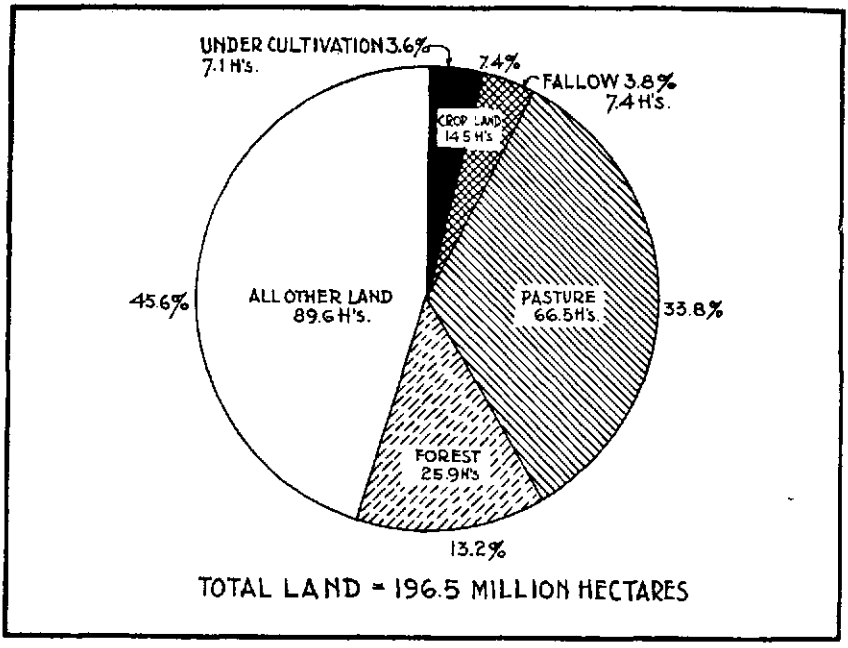

FIG. 10.—Utilization of land, 1930. (See Appendix A, Tables 11 and 12.)

that shown in Fig. 10. In Fig. 11, land utilization is presented by agricultural statistical zones. As the chart clearly shows, both relatively and absolutely the greatest amount of crop land ("under

[36] "Crop land" is defined as land cultivated at any time during the five years preceding the census of May 15, 1930.

[37] There is a certain per cent of error involved in Fig. 10 and the corresponding tables because the class "all other land" was obtained by subtracting from the total of all land in the Republic, the areas classified in the 1930 census as crop land, pasture and forest. This means that there is included in the class "all other land" public lands not under agricultural exploitation, urban areas, rivers, lakes, roads, etc., which by definition were not covered by the census as well as those lands classified in the census as "land exploited for uncultivated crops" (maguey de ixtle, guayule, etc.); "agricultural properties of less than one hectare each" (approximately 100,000 hectares of these); and waste land." It may be assumed that a large proportion of the properties of less than one hectare were under cultivation. It may also be assumed that the some 40 million hectares

cultivation" plus "fallow") is to be found in the central states. Although embracing only one-seventh (14.1 per cent) of the area of

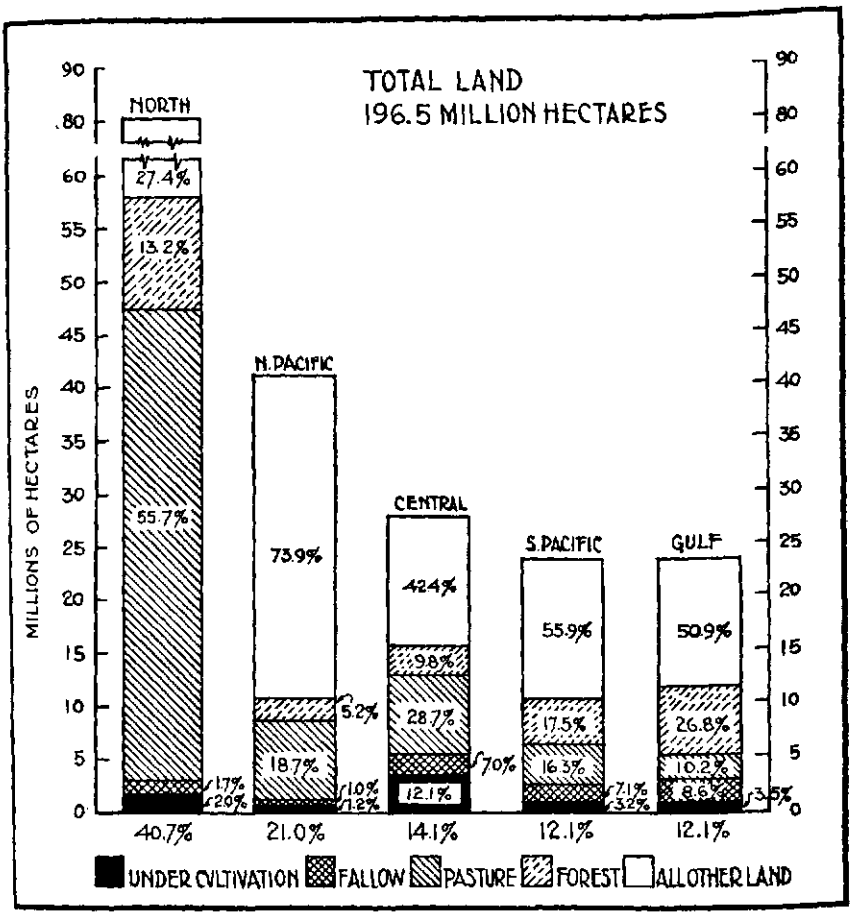

FIG. 11.—Utilization of land by zones, 1930. (See Appendix A, Table 12.)

the country, the Central zone contains more than a third (36.4 per cent) of the total crop land.[38] If the figures for land under cultivation

of public land not covered by the census (Appendix A, Table 35) should be distributed between the several classes indicated. Since no survey or other studies have been made of public lands, however, there is no way to make the distribution in question. The following classification of public land made by the Ministry of Agriculture (see *Sugestiones para la elaboración del Plan Sexenal 1934-1935*) is admittedly little more than a guess: arable—6 per cent; pasture—25 per cent; forest—15 per cent; and mountain—54 per cent.

[38] When one recalls the figures for population distribution—48.6 per cent of the total population and 45.4 per cent of the economically active population occupied in agricul-

be used as the basis of comparison, it turns out that almost half of the land under cultivation in the Republic is in the Central zone.[39]

But the outstanding fact demonstrated by both charts is the relatively small amount of land in Mexico classified at the present time as crop land: 7.4 per cent of the whole Republic; only 3.7 per cent of the great North zone which comprises 40.7 per cent of the area of the Republic; and even as low as 2.2 per cent of the North Pacific zone, the next largest geographical area.[40] These statistics will take on additional significance if the reader will recall that in most European countries the proportion of crop land to all land varies between 20 and 40 per cent—in Italy, for example, the

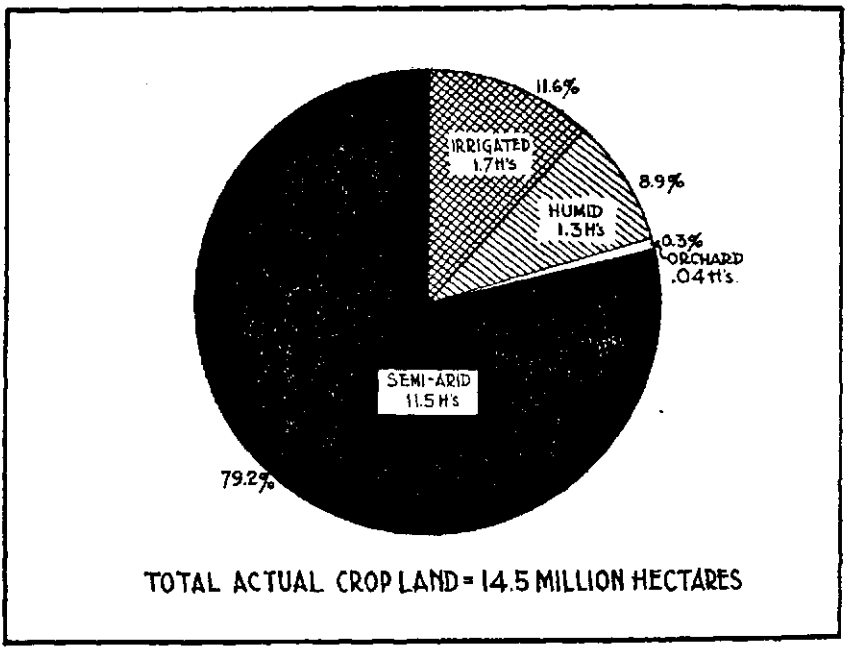

FIG. 12.—Classification of actual crop land, 1930. (See Appendix A, Tables 15 and 16.)

percentage is approximately 44, in Germany 43, in France 40, and in Spain 31.[41]

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ture—the reason for the unequal concentration of crop land in the Central zone becomes apparent.

[39] Appendix A, Table 12.

[40] Even these figures fall short of telling the whole story: crop land in 12 states out of the total of 31 political divisions is 7 per cent or less of the total area, and in 6 states is less than 3 per cent. See Appendix A, Table 11.

[41] *International Yearbook of Agricultural Statistics, 1931-32*, pp. xiv-xv.

RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT OF "GOOD" CROP LAND

The next point revealed by the 1930 census is the very small proportion of Mexico's actual crop land which may be classified as naturally "good" crop land. Over 79 per cent of the total of 14.5 million hectares of crop land is semiarid (*temporal*), less than 12 per cent is irrigated (that is, rescued "at a price" from the semiarid area), and only 8.9 per cent is naturally humid (Fig. 12). In these figures lies the justification for our rather lengthy preoccupation with the statistics of rainfall and climate.

Distributed by zones the statistics for the various classes of crop land are even more revealing. Thus in Fig. 13, it is apparent that

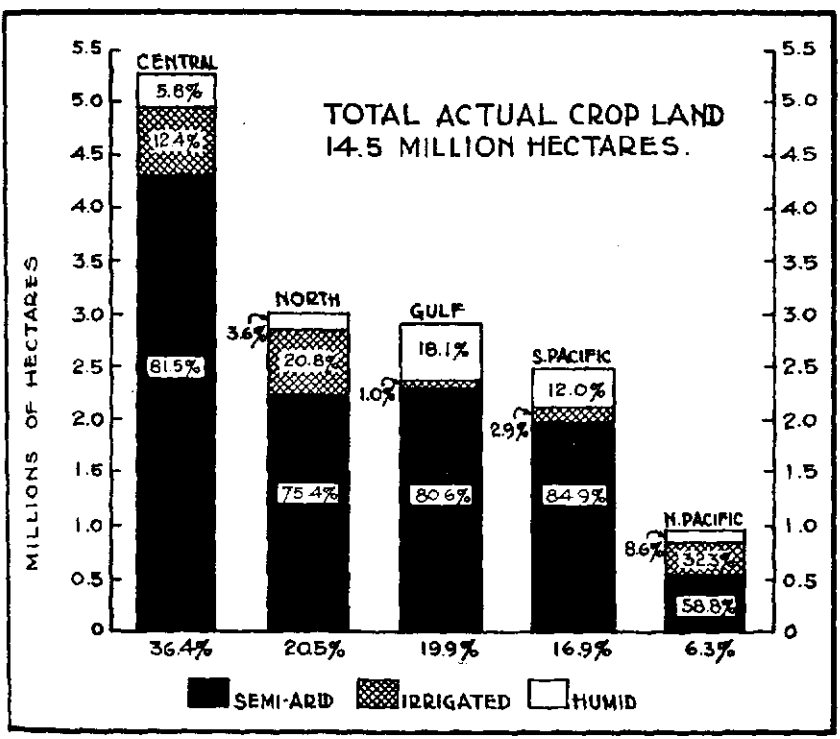

FIG. 13.—Classification of actual crop land by zones, 1930. (Because of the smallness of the area involved, "orchard land" is not included in this chart. See Appendix A, Table 16.)

most of the actual crop land (36.4 per cent of the total) is found in the Central zone. At the same time it is equally clear that by far the greater part of this land is classified as semiarid. In only one zone—

the North Pacific, containing only 6.3 per cent of the total crop land in the Republic—does the proportion of semiarid land drop below 60 per cent. In all other zones it is three-fourths or more. Stated in terms of farm practice this means that production in all but a very small part of the area in farms is dependent upon the often insufficient and almost always erratic rainfall. In only one part of the country—the tropical and semitropical Gulf states—is as much as 18 per cent of the land judged to be naturally humid. With the exception of Lower California where crop land is, generally speaking, either irrigated or nonexistent, in only one state does the amount of semiarid land fall as low as 40 per cent; in 16 states the proportion of semiarid and crop land to all crop land is more than the average of 79 per cent for the whole Republic and in 8 states the percentage is 85 or over.[42]

SMALL AMOUNT OF POTENTIAL CROP LAND

In the 1930 census each agriculturist was asked to state how much of the land in his property not worked during the last five years (that is, according to the census definition not classified as "crop land") was "easily susceptible to being opened to cultivation." The answers to this question when they were all added together gave a total of 8.8 million hectares for the whole Republic. This would mean that Mexico, presumably without the expenditure of much money or labor, could increase by some 61 per cent the amount of crop land at present in existence thus bringing the total crop land up to 23.3 million hectares, or 11.9 per cent of the total area of the Republic (Fig. 14).

As may be seen in Fig. 15, there was a wide variation in the estimate of the amount of potential crop land as between the various agricultural statistical zones. In the North it was thought the crop land could be more than doubled. Similarly in the Gulf area it was estimated that the crop land could be raised from 12.1 per cent to 21.8 per cent of the total area—an increase of about 80 per cent. In the Central zone, where, once again, the reader is reminded there exists the greatest concentration of agricultural population and hence the greatest need for land, it was believed that the amount of crop land now in existence could be increased by only about 14 per cent or from 19.1 to 21.7 per cent of the total area of the zone. In no zone was it felt that as much as one-fourth of the total area could be regarded as crop land actual and potential.

These figures are, of course, at best only estimates. The amount of

[42] Appendix A, Table 15.

crop land in Mexico actual and potential may be more or less than 23.3 million hectares. If the standard of measurement be "the ex-

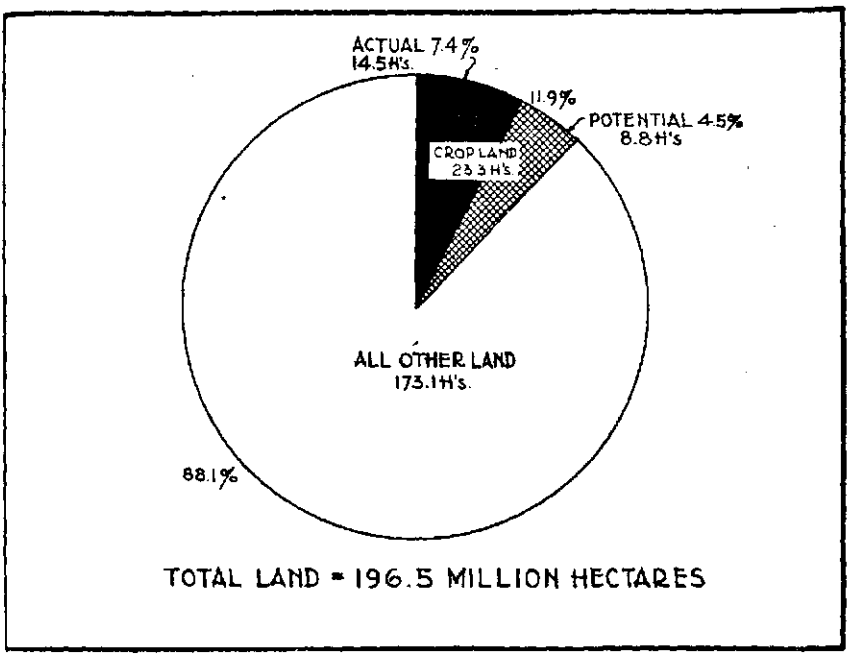

FIG. 14.—Crop land actual and potential compared with all other types of land, 1930. (See Appendix A, Tables 13 and 14.)

treme limits of physical possibility," undoubtedly the figure should be raised. If, on the other hand, the test applied be "land which it is economically feasible to cultivate," it is quite possible that the estimate is too high.[43] Accepting the figures as they stand for what they are worth, the conclusion is inescapable : not only is Mexico possessed of a relatively small amount of crop land, but the possibilities of increasing the total area of crop land without resort to expensive works of irrigation, drainage, and so forth, are relatively limited. How great a capital investment would be necessary and how rapid would be the rise of the curve of diminishing returns should Mexico

[43] Of the several estimates which have been made aside from the census figures, not even the most optimistic has placed the total amount of cultivable land at more than 20 per cent (39.3 million hectares) of the total area of the Republic. More conservative guesses have been around 15 per cent (29.5 million hectares). See Fabila, *Apuntes relativa al problema de la distribución ejidal en México*, pp. 66-67, and the estimate of the National Agrarian Commission cited in Fernández y Fernández, "Aspectos de nuestro economía agrícola," *El Economista*, No. 118, pp. 29-30.

seek to bring under cultivation any considerable amount of the presumably marginal lands now classified as "potentially cultivable," it is impossible to say; but it would appear that, given the present

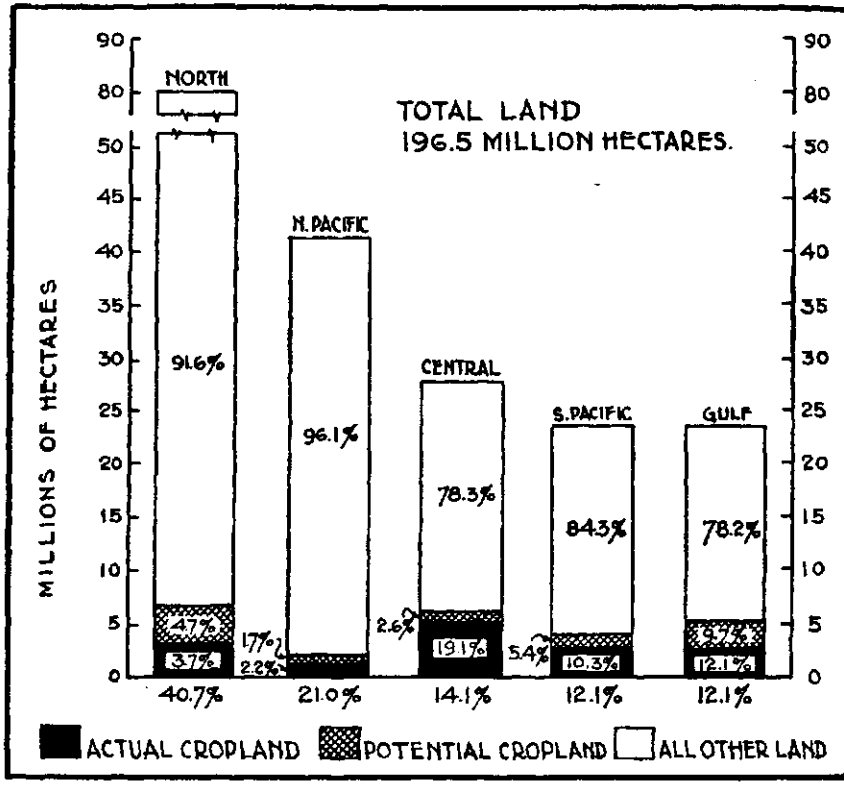

FIG. 15.—Crop land actual and potential compared with all other types of land by zones, 1930. (See Appendix A, Table 14.)

state of the agricultural arts and sciences in the world, limits set by climate, soil, and topography would soon be reached beyond which it would be extremely expensive to go.[44] It is more than likely that something in excess of 75 per cent of Mexico's land will for a long time to come, certainly, be unavailable for crop-growing purposes.

[44] The careful estimate of agricultural resources made by McBride concludes with the statement that the *best* agricultural land in Mexico probably does not exceed 27,500 square miles, i.e., about 7 million hectares. McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

LOW YIELDS

In Fig 16 are charted the statistics as reported by the Direction of Rural Economy for the nine most important crops grown in Mexico in order of their rank in terms of the area planted.[45] As the chart indicates, Mexican crops are of two varieties—those of the temperate zone (corn, frijoles, wheat, barley, and garbanzos) and those of the semitropical and tropical zones (cotton, henequen, coffee, and sugar-cane). In terms of area planted and to somewhat lesser degree in

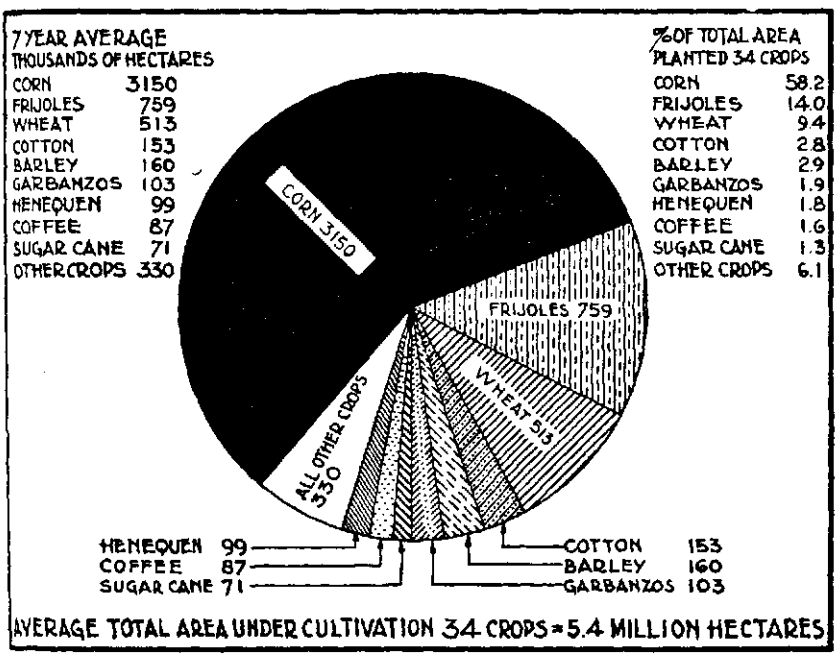

FIG. 16.—Average area planted in nine crops compared with the average total area under cultivation for thirty-four crops, 1927-1933. (See Appendix A, Tables 60 and 62.)

terms of value, by far the most important crops are corn, frijoles, and wheat. Corn dominates the field with a greater area planted than all other crops combined.

[45] It will be noted in Fig. 16 and the corresponding table in Appendix A that the area under cultivation is appreciably less than that reported in the 1930 agricultural census (see Fig. 10). Although the figures of the census are probably more accurate than those of the Direction of Rural Economy, the statistics of the Direction are nevertheless to be preferred in all cases referring to individual crops because they are the only ones available covering a period of years.

In the raising of the temperate zone crops Mexican agriculture is, generally speaking, notably unsuccessful. On the average the yield per hectare of corn in Mexico is 6.1 metric quintals (1 quintal equals 100 kilograms) compared, for example, with 22.0 quintals in Canada, 19.0 in the Argentine, 16.2 in the United States, 15.5 in Italy and, 15.0 in Spain.[46] Indeed, in yield per hectare of corn Mexico ranks among the lowest in the world. Out of 45 countries for which average corn yield per hectare figures are given in the *International Yearbook of Agricultural Statistics*[47] for the period 1923-1927, Mexico ranked 39!

When we examine the figures for corn production within Mexico, the results are equally startling. Two-thirds of the total area planted in corn in the year covered by the 1930 agricultural census yielded 6 quintals or less per hectare. In the Central zone, the so-called granary of the country, where more corn was planted than in all the rest of the Republic put together, 77.7 per cent of the area planted yielded 6 quintals or less per hectare. In only 23.7 per cent of the total area planted in corn did production per hectare even begin to approach (that is, show a yield of 10 quintals or more per hectare) the yields, for example, of 15.5 quintals in the same year in Spain, 14.0 in France, 13.8 in Italy—to say nothing of 22.7 in Canada and 20.9 in Austria.[48] In the Central zone in Mexico in the year in question only 6.4 per cent of the total area planted in corn showed a yield of 10 quintals or more per hectare. In the North zone, where the second largest area was planted, the yield was 10 quintals or more per hectare in only 4.6 per cent of the total area.[49]

Similarly in the case of wheat, in spite of the fact that a large proportion of Mexican wheat is raised on irrigated land, Mexican production is unusually low: on the average 6.0 quintals per hectare as compared, for example, with 13.0 quintals in Italy, 11.5 in Canada, 9.7 in the United States, and 8.9 in Spain. Of the 62 countries for which figures on wheat production are available for the period 1923-1927, Mexico, in average production of wheat per hectare, ranked 59. Almost 73 per cent of the total area planted in wheat in Mexico in 1929-1930 yielded 6 quintals or less per hectare. Approximately two-thirds of the total land planted in wheat in the Republic was planted in the Central zone, but of this area only 1.0 per cent yielded 10 quintals or more of wheat per hectare while 82.3 per cent yielded 6 quintals or less. In the North zone, with a little more than a

[46] Appendix A, Table 63.

[47] Pp. 178-81.

[48] *Ibid.*, pp. 176-79.

[49] Appendix A, Table 72. As has already been remarked, however, the agricultural year 1929-1930 was considered a "bad" year.

fifth of the total wheat area planted in the Republic, the figures were : 4.4 per cent with a yield of 10 quintals or more and 59.9 per cent with a yield of 6 quintals or less.[50]

For the most important noncereal, temperate zone crop in Mexico—frijoles—no statistics are available on which to base comparison of Mexican production with that of a number of other representative countries. However, it is perhaps sufficiently revealing to point out that Spain, which on the average plants about 60 per cent as much land each year in frijoles as Mexico, nevertheless, surpasses Mexican production four times over.[51]

In the case of the principal tropical and semitropical products raised, Mexico makes a much better showing in the average yields per hectare planted than in the temperate zone crops just discussed. The yield of cotton per hectare planted averages 2.6 quintals as compared with 2.3 quintals in Italy, 1.7 in the United States, 0.7 in Argentina.[52] Such little coffee as Mexico produces (about 0.2 per cent of the average annual world production for the period 1923-1928) is also produced at yields that compare favorably with other coffee raising countries—to wit : Mexico 5.2 quintals per hectare, Brazil 3.3 quintals per hectare, Venezuela 5.0 and Guatemala 6.0. Similar statistics might be presented for sugar-cane and henequen.

These somewhat more encouraging figures for tropical and semitropical products lighten but, because of the relatively small areas planted and the small volume of production, do not completely relieve the dark record of Mexican agriculture. For the most part there seems to be little reason to alter the summary statement of one Mexican agronomist : "Mexican agricultural production can be described in two words : scarce and costly."[53]

[50] Appendix A, Table 73.

[51] Costo Villegas, "La importancia de nuestra agricultura," *El Trimestre Económico*, I, 128.

[52] However, the amount of cotton raised in Mexico is relatively insignificant. Compare, for example, the normal annual production in Mexico of around 278,000 bales with that of the state of Texas which varies between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 bales a year.

[53] Fernández, y Fernández, "La realidad agrícola Mexicana," *Crisol*, May, 1931, p. 370.

CHAPTER X

LAND AND WATER TO VILLAGES

THE SUBSTANCE of the facts presented in the preceding chapter may be summed up in the homely statement that, agriculturally speaking, Mexico is "poor pickings."

But what are we to conclude? That Mexico's agricultural resources are insufficient to support her people? That the population is fated for purely geographical reasons to live in poverty if not die of starvation? That, as some have held, the whole agrarian reform is hopeless and doomed from the start because there is not enough cultivable land to go round and because "Mexico is poor, hungry and miserable by reason of natural law"?[1]

In the opinion of the present writer no one of these conclusions is justified. It is true that Mexico's agricultural resources are limited, but this is far from saying that they are nonexistent or that they are existent only in such quantities and in such shape as to condemn the present population to hunger and misery. Mexico, agriculturally speaking, is not the treasure house of the world, but then neither is the country a beggar among nations. The facts presented so far tell only part of the story. Before we may draw any final conclusions, and especially before we may venture upon any dogmatic statements with reference to the bearing of the facts of Mexico's physical equipment for agriculture on the agrarian reform, certain qualifications must be introduced; lights and shades must be added to the stark black and white picture which has been painted of Mexican farming.

In the first place it must be noted that Mexico is in fact an agricultural country. Over 70 per cent of the economically active population earns its living in farming[2] as compared with 14.4 per cent in

[1] "I would have been the first of the agrarian apostles in Mexico were it not for the fact that the idea of the marvelous riches of our territory is ridiculous. . . . For science, out of the 200 million hectares of the national territory, there are not more than 12 million hectares 'very imperfectly subject to cultivation'. . . . These 12 million hectares do not, for the most part, represent agricultural riches, but agricultural poverty which rewards with ruin those foolish enough to dedicate to it their capital, work and thought." Bulnes, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-20.

[2] Including crop production, stockraising, forestry, fishing and hunting.

industry,[3] 2.1 per cent in transportation and communication, 5.3 per cent in commerce, and 8.0 per cent in all other classes of occupation.[4] In the South Pacific states the proportion of the economically active population engaged in agriculture is almost 86 per cent of the total economically active population. If the Federal District is excepted, in no state in the Republic does the proportion of the population occupied in farming drop as low as one half, while 19 states show more than the 70.2 per cent average for the Republic.[5]

In terms of the gross value of the annual production, agriculture outranks all other industries except manufacturing. With an average annual value in recent years of 722.5 million pesos the products of agriculture are approximately twice as valuable as those of mining and metallurgy and around eight times as valuable as those of the petroleum industry. If due allowance be made between the difference in the cost of raw materials in manufacturing and in agriculture it is more than likely that agriculture also outranks manufacturing in the value of its annual product.[6]

In the second place, although it is easy to exaggerate their importance, Mexico possesses in her tropics, forests, and pastures resources which have scarcely been tapped, much less exhausted.

The difficulties in the way of the successful exploitation of the tropics in Mexico are many and real. It cannot be denied that the prodigality of vegetation demanding unceasing struggle to keep land cleared and ways of communication open (if, indeed, it is feasible to construct ways of communication in any case), the necessity often for expensive works of drainage and, above all, the insalubrious climate, make the "conquest of the tropics" in Mexico, as in other parts of the world, a hazardous undertaking.[7] Nevertheless, the fact remains that approximately one-fourth of Mexico's total area is in the tropics and semitropics. The more ardent proponents of the

[3] Mining, petroleum, and manufacturing.

[4] Appendix A, Table 3.

By way of comparison it may be noted that in Germany 30.5 per cent of the economically active population is engaged in agriculture; in France 38.3 per cent; in Italy 56.1 per cent; in Canada 35.0 per cent; and in the United States 26.3 per cent. *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1933*, pp. 314-15.

[5] Appendix A, Table 45.

[6] Appendix A, Table 86.

[7] "It is true that the rain-forest belts of the tropics and the drier subtropical lands about their borders, have large areas of land capable of high development. But to the white man a tropical settlement is still like the medieval walled town: the wild beasts of legend are the microbes, and the wall is medical science. It still costs too much to keep the wall in repair, and commercial development is aimed primarily at money making, not the conquest of tropical diseases." From Isaiah Bowman, *The Pioneer Fringe*, p. 56, published by the American Geographical Society of New York.

thesis that "in the tropics lies the salvation of Mexico"[8] have undoubtedly overstated their case. The tropics of Mexico are not a garden of Eden waiting to drop their fruits in man's lap. Their development will require time, money, and labor. But the point is that they are there to be developed and there is considerable evidence in support of the contention that the exploitation of these lands, large areas of which are now lying untouched and in some cases even unknown, will probably cost much less and the results be more remunerative[9] than to attempt, as the government has been doing, to make the deserts of Chihuahua and Coahuila produce corn and wheat. That this is not idle dreaming may be seen from even a most casual review of the available statistics. The outstanding cases in point are bananas and fresh vegetables, principally tomatoes. The production of bananas has grown in the last dozen years by leaps and bounds until at the present time Mexico is producing on the average around 315,000 metric tons of bananas a year as compared with approximately 44,000 tons before the revolution. Tomatoes for export (produced in the semitropical Sonora river valleys) which before the revolution were practically unknown as a commercial crop, represented, until the industry was hit by American tariffs and the depression, the tidy sum of around 19 million pesos in Mexico's annual export trade. Although in less degree, similar expansion could be indicated in the production of coffee and sugar cane.[10]

In none of the crops just mentioned does Mexico bulk very large as compared with countries in which these products are specialties. But this fact is somewhat beside the point under discussion here—

[8] For samples of this doctrine see Fernández y Fernández, "Aspectos de nuestra economía agrícola," *El Economista*, July 13, 1933, p. 682.

[9] As a rough index of the economic value of tropical and semitropical crops as compared with temperate zone crops in Mexico it may be noted that the average annual gross farm value of the 10 most important tropical and semitropical crops in the years 1925-1929, for example, was 215 pesos per hectare, while for 23 nontropical crops in the same period it was 51 pesos per hectare. Comparisons of the average annual gross farm value per hectare for typical individual tropical and nontropical crops during the years indicated were: tropical and semitropical—tobacco 524 pesos, vanilla 515 pesos, coffee 315 pesos, and sugarcane 302 pesos; primarily temperate zone—frijoles 23 pesos, barley 27 pesos, corn 45 pesos, and wheat 64 pesos. (However, there were some temperate zone crops which also had high economic value per hectare—for example: alfalfa 555 pesos, dried chile 426 pesos, and melons 658 pesos.) Also, as bearing on the same point, it may be noted that in the years 1927-1929 the average annual farm value of the 10 most important tropical and semitropical crops, despite the relatively small areas under cultivation as compared with the temperate zone crops, was around 154 million pesos, or approximately one-third of the value of all crops produced. Figures from Alanís Patiño, "Como podría ser la producción agrícola nacional," *El Economista*, July 6, 1933, p. 647.

[10] Appendix A, Tables 57, 58 and 66.

namely, that the tropics offer real opportunities for the expansion of Mexican agriculture which have not yet been plumbed. The best evidence of the fact that the tropics in Mexico can be exploited is that they are being exploited—and that in increasing degree.[11]

As was pointed out in the preceding chapter, 66.5 million hectares, or 33.8 per cent of the total land in Mexico, is classified at the present time as pasture. If to this figure there be added the very considerable proportion of land now classified as forest, brush land, and fallow crop land which may also be regarded as pasture, it is probably not an exaggeration to say that fully half of the total land in Mexico is, theoretically at least, available for the production of livestock. Without attempting at this point to offer detailed statistical proof of the matter, it may be added that what is true in theory is also true in fact. The physical equipment of Mexico for the production of livestock is surpassed by few countries in the New World.[12]

According to the 1930 census the livestock population in Mexico in millions of head was: cattle 10.1; horses 1.9; mules 0.8; burros 2.2; sheep 3.7; goats 6.5; and hogs 3.7.[13] As compared with other representative countries in the world these figures are relatively low.[14] However, the point in interest here is not so much the comparative position of the country as it is the possibilities of the expansion of the livestock industry of Mexico. Recent "conservative estimates" by Dr. José Figueroa, Chief of the Department of Livestock, are that Mexico at the present time has the physical "capacity to sustain without great effort" twice the number of cattle revealed by the

[11] In the statements made here no account is taken of the problem of marketing tropical products. It may be said in passing that this problem is too often posed purely in terms of exports and sales on the international market. Markets abroad may be necessary for the full development of some Mexican tropical crops. However, figures for the per capita consumption of sugar, coffee, and bananas, not to mention such facts as that Mexico is at the present time a net importer of cacao, would seem to indicate that there is considerable room for expansion in the internal market. See in this connection the monographs recently published by the *Secretaría de Economía Nacional* entitled *El café* and *El cacao*.

[12] ". . . There is scarcely a place in the whole Republic in which it is not possible to raise some of our domestic species; from sea level up to 4,000 meters in altitude . . . our lands are susceptible to use [for livestock production] and it is possible for the livestock industry to develop to the point where it would compete favorably with the proverbial riches of other nations not only in quality . . . but also in quantity. . . ." Figueroa, "Posibilidades de la ganadería mexicana," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, I, 22.

[13] Appendix A, Table 71.

[14] In the nearest census year the ratio of heads of cattle to human population in sparsely settled countries similar to Mexico was approximately 2.8 in Argentina, 1.9 in Australia, and 0.9 in Venezuela as compared with 0.6 in Mexico. In representative thickly settled countries the ratios were 0.5 in the United States, 0.3 in Germany, and 0.4 in France. The ratio of hog population to human population was roughly: the United States 0.5; Germany 0.4; Argentina 0.3; and Mexico 0.2.

1930 census, five and a half times the number of hogs, three and a half times the number of sheep and something less than double the number of goats—to name only the most important species.[15] When one adds that until quite recently (when the depreciation of Mexican currency and high tariffs greatly reduced the volume) Mexico was importing around 23 million pesos a year worth of lard, meats and dairy products—not to mention over 1.5 million pesos worth of eggs[16]—and that the annual per capita consumption of meat in Mexico is probably not more than 40 pounds as compared with, for example, 151 pounds per capita in Canada, 290 pounds in Argentina, 103 pounds in Germany and 156 pounds in the United States,[17] both the possibility and the potential need for an expansion of the livestock industry in Mexico would appear to be sufficiently demonstrated.[18]

According to the findings of the 1930 agricultural census 25.9 million hectares, or 13.2 per cent of the total area of Mexico, is in forests. The value of all forest products (not including chicle[19]) in 1929 was approximately 21 million pesos. Some 3.4 million hectares or around 13 per cent of the area in forests is at present in exploitation.[20] Although a large part of the area listed in the census as forests is brush land rather than forests properly speaking and although, because of the wasteful methods of exploitation which have characterized the industry since the days of Independence, the forest resources of Mexico are greatly depleted and relatively of

[15] Figueroa, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

That the estimates of Dr. Figueroa are truly conservative would seem to be borne out by other investigations. In a field study made by the present writer in 1929 of the cattle industry in northern Mexico, the following conclusion was reached: "It can safely be said that with the ranges properly fenced and watered and with the introduction of modern scientific methods of cattle raising anywhere between 5 and 7 million head of cattle could be carried on the ranges of Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Sonora, and Durango" (Simpson, "The Cattle Industry in Northern Mexico," p. 46). The foregoing estimate was made on the basis of an assumed grazing area of something less than one-third the total area of the states in question. As a matter of fact the 1930 census has since revealed the pasture land in these states to be well over half their total area.

[16] Appendix A, Table 65.

[17] Estimates are based on data for the year 1926. Simpson, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-12.

[18] Further support of the "bullish" position taken here with reference to the potentialities of the Mexican livestock industry will be found in *La industria de la carne*, a recent monograph of the Ministry of National Economy; and in Antonio Martínez Barragán, "Las pérdidas de la ganadería Mexicana por enfermedades y mala técnica," and Francisco Moguel, "El consumo de la carne en México," both published in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, I.

[19] The average annual value of chicle production in recent years (1928-1930) has been around 9 million pesos. *México económico, 1928-1930*, p. 39.

[20] Appendix A, Table 11; and *México en cifras*, p. 43a.

little moment compared with those of many countries,[21] nevertheless Mexico still has vast areas which, properly worked, would add greatly to the agricultural riches of the nation. Statistical proof of this assertion is not possible because of the lack of adequate information. The following paragraph from a careful study made by Tom Gill in 1931 under the auspices of the American Tropical Plant Research Foundation suggests the potentialities waiting to be tapped in Mexican forests.

. . . Mexico is one of the countries whose forests and forest soil are of wide extent and of very great importance in her social and political economy. Aside from their influence on agriculture those forest riches, under rational management, might represent a renewable resource of great economic value. Data collected in the last ten years show that the forest products taken from the area then covered by woods and excluding chaparral forests and brush lands, averaged twenty million cubic meters yearly, but their productive capacity under a very conservative plan of cutting could easily be increased to some thirty-six million cubic meters.[22]

It is, as the same authority goes on to point out, particularly in her tropical regions[23] that Mexico's most valuable forest resources lie :

In the hot tropical zone, one finds the true tropical species and woods of greatest value, the so-called precious woods. Here grow mahogany, cedar, grenadillo, guyacan, sapote and many trees with valuable gums and resins such as rubber and chicle. . . . Its more accessible forests are now culled of practically all their valuable trees, although vast areas of unexploited timber lands still exist, containing some of the most magnificent hardwood forests in the world.[24]

Finally, attention must again be called to the fact that, quite aside from whatever room for expansion there may be in tropical agriculture, the production of livestock and in forestry (tropical and otherwise), Mexico's agricultural resources could in effect be greatly increased by improvements in the present techniques of farming. And here reference is made not to expensive works of irrigation, the use of costly fertilizers or any other equipments or methods requiring large outlays of capital, but rather to such relatively simple and inexpensive changes as those involved in rational as opposed to

[21] In Germany the proportion of forest and woodlands to all lands is 27.3 per cent; in France 19.1 per cent; in Italy 16.1 per cent; and in Argentina 26.5 per cent.

[22] *Tropical Forests of the Caribbean*, p. 185. Reprinted by permission of the Tropical Plant Research Foundation.

[23] A recent estimate of the Ministry of Agriculture gives the area of tropical forests in Mexico as 6.6 million hectares, or approximately one-fourth of the total area, in forests. *Memoria de la Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento—1933*. p. 154a.

[24] Gill, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-86.

traditional crop rotation, selection of seed, and choice of planting and harvesting times. One small illustration must suffice to show the possibilities along this line. In the ejido village La Lola in the state of México in 1931 it was found that the variety of wheat known as "Pacific Blue Stem" produced 1,700 kilograms per hectare in a period of 180 days while wheat grown from native seed took 212 days to produce 850 kilograms per hectare. In other words, with no change in farming methods except the importation of a new type of seed, production was increased 100 per cent and the growing time cut down over 14 per cent![35] If gains such as these can be made simply by the selection of seed, one wonders what might not be accomplished if Mexican farmers should adopt steel plows, tractors, chemical fertilizers and the rest of the paraphernalia of modern agriculture in place of the wooden plows, oxen, and fallow field system now practically universal.[36]

If now once more we put the questions—what are we to conclude? what are the bearings of the facts concerning Mexican agricultural resources on the agrarian reform?—it would appear that a fair answer to these questions would be as follows:

(1) Mexican agricultural resources are limited in the sense that they are not what, given the very considerable area of the country, one might expect.

(2) Nevertheless, Mexico, at the present time with some 14.5 million hectares of actual crop land, with at least 8.8 million hectares of potential crop land, and with pasture and forest resources, in many regions, as vast as they are of high quality, has more than

[35] Fernández y Fernández, "Aspectos de nuestra economía agrícola," *El Economista*, July 6, 1933, p. 647.

[36] Crop production per male worker in agriculture in the United States during the last 90 years has increased nearly two and a half times and agricultural production per worker has increased three-fold. In the five years from 1922 to 1926 agricultural production increased by more than one-fourth while crop acreage remained practically stationary and labor engaged in agriculture declined. (*Recent Social Trends*, I, 99-100.) Modern machine methods of agriculture applied in the cornfields of Michoacán or Guanajuato may not produce quite the same results as when applied in Iowa or Illinois, but one cannot doubt but that they will produce some results.

If the total actual crop land be divided into the total economically active population engaged in agriculture it will be found that at the present time each square kilometer of crop land in Mexico supports only 24.9 persons as compared, for example, with 37.0 persons per square kilometer of crop land in France, 47.6 persons in Germany and 74.4 persons in Italy. Surely it would be unreasonable to assume, even admitting all the shortcomings of Mexican soil and climate, that the low carrying capacity of the land in Mexico just indicated is entirely due to nature.

enough agricultural land to support the present population, or and even larger population,[27] at a standard of living far above the present subsistence level on which most of the people live and have their being.

(3) In sum, the agrarian and agricultural problems in Mexico would appear to be functions in the first instance, not of the factors of the quantity or quality of the available physical resources, but rather of the uses to which these resources have been put. If agricultural production in Mexico is low, if the people are hungry and miserable, it is not because God, natural law, or any other abstraction has so ordained, but rather: (a) because the ownership of the land has been concentrated in the hands of the privileged few and under a semifeudal system either worked inefficiently or not at all; (b) because there has been an almost complete lack of agricultural credit; (c) because the population has been distributed with inadequate relation to agricultural resources; (d) because systems of communication, marketing, and transportation have been insufficient or nonexistent; and (e) because the techniques used in Mexican farming are, for the most part, of the most primitive type. But are these things really true? And, if so, are not these conditions the very ones which the agrarian reform is supposed to have remedied?

To answer these questions will be one of the purposes of the remaining chapters in this section. We will begin by centering our attention on the point: how well has the reform succeeded in redistributing land tenure, in breaking up the large estates and in taking from those who have and giving to those who have not?

Progress

In presenting and analyzing the materials available related to the redistribution of land and water under the agrarian reform our first concern will be with the ejido. In the second place, in order to round out the picture of the achievements to date in this field of the reform, statistics will be given covering land distribution by the several other methods (colonization, settlement on public lands, and so forth) developed as subsidiary procedures. Finally, an effort will be made to summarize the whole question by reviewing the figures on the size, character, and disposal of landholdings at the present time in Mexico.

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[27] Some would claim a *much* larger population. See, for example, Loyo, "Las deficiencias cuantitativas de la población de México," *Crisol*, January 1932, pp. 41-47.

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND AND WATER UNDER THE EJIDO LAWS

Under the ejido laws, as the reader will recall, there are four methods by which a village may receive lands: (1) by *restitución*—that is, the restoration of lands which it can be proved were previously owned and unjustly or illegally alienated; (2) by *dotación*—that is, the dotation or outright gift of lands where it can be shown that a village has no land or insufficient land for the needs of its inhabitants; (3) by *confirmación*—that is, the legalization of the right to have and to hold lands already in the possession of a village; and (4) *amplificación*—that is, the enlargement or amplification of the amount of land given to a village where the original grant has proved insufficient for the needs of the inhabitants.

It should also be remembered that lands under the ejido laws are given first in provisional possession by the State Agrarian Commissions and that title becomes final—that is, a definitive grant is made—only after the case has been reviewed by the National Agrarian Commission and the president of the Republic has issued an official decree to that effect. Because of the transitory and indeterminate nature of the provisional grants, unless otherwise indicated, all statistics in the following pages will refer to definitive grants only.

Finally, the reader must be warned that at best the official statistics of land distribution are only approximations to reality. This is partly due to the inadequate funds and time devoted to the preparation of such statistics and partly to the fact that for various reasons the figures have been distorted at their source. It has been freely admitted by the National Agrarian Commission itself that in the whole period up to October 1931, in their zeal to make as many grants as possible, the employees of the Commission were "careless of the veracity of the data which served as a basis for presidential decrees granting land to villages as well as in the correct execution of those decrees."[28] There is also evidence that the deliberate padding of agrarian censuses has not been an unknown phenomenon.

1. *Under the ejido laws, approximately 7.6 million hectares of land have been distributed to 4,090 villages to the benefit of 754,577 ejidatarios.*

These figures[29] compiled by the Agrarian Department (National Agrarian Commission) to be understood properly need to be qualified and interpreted.

The statistics refer only to definitive grants made up to December

[28] Statement of the National Agrarian Commission as reported in *El Nacional*, July 7, 1933.

[29] Appendix A, Table 19.

31, 1933, the last date for which detailed information is available.

The figure of 7.6 million hectares does not, accurately speaking, represent the *amount of land distributed* for it includes 531,046 hectares granted by confirmation. Grants by confirmation are practically always made in connection with grants by dotation and restitution—that is, grants by confirmation are simply the legal recognition of title to lands already in possession of the villages.[80] Most of the land, therefore, included under the heading of "confirmation" cannot be credited as an achievement of the agrarian reform. However, in the case of a few villages—21 to be exact—grants have been made which to all intents and purposes are *ex post facto* dotations, since for the most part they represent cases of villages which have been "confirmed" in the right to hold land acquired (seized?) from public lands or from private properties.[81] The statistics of the Agrarian Department do not show how much land the 21 villages in question have received; it is probably only a small fraction of the total amount of land granted by confirmation. If one were to answer the question: how much land has actually been *given* to villages under the ejido laws? it would be necessary to subtract from the total of all land distributed most of the land listed under the head of confirmation.

In the case of the *number of villages* which have received land it is obviously necessary to subtract from the total of all villages those granted amplifications; for, by definition, grants under the procedure of amplification are made only to villages which have already received land by restitution or dotation. Wherefore, the figure 4,090 instead of 4,260 given in the totals columns of Tables 17 and 19 in Appendix A.

For the *number of persons benefited* no subtractions from the grand totals need be made since this figure is not affected by the method of the grant. However, the figure of 754,577 cited above as the total number of ejidatarios is probably an overstatement of the number of ejidatarios who are actually the beneficiaries of definitive ejido grants at the present time (December 31, 1933). And this is true for several reasons.

In the first place, as has already been mentioned, there has un-

[80] See footnote 32 on p. 172.

[81] "When a pueblo petitions for lands and it is not possible to grant them because there is no legal sanction for the action, but which lands nevertheless have already been *occupied by force*, the possession of such lands may be *confirmed*, that is, the pueblos are given the right to continue occupying them." Caso, *El juicio agrario*, p. 25, quoted in Carvajal, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

doubtedly been considerable padding of agrarian censuses for the purpose of obtaining additional land.[32] This can be demonstrated after a fashion by comparing the statistics of the Agrarian Department with those of the 1930 agricultural census. This comparison shows that, although there were only 99 (or 2.4 per cent) *fewer* ejido villages reported by the Agrarian Department in 1933 than were reported by the agricultural census in 1930, the Agrarian Department nevertheless listed 219,385 *more* ejidatarios than were listed by the agricultural census. In other words, for approximately the same number of ejido villages the Agrarian Department reports 41 per cent more ejidatarios than the agricultural census.[33]

In the second place, the figures for the number of ejidatarios benefited by ejido grants compiled by the Agrarian Department are the sum of the heads of families appearing in the agrarian censuses at the time definitive possession was given in each case. Since the government has been giving land to villages for a period of almost eighteen years there have undoubtedly been numerous changes in the original census figures. Some ejidatarios have died, some have moved away, others have renounced their rights, and so forth. On the other hand, there have been some additions—for example, through the coming of age of the sons of ejidatarios, and by the return of emigrants from the United States. It would appear, however, that the losses have been greater than the gains.

2. *In addition to the villages in definitive possession of their land cited in the foregoing paragraphs, on December 31, 1933, there were 2,337 communities which had been given provisional possession of some 3 million hectares of land by the state agrarian authorities and which were awaiting final action on these grants by the federal agrarian authorities.*

Since, as has already been pointed out, provisional grants are of a

[32] Under the procedure of dotation the amount of land granted to a village is calculated on the basis of the presumptive needs of the heads of families dedicated to agriculture in the village. The number of such heads of families is arrived at in each case by a special agrarian census. In the determination of the total amount of land to be granted to the village account is taken of the amount of land, if any, already in the possession of the individuals and the village.

[33] Appendix A, Table 29. Despite the fact that one count was made in 1930 and the other in 1933, the two sets of figures here in question refer not only to approximately the same number of ejido communities but also to the *same* communities, for, although the 1930 census covered both provisional and definitive ejidos while the 1933 figures refer only to definitive ejidos, it is obvious that in the definitive ejidos of 1933 were included ejidos which in 1930 were classed as provisional. The only exceptions would be: (a) provisional possessions granted and converted into definitive possession after the taking of the agricultural census; (b) provisional possessions existing at the time of the agricultural census and later revoked; and (c) ejidos which in 1933 were still in the provisional stage.

temporary and transitory nature, ejidos in the process of becoming rather than ejidos in being, no further analysis of provisional grants will be undertaken. Such details as are available with regard to these grants will be found in Table 20, Appendix A.

3. *By far the larger part of the land distributed under the ejido laws has been granted by the method of outright gift or dotation.*

Approximately 5.8 million hectares or 82.4 per cent of all land (not including confirmations) given to villages has been granted by the process of dotation while only 1.1 million hectares or 15.0 per cent has been granted by restitution and less than 0.2 million hectares or 2.6 per cent by amplification.[34] (See Fig. 28, on p. 194.)

As an illumination of the rationale of the ejido program this fact is highly significant, for it indicates the extent to which the earlier and narrower conception that the purpose of the program was to restore lands to villages unjustly deprived of them has been abandoned in favor of the much broader and simpler principle that the goal of the reform is to take from those who have and give to those in need. Indeed, the shift in emphasis from restitution to dotation as the principal method of granting land to villages may be regarded as a triumph of social justice over legalism and caution. By electing the method of dotation the government assumed, in theory at any rate, the responsibility for paying for lands expropriated. But by the same token the agrarian reform ceased to be an effort (always complicated and often impossible of realization in practice) to right specific wrongs, and became frankly an undertaking to create general rights.

4. *The numbers of villages and persons which have received land under the ejido laws have varied greatly from state to state and from one section of the country to another. The central states outrank all others in both respects.*

As shown in Fig. 17 out of the total of 4,090 villages receiving definitive grants of land 2,050, or 50.1 per cent, are located in the Central zone. Similarly 59.0 per cent, or 445,209 of the total of 754,577 ejidatarios benefiting from grants of land to villages, are in the Central zone.[35]

As further evidence of the variation from state to state and from one section of the country to another in the numbers of ejido villages and ejidatarios it may be noted that less than half the states contain approximately three-fourths of all ejidos and ejidatarios.

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[34] Appendix A, Table 19.

[35] If the several states be ranked in descending order of the number of ejidos and of ejidatarios, however, it will be found that in both cases in the first half-dozen states there appear two states not classified in the Central zone: Veracruz (Gulf) and San Luis Potosí (North).

Generally speaking, there is a rough positive correlation between the total number of ejidatarios and the total number of persons engaged in agriculture. Thus the Central zone with 45.4 per cent of the economically active population engaged in agriculture has 59.0 per cent of the ejidatarios; the North zone with 18.4 per cent of the population occupied in agriculture has 18.8 per cent of the ejidatarios, and so forth. That this is not always true with the individual states, however, may be shown by the case of Oaxaca which contains 8.0 per cent of the population engaged in agriculture but only 3.3 per cent of the ejidatarios.[36]

What might be termed the greater intensity of the agrarian reform in the Central zone as compared with other parts of the country is explained partly by the fact that the Central zone is at once the region wherein are found the greatest concentration of population and the best agricultural lands. In many states, however, the presence or absence of strong leaders in sympathy with the agrarian movement has been quite as important in determining how many ejidatarios have benefited from the reform as the factors of the density of the population and the character of the agricultural resources.

5. *The majority of the villages which have received land have been communities of relatively small population.*

If the 4,049 communities in definitive possession of their lands for which the Agrarian Department has compiled data[37] be arranged by communities with populations of from 1 to 100, 101 to 500 and so on up to 5,000 and over, it will be found that approximately 54 per cent of all villages which have received land are in the class 101 to 500 and 26 per cent in the class 501 to 1,000, while at the opposite extreme only 0.3 per cent of the total villages are in the class 4,001 to 5,000 and another 0.3 per cent in the class of more than 5,000. In other words, approximately 80 per cent of the villages which have received land have less than 1,001 population while only 0.6 per cent have populations of 4,001 or more.

Although the small villages are, generally speaking, the ones which have received land, nevertheless, the number is relatively low compared with the total number of small villages in the Republic. Thus, out of a total of 18,559 villages reported by the 1930 census as being in the population size class 101 to 500, only 2,179 or 11.7 per cent had been given definitive possession of land at the end of 1933. In the class 501 to 1,000 the percentage of villages obtaining land as compared with the total number in the class was 30.8 per cent; in the next class (1,001 to 2,000) 38.8 per cent; and so forth. Of all com-

[36] Appendix A, Tables 4, 5, and 19.

[37] Appendix A, Table 26.

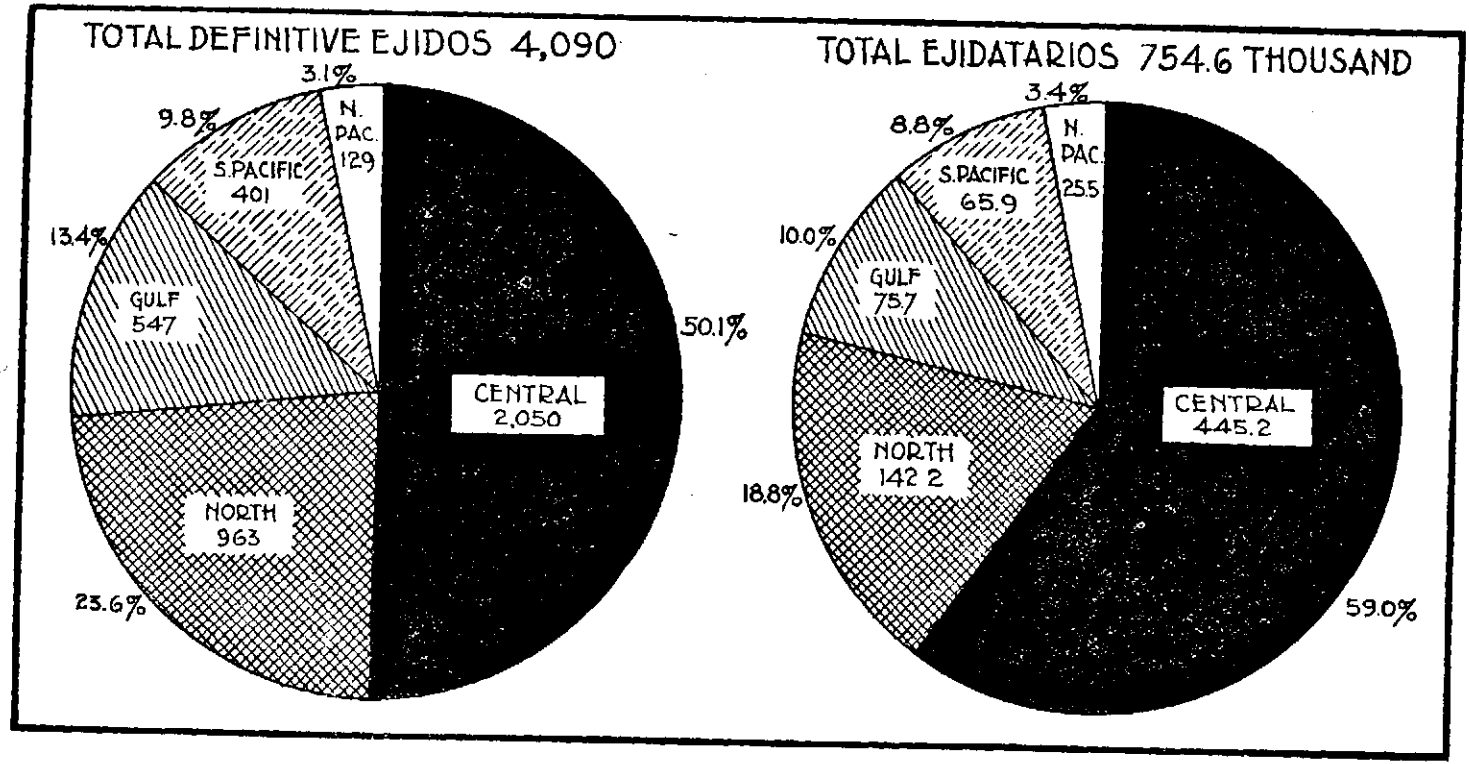

FIG. 17.—Total definitive ejidos and total ejidatarios by zones, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 19.)

munities of less than 1,001 population (71,794) only 4.5 per cent have received land.[38] It would appear that the larger a community is, up to the limit of 4,000, the better chance it has had to be the recipient of an ejido grant.

6. *The total area in ejidos is only 3.9 per cent of the area of the Republic.* In absolute numbers the largest amount of land in ejidos is found

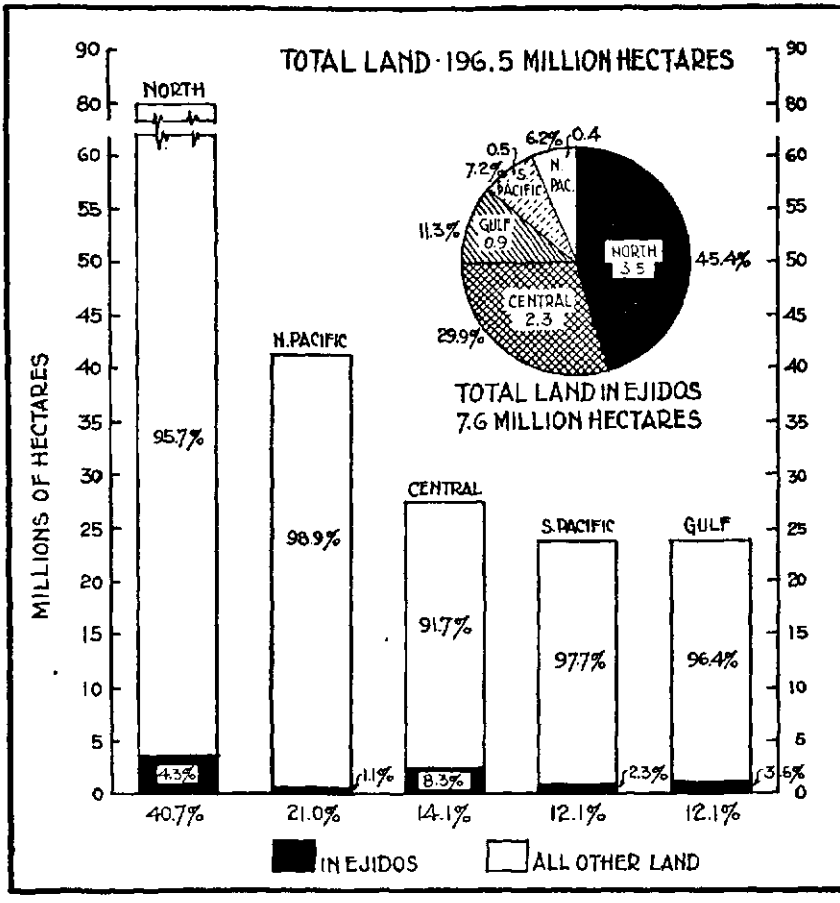

FIG. 18.—Total area in ejidos compared with total geographical area by zones, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 27.)

in the North zone. Indeed, as indicated in Fig. 18, almost as much land has been granted to villages in the North zone as in all of the

[38] However, in the 71,794 communities of less than 1,001 population are included 49,817 communities of less than 101 population which for the most part (i.e., in all cases where there are less than 20 heads of agrarian families qualifying as prospective ejidatarios

rest of the Republic put together. Relatively, however, more land (8.3 per cent of the total territorial area) has been distributed in the Central zone than in any other region. Here again the correlation with density of population and the kind of land available is obvious.

In a number of states the percentage of land in ejidos as compared with the total territorial area is considerably higher than the corresponding percentage for the whole Republic noted above. In the state of Morelos, for example, the amount of land in ejidos is almost half of the geographical area; in eight other states the percentage varies from 10.1 to 18.1.[39]

7. *The total area of actual and potential crop land in ejidos is 9.9 per cent of the total actual and potential crop land in the Republic.*

In the case of crop land the statistics of the Agrarian Department are unfortunately incomplete. Careful estimates[40] would seem to indicate, however, that at the end of 1933, 2.3 million hectares out of the total of 7.6 million hectares in ejidos could be classified as actual or potential[41] crop land. As in the case of the total land of all classes granted to ejidos the amount of crop land varies appreciably as between states and from one part of the country to another (Fig. 19). Although the Central zone contains only one-fourth of the total crop land in the Republic, slightly more than 40 per cent of all the crop land in ejidos is in the ejidos in this zone. Moreover, 15.4 per cent of the total crop land in the Central zone has been distributed in ejidos, while only 10.5 per cent of the total crop land in the North zone and still lesser proportions of the Gulf, South Pacific and North Pacific zones have been so distributed.

By states the percentage of crop land in ejidos as compared with all crop land varies from 87.0 per cent in the state of Morelos to 1.3 per cent in the state of Tabasco. In all but 12 states, however, the percentage is higher than, and in 5 states the percentage more than doubles, the 9.9 per cent average for the whole Republic.

8. *The average holding per village established by the agrarian reform is 1,864 hectares of all classes of land and 560 hectares of crop land. The average number of ejidatarios per village is 185.*

As usual the picture is somewhat distorted by the relatively disproportionate grants in the arid and sparsely populated North and North Pacific zones. While the average holding of all land per ejido

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under the law) do not have the right to petition for ejido lands. For further discussion of this point see below pp. 195-96.

[39] Appendix A, Table 27.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] Potential crop land as here used means land which can be put under cultivation with a relatively small expenditure of labor and money.

for the whole Republic is 1,864 hectares and of crop land 560 hectares, in the North zone the average holding is 3,594 hectares of all land and 737 hectares of crop land—and this despite the fact that in the North zone the average number of ejidatarios per ejido village is only 148 as compared with the average of 185 for the whole Repub-

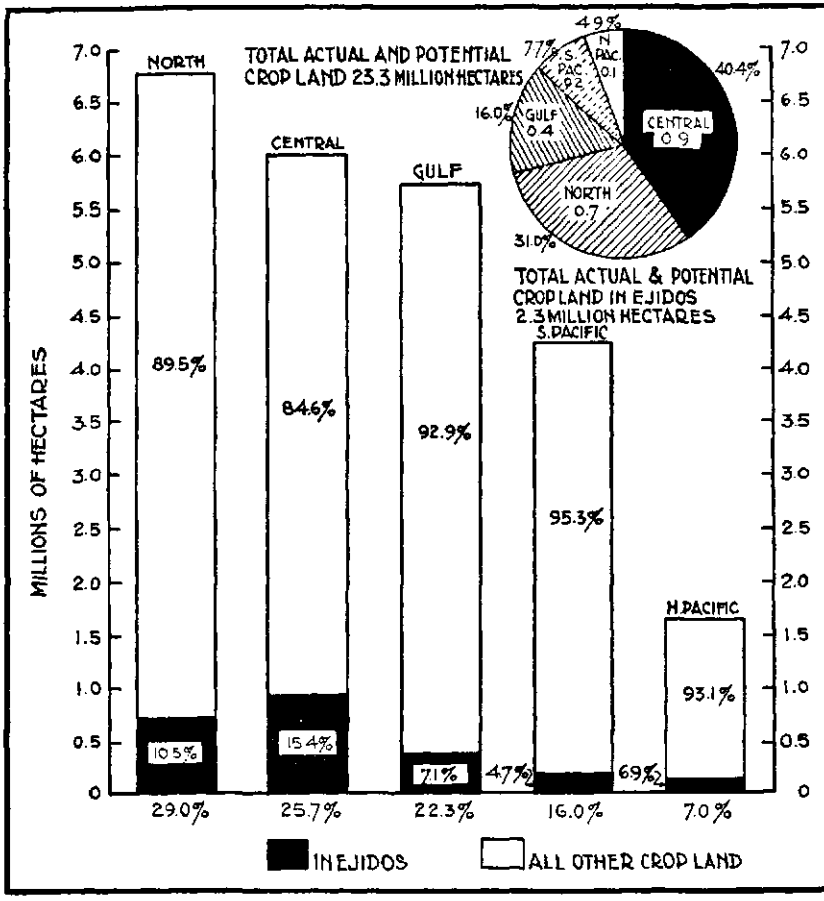

FIG. 19.—Actual and potential crop land in ejidos compared with total actual and potential crop land by zones, 1933. (See Appendix A, Tables 13 and 27.)

lic. In the densely populated Central states, on the other hand, the average holdings per village of all classes of land (1,111 hectares) and of crop land (452 hectares) are considerably less and the average number of ejidatarios per village (217) is considerably more than the general average for the whole Republic. Similar statements can be

made with reference to the variations as between the several states.[42]

In order to overcome the effect on the average of the relatively few ejidos in the North and North Pacific zones and thus to obtain a somewhat truer picture of the composite typical ejido it is helpful to classify the average holdings by sizes and to distribute them according to the number of villagers in each class. Thus, in Fig. 20,

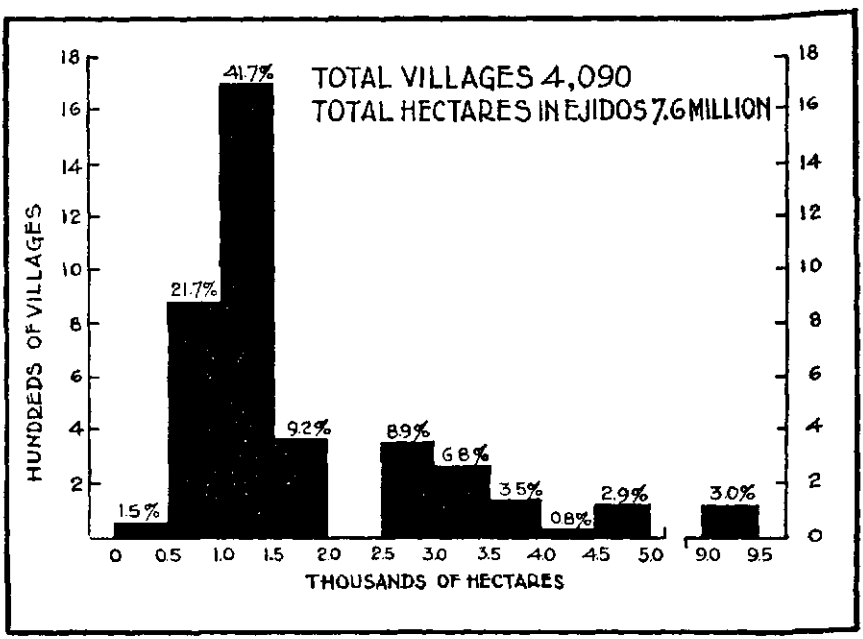

FIG. 20.—Average of all land per ejido village distributed according to the average area per village and the number of villages in each of the classes indicated, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 28.)

it will be observed that the greatest concentration of villages (41.7 per cent of the total) in terms of the total area of all classes of land in their possession is found in the class 1,000 to 1,500 hectares and the majority of holdings (64.9 per cent of the total) are less than 1,500 hectares. The 1,704 villages in the class 1,000 to 1,500 hectares average 177 ejidatarios per village. Similarly in the case of the total holdings of crop land, as may be seen in Fig. 21, the typical holding is in the class 300 to 400 hectares (45.6 per cent of all villages) and the majority (50.6 per cent) of all holdings of crop land are in units of less than 400 hectares. The 1,867 villages in the class 300 to 400 hectares average 188 ejidatarios per village.

[42] Appendix A, Table 28.

These figures with reference to the average and typical ejido—presented here merely as facts—it will be readily understood are

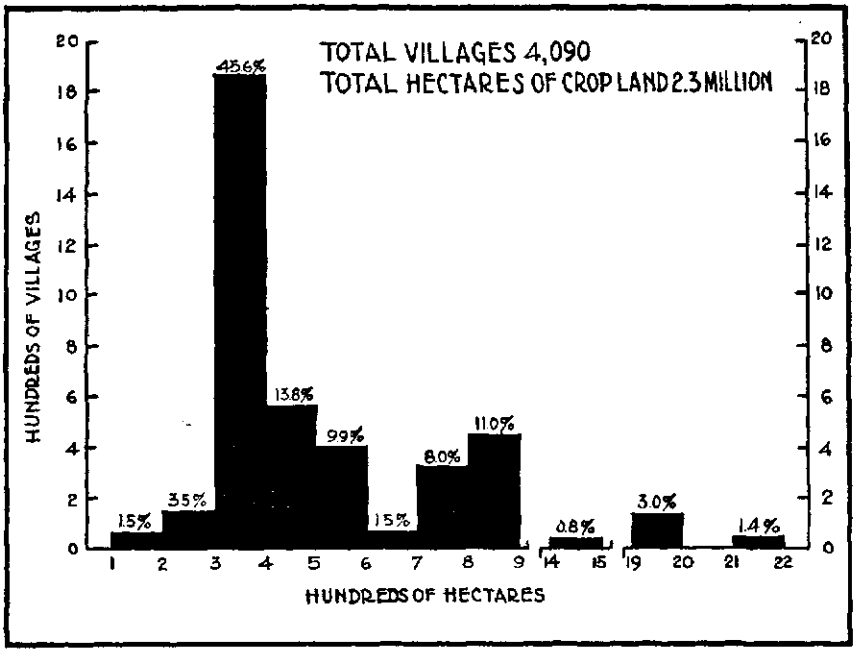

FIG. 21.—Average area of actual and potential crop land per ejido village distributed by average area per village and the number of villages in each of the classes indicated, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 28.)

basic to any consideration of the ejido as a coöperative or collectivistic production unit.

9. *The average holding per ejidatario of all classes of land is 10.1 hectares. The average holding per ejidatario of actual and potential crop land is only 3.0 hectares.*

Once again these general figures for the whole Republic are pulled out of line by the North and North Pacific zones and thus made to present a somewhat more favorable picture than is the case in reality. The average parcel of all classes of land per ejidatario in the Central states which contain 59.0 per cent of all ejidatarios is only 5.1 hectares and the average parcel of crop land is only 2.1 hectares. Similarly in the South Pacific states the average holdings of all land and of crop lands are appreciably less than the averages for the whole country. It is principally the North and North Pacific zones which, with their average parcels of all land of 24.3 and 18.6

hectares per person and average parcels of crop land of 5.0 and 4.4 hectares per person respectively, pull up the average for the whole Republic out of proportion to the number of ejidatarios (22.2 per cent of the total) enjoying parcels of the sizes in question. Indeed, if the matter be considered by states, it will be found that, although the average parcel of all classes of land varies anywhere from 1.2 hectares in the Federal District to 49.9 hectares in Chihuahua, nevertheless, in 14 states containing well over two-thirds of the total ejidatarios the average parcel of all classes of land is less than the average of 10.1 hectares for the whole country. Likewise, although the average parcel of crop land varies from 0.7 hectares per ejidatario in the Federal District up to 11.1 hectares in Campeche, there are 12 states containing more than three-fifths of the total ejidatarios in which the average parcel of crop land is less than the average of 3.0 hectares for the whole country.[43]

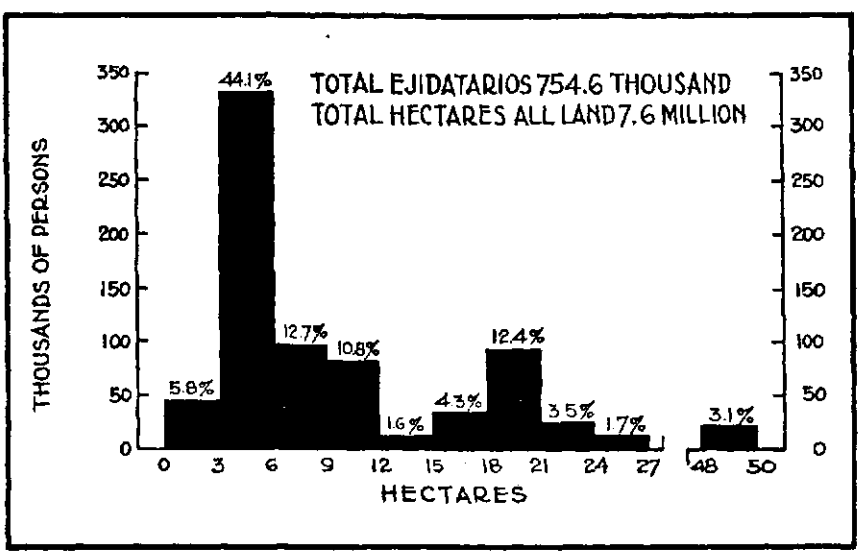

FIG. 22.—Average area of all land per ejidatario distributed by average area per person and the number of persons in each of the classes indicated, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 24.)

As in the case of the average holdings per village, it is helpful to supplement the simple averages of holdings per ejidatario by statistics showing distribution and concentration. In Fig. 22, in which the average areas of all classes of land per ejidatario have been

[43] Appendix A, Table 24.

classified and distributed according to the number of ejidatarios in each class, it will be noted that the greatest concentration occurs in the class 3-6 hectares and that almost exactly half of all ejidatarios enjoy parcels on the average of less than 6 hectares of all classes of land.[44]

In Fig. 23 a distribution is made for average parcels of crop land with similar results—to wit: the class of greatest concentration (34.2 per cent of all ejidatarios) is that of from 1 to 2 hectares. The same Figure reveals that the average parcels of crop land of some three-fifths of the total ejidatarios are less than 3 hectares.

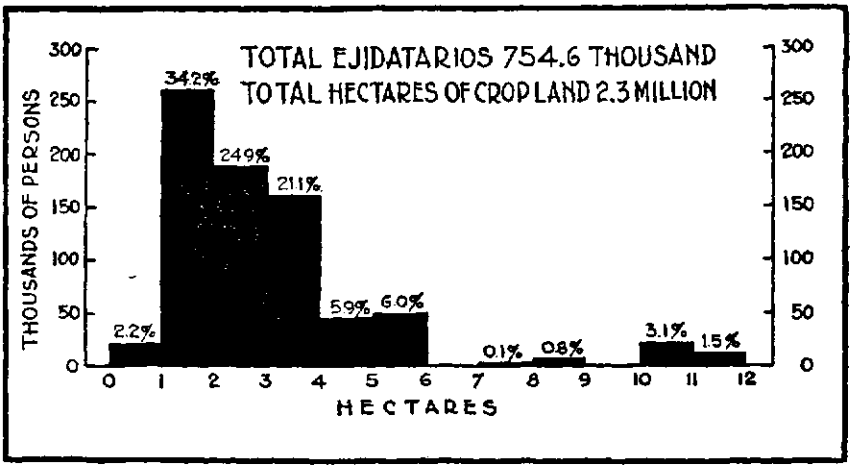

FIG. 23.—Average area of actual and potential crop land per ejidatario distributed by average area per person and the number of persons in each of the classes indicated, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 24.)

10. Of the total amount of land given to villages (not including confirmations) 860,851 hectares, or about 12 per cent, have been taken from public lands.[45]

Although the records on public lands distributed in ejidos are not very complete, it would appear that only a small part of this land has been crop land and a still smaller proportion has been crop land of the first class.

It is interesting to note, also, that well over two-thirds (583,113 hectares) of the public lands given to villages were distributed in the

[44] As a matter of fact, according to the law, only crop lands are divided up and assigned to individual ejidatarios. The "enjoyment" of the other classes of land is a collective and coöperative enjoyment.

[45] Appendix A, Table 21.

states of the North and North Pacific zones—the state of Chihuahua alone accounting for 305,473 hectares or over 35 per cent of the total. In other words, wherever public lands have been available (over three-fourths of all public lands of which there is a record are located in the North and North Pacific zones[46]) the government has tried to use them to meet the demands of the villages.

11. *The total amount of land taken from private farms and given to villages under the ejido laws up to December 31, 1933, was 7.1 million hectares or only 14.2 per cent of the total of 49.8 million hectares of land contained in the farms affected. The amount of actual and potential crop land expropriated for villages (2.1 million hectares), however, was 20.3 per cent of the total actual and potential crop land (10.3 million hectares) in the farms in question (Fig. 24).*

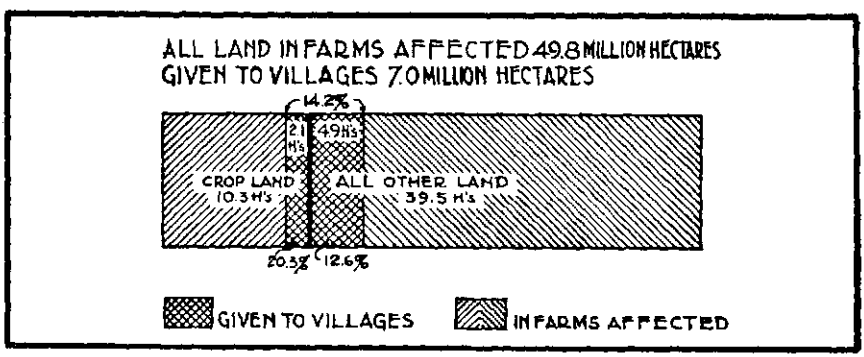

FIG. 24.—Land in privately-owned farms expropriated for villages compared with the total land in farms affected, 1915-1933. (See Appendix A, Table 22.)

The averages for the whole Republic of the extent to which private farms have been affected are, as the reader may see by examining the detailed statistics,[47] somewhat misleading. In 21 states a larger proportion of the total area of the properties affected was given to villages than the average for the Republic of 14.2 per cent; and in 9 states the percentage varies from well over twice up to three times the average for the country as a whole. In the case of the actual and potential crop land in private farms affected by ejido grants the percentage expropriated for villages varies from 2.4 per cent in the states of Tamaulipas up to 67.3 per cent in the state of Hidalgo. In all but 10 states the percentage of crop land taken for villages is

[46] Appendix A, Table 35.
[47] Appendix A, Table 22.

greater than, and in 8 states the percentage more than doubles, the 20.3 per cent for the whole Republic.

By agricultural statistical zones the proportion of crop land expropriated for villages as compared with the total crop land in the farms affected varies from 14.1 per cent in the North zone to 27.6 per cent in the Central zone. Both proportionately and relatively the amount of crop land taken from private properties in the Central zone is greater than in any other region of the country (Fig. 25).

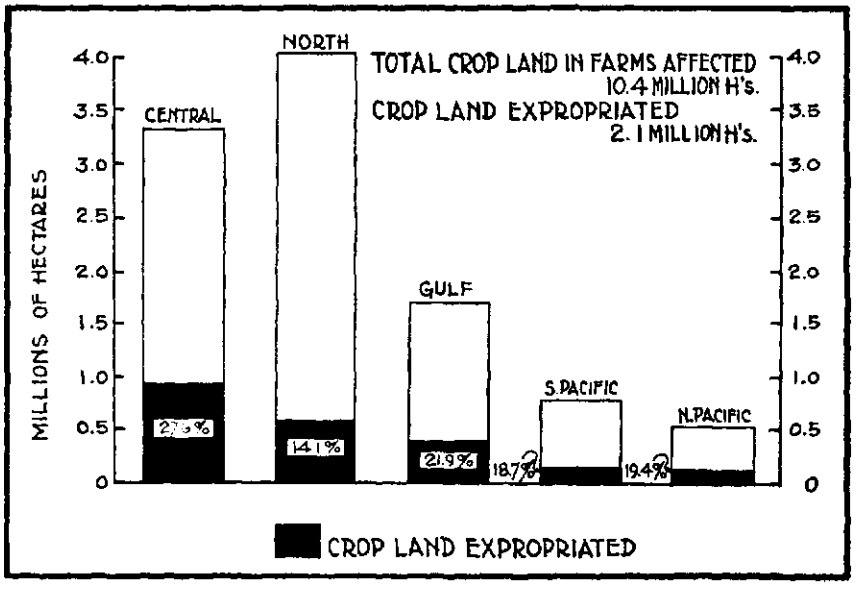

FIG. 25.—Actual and potential crop land from privately-owned farms expropriated for villages compared with the total actual and potential crop land in farms affected, 1915-1933. (See Appendix A, Table 22.)

12. *Only a little over half of the privately-owned farms affected by definitive ejido grants up to December 31, 1933 were farms in the hacienda class.*

In Fig. 26 the 7,927 privately-owned farms affected by definitive grants to ejido villages are divided into classes by sizes and the percentage of farms in each class indicated. It will be noted that of all properties affected, 2,216 or 28.0 per cent were in the class of relatively small farms (500 hectares or less) and 1,453 or 18.3 per cent were in the class of medium sized properties. At the opposite extreme only 754 or 9.5 per cent of all farms affected were in the class of very large properties (10,001 hectares or more). If the dividing line be-

tween small and medium sized properties, on the one hand, and haciendas, on the other hand, be set at 1,000 hectares then the number of hacienda properties affected by ejido grants is only slightly more than the number of all other properties so affected.[48]

13. *Of the total privately-owned farms in the hacienda class in existence at (approximately) the beginning of the agrarian reform only one-third have been affected by definitive ejido grants.*

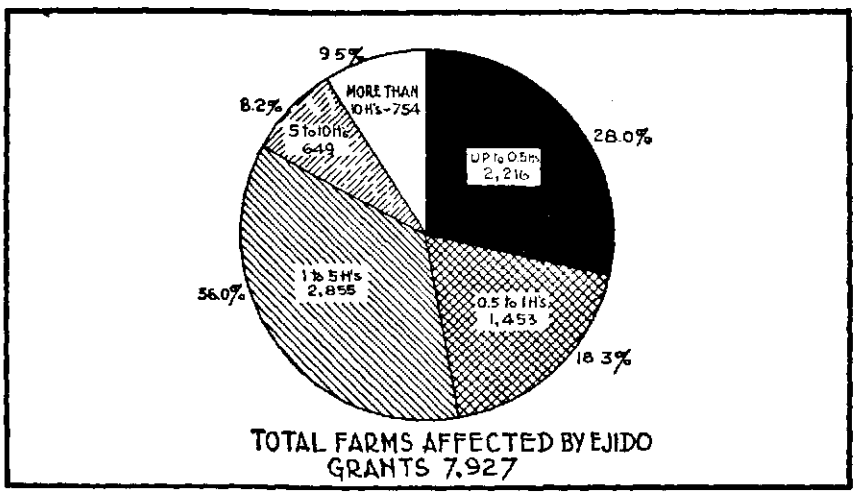

FIG. 26.—Number of privately-owned farms affected by ejido grants by sizes of farms affected, 1915-1933. (Sizes of farms in thousands of hectares. See Appendix A, Table 23.)

The total number of farms in Mexico of 1,001 hectares or more in 1923—the nearest date to the initiation of the reform for which data are available—was 12,782. Of this number 4,258 or 33.3 per cent had suffered expropriations for definitive grants to ejido villages up to December 31, 1933. This statement is, of course, true only for the Republic taken as a whole. In some states—notably Aguascalientes, México, and Puebla—as many as two-thirds or more of all the properties in the hacienda class have been affected by ejido expropriations. However, in 13 other states even less than a third of the hacienda properties have been affected and in 4 of the states just mentioned the percentage has been 10 or less.[49]

It is true that many properties in the hacienda class have suffered losses more than once by virtue of expropriations for ejidos and that

[48] For the variations in the proportions of farms affected in the several classes indicated from state to state, see Appendix A, Table 23.

[49] Appendix A, Table 23.

some large properties have been completely dismembered. But those cases would appear to be the exception rather than the rule.

Considering that one of the avowed purposes of the agrarian reform is that of breaking up large estates, the fact that just about as many small and medium sized properties have been affected by ejido grants as have large properties and that some two-thirds of all large properties have never been touched at all raises some question as to just how successful the ejido program has been in destroying the *latifundia* system. And this question becomes even more insistent when one recalls that on the average the properties, big and little, affected by ejido grants have lost only 14.2 per cent of their total area and about a fifth of their crop land.

CHAPTER XI

LAND DISTRIBUTION AND LAND TENURE

WE NOW HAVE before us the facts concerning the definitive distribution of land to ejido villages in terms of the amount and classes of land granted, the number of villages and heads of families benefited and the extent to which private and public properties have been affected. In order to complete our analysis of the land and water aspect of the agrarian reform it remains to state: first, what progress, if any, has been made in the solution of the problem of irrigation for ejido communities; second, what is the present status of the ejido allotment program—that is, how many villages and persons have received land as compared with the numbers which under the law theoretically have a right to land and how much land has been granted as compared with that which remains to be granted; third, how much land has been distributed by means other than the ejido program; and, finally, what are the results up to the present time of the whole effort to effect a more equitable allocation of landholdings.

THE EJIDO, WATER RIGHTS AND IRRIGATION PROJECTS

Although the importance of granting villages water rights has long been recognized and although all the ejido laws since 1926 have contained elaborate provisions for the disposition of irrigation waters on terms similar to those governing land, up to the end of 1933 only 540 ejido villages had received definitive grants of water rights. How many villages in final possession of their lands are also in need of water for irrigation purposes is not known. If one may judge, however, from the data on climate and rainfall presented in Chapter IX, it would appear that rare indeed are the ejido lands which would not be greatly improved by water for irrigation and that in the vast majority of the ejidos in the North, North Pacific, and Central zones irrigation may be regarded as an absolute necessity.[1] Definitive

[1] According to an estimate made by the *Dirección General de Estadística*, the area classified in the 1930 census as semiarid crop land (*temporal*) and level pastures where theoretically irrigation is necessary if the land is to be used for crop raising purposes is as follows by zones:

grants of rights to existing sources of irrigation waters to only 540 ejido villages out of a total of 4,090 villages in definitive possession of their land obviously represents only a gesture as compared to what needs to be done. This fact becomes doubly apparent when it is added that the water granted to the 540 villages mentioned is sufficient to irrigate only a little more than 107,000 hectares out of an estimated total area of 302,400 hectares of actual and potential crop land in their possession.[2]

The figures just cited refer to grants of rights to the use of water from irrigation works already in existence. One of the principal reasons why the ejido villages have not been given more irrigated land—or, what is the same thing, more rights to the use of irrigation waters—is to be found in the fact that irrigation plants in Mexico are relatively few and far between. This raises the question : What has the agrarian reform done in the way of constructing new irrigation works and, more particularly, new irrigation works for the benefit of the ejidatarios?

The Irrigation Law of January 4, 1926,[3] inaugurating the present

Zones	*Area in Semiarid Crop Land and Level Pastures (Millions of Hectares)*	*Area Theoretically in Need of Irrigation (Millions of Hectares)*	*As % of Semiarid Crop Land and Level Pastures in Zone*	*As % of Total*
North	25.5	24.7	96.9	65.4
Central	6.4	6.1	96.0	16.1
N. Pacific	3.2	3.0	93.3	7.9
S. Pacific	3.5	2.9	82.1	7.7
Gulf	4.2	1.1	27.1	2.9
Total	42.8	37.8	88.3	100.0

If the foregoing figures are considered in connection with the fact that according to the returns of the 1930 census 62.1 per cent of the total land then in possession of ejido villages was classified as semiarid crop land and pasture, one obtains a rough idea of the extent of the need for irrigation in ejido lands. (See Appendix A, Table 76).

[2] Appendix A, Table 25.

[3] The primary purpose of the *Ley de Irrigación con Aguas Federales*, of January 4, 1926, and its subsequent additions and modifications (see Appendix B, V, 3) was to provide the necessary administrative machinery and procedure for the development of new irrigation works by the federal government. It is interesting to note, however, that the irrigation laws also furnish the legal basis for the destruction of water monopolies and the better distribution of existing water supplies. Viewed from this angle, the irrigation laws take their place in the agrarian reform along with the already discussed (pp. 110-11) National Waters Law as one of the subsidiary methods of the agrarian reform for breaking up large estates.

The part of the irrigation law directed toward the breaking up of large estates is found

government reclamation program was enacted with the avowed intention of helping the *ranchero* or *campesino medio*. As such the program is in line with the philosophy, characteristic of the *veteranos*, which would place the emphasis of the agrarian reform on private property and the creation of a middle class of independent farmers rather than on the collectivistic ejido.[4]

Concretely the government irrigation program developed during the last eight years has consisted of the building of six major irrigation projects and five projects of somewhat lesser importance. The total amount spent by the National Irrigation Commission up to the end

in those articles which reaffirm and apply in this field the doctrines of public utility contained in Article 27 of the constitution. The law declares that whenever and wherever federal waters (for the definition of "federal waters" see p. 67) are involved the irrigation of privately owned agricultural land becomes a matter of public utility and the nation has the power to step in and regulate irrigation works and the rights to the water affected by these works. This means that the federal government not only has the right to regulate in the public interest irrigation works already in existence, but to initiate and control the construction and use of new irrigation works. For these purposes the law created a National Irrigation Commission and empowered it to study and recommend the construction of irrigation projects in specified areas. Landowners in irrigation zones so determined are given an opportunity under the law to carry out the irrigation projects according to the plans made by the Commission. If, however, the owners affected for any reason cannot or will not build the works in question, then the Commission takes charge of the project admitting to partnership any of the owners who contribute to the cost.

A novel feature of the *Ley de Irrigación* is the abandonment therein of the ordinary theories of expropriation and the acceptance by the government of Henry George's famous principle of the right of the whole community to the "unearned increment." The application of this principle is found in the section of the law which states: "Wherever the Irrigation Commission assumes responsibility for the execution of [irrigation] works or contributes to the cost thereof, the federal government shall be compensated by [taking over] a portion of the lands irrigated." Correspondingly, the owners of lands affected shall be left with land the value of which under irrigation shall be equal to the value of the total area before irrigation.

Finally, the law states that the land acquired by the government in the manner described in the foregoing paragraph shall be divided into lots and sold to individual farmers on time payments (not over 10 years) at a price based on the capital investment in the irrigation works.

[4] Consider the following paragraph from Calles' message to Congress recommending the enactment of the irrigation law of January 4, 1926:

"There is in our rural population, in addition to the great mass of humble peasants . . . another group made up of . . . 'middle class peasants' . . . who have succeeded in rising above the great mass by virtue of their energy and intelligence. It is the peasants of this class . . . for which the Nation must provide [through the development of irrigation works] an opportunity to acquire the ownership (*adquirir en propriedad*) of a piece of land. [The government must help] these peasants of greater ambitions who probably will not be satisfied with an ejido parcel and who aspire to a larger field of activity. . . . It is this group which will form . . . the middle class of agriculturists . . . small proprietors standing . . . between the ejidatarios and the great landlords. . . ." *Recopilación de las principales leyes . . . Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento*, pp. 431-32.

of 1933 was approximately 86 million pesos of which some 60.3 million pesos was invested in the actual construction of irrigation projects (including machinery and equipment) and the remainder in indemnifications for expropriated lands, engineering studies, administration and operation, and so forth. At the end of 1933 the Commission reported the following progress on its eleven projects:

Estimated irrigable area when all projects are completed	295,115	hectares
Present irrigable area	145,990	hectares
Area in possession of colonists and original owners	175,000	hectares
Area under cultivation	92,813	hectares
Total number of beneficiaries (original owners, colonists, etc.)	15,674	persons[5]

Numerous criticisms have been made of the government irrigation program. It has been pointed out, for example, that the major part of the funds of the National Irrigation Commission has been spent on the type of project which it will be most difficult to make succeed either economically or socially. As matters now stand, as has just been noted, the government has spent in actual construction of irrigation works 60.3 million pesos with the result that approximately 93,000 hectares are being cultivated by 15,674 persons.[6] Even assuming that the rest of the 295,000 hectares which it is estimated will be available when the projects at present under the control of the Irrigation Commission are completed could be placed in production without the expenditure of another single peso, it is obvious that the reclaiming of land at an initial cost of over 200 pesos per hectare is pretty expensive business.[7] To this must be added the fact that the areas the principal irrigation projects are designed to bring into cultivation are for the most part marginal lands and as such are penalized in competition with nonmarginal land by a large initial surcharge made up not only of the cost of the irrigation works but also the

[5] Appendix A, Table 38. See also: Alvarez Gleason, "La política de irrigación que más conviene a la agricultura mexicana," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, I, 129-47; and Becerril Colín, "Como ha cumplido su misión social la Comisión Nacional de Irrigación," *Irrigación en México* (Sept. 1934), pp. 153-81.

[6] Of this number only 2,859 are colonists newly settled on the land. The remaining 12,814 beneficiaries are individuals who were already in possession of the land at the time the projects were undertaken.

[7] For the eleven projects the average cost per hectare of the total irrigable land available at the end of 1933 was 412 pesos per hectare counting only actual construction costs. For the six most important projects the average cost per hectare of irrigable land available at the end of 1933 varied from 2,594 pesos per hectare in the case of system No. 1 to 172 pesos per hectare for system No. 3, or an average of 889 pesos for the six systems in question. (See Table 38).

expense of clearing and otherwise preparing them for cultivation. Since there are still large areas in Mexico which could be placed in production without vast outlays of capital for irrigation systems, it is perhaps not impertinent to raise the question: would it not have been wiser for a nation whose funds at best are rather limited to have put its money first into agricultural schools, experiment stations, agricultural banks and whatever else might be necessary to improve the cultivation of lands already in use before entering upon a hazardous program of reclamation of distinctly marginal and submarginal lands?[8] Would it not be better to seek to foment and develop agriculture on those lands which will bring relatively immediate results in the form of cheaper and more efficient production rather than to tie up the government's money in enterprises which, even if successful, are in the nature of the case long term investments with slow returns?[9]

Whatever may be the merits or demerits of the government's irrigation projects considered in relation to the general question of national planning, for the purpose of the present inquiry there is only one test to be applied to the program: has it helped the ejidatarios? By this test the program cannot be regarded otherwise than unfortunate; for, with the exception of a half dozen or so ejido communities which by chance happened to be located on or near the systems, not a single ejido village has benefited from the 86 million peso outlay for irrigation works. It has already been pointed out that

[8] On agricultural credit the federal government has spent since 1921 approximately 15 million pesos; on highways some 89 million pesos. What would have been the result if the 86 million pesos now invested in irrigation works had been devoted to roads and banks?

[9] Although it is perhaps too early to draw any final conclusions, it may be noted *in re* the subject of "slow returns" that the National Irrigation Commission has reported that, whereas the operating and conservation costs of all federal irrigation projects up to June 30, 1934, was 4.4 million pesos, the total payments by the beneficiaries of these projects of assessments for operation and conservation were 2.5 million pesos—or a net loss to date of around 1.9 million pesos. Becerril Colín, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

In this same general connection it is interesting to recall the experience of the United States. The government of the United States has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on reclamation projects during the last twenty-five years. "Yet," writes Dr. Isaiah Bowman, "what has been the result? In twenty-eight years how many people have we actually taken care of? The total farming population upon the twenty-four national irrigation projects of the West after twenty years of government aid and generosity was but 140,000, a population equal to that of the city of Long Beach, California, or Tulsa, Oklahoma. . . . It is easy to see that a quite modest improvement of agricultural practice in settled communities will accomplish much more for the increase of agricultural production and the support of population than all the millions that have been poured out upon the government-built irrigation works of the West in a quarter of a century." *The Pioneer Fringe*, p. 77, published by the American Geographical Society of New York.

it was not the intention of the government irrigation program to further the cause of the ejidos; it may now be noted that the government has succeeded admirably in carrying out its intentions.[10]

Present Status of the Distribution of Land in Ejidos

From the very beginning of the agrarian reform the demand for land exceeded the willingness and ability of the government to satisfy

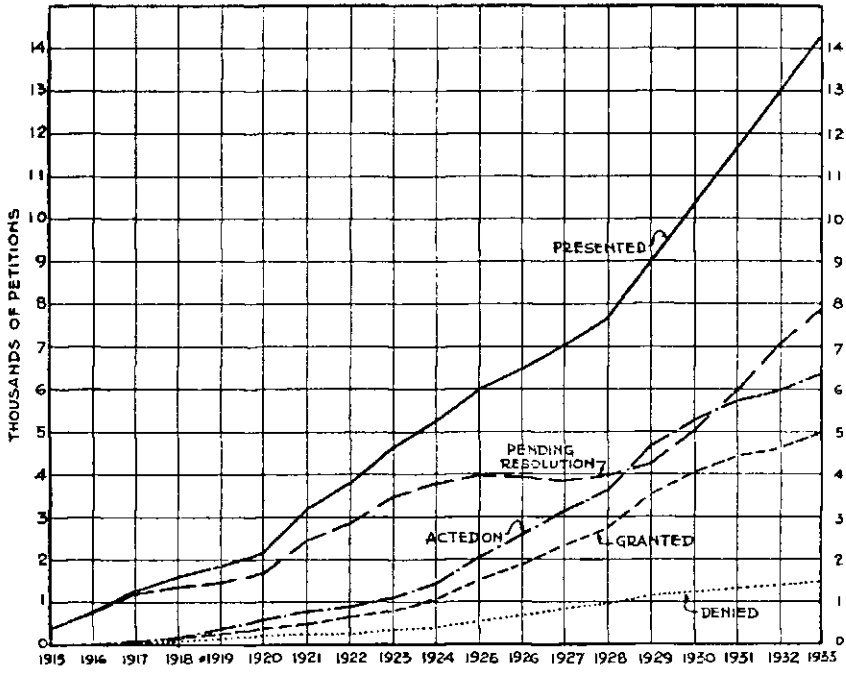

Fig. 27.—Cumulative movement of ejido petitions up to December 31, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 32.)

it and, as time has gone on, the government has fallen further and further behind in its efforts to keep up with the ever-growing number

[10] It is only fair to state that various attempts have been made to curtail the activities of the National Irrigation Commission and to provide funds for the building of small and inexpensive irrigation projects designed specifically to improve the situation of ejido communities. Thus, for example, the Law of Agricultural Credit of January 2, 1931 (Appendix B, VIII, 17), provided that the funds derived from the sale of lands pertaining to government irrigation projects should be turned over to the Bank of Agricultural Credit to be used by the bank for the development of small irrigation works. Also the decree of December 27, 1932, reforming the Law of Ejido Patrimony (Appendix B, III, 7) stated in transitory Article 4 that: "For the execution of small irrigation works and for the construction of dwellings for peasants who may change their residence while the [this] law is

of petitions from the land-hungry villages. This fact is brought out clearly by charting the movement of ejido petitions from 1915 to 1933. In Fig. 27 it will be seen that during the first few years of the reform—the Carranza period of indecision—the number of petitions pending resolution is almost identical with the number presented. The "batting average" of the government was practically zero. Once the reform got into its stride the curves begin to diverge; and from 1919 to 1929, although limping behind and losing ground, the government managed to widen the space between "Petitions Presented" and "Petitions Pending Resolution." That is to say, although the number of petitions pending action was constantly growing, nevertheless the ratio between petitions presented and petitions pending resolution was constantly being reduced. But the very fact of increased activity on the part of the government in meeting the demands of the villages led to an increase in the number of petitions. From 1929 on, once more the two curves began to converge and at the end of 1933 the score stood: 14,252 petitions presented and 7,882 pending resolution. In other words, although by 1929 the government had acted on a little more than half of the petitions presented up to that date, by the end of 1933 only 44.7 per cent of the petitions presented had been resolved.[11]

The figures for grants made are similarly revealing. Almost two-thirds of all land (including confirmations) granted in definitive possession to villages in the nineteen-year period 1915-1933 was distributed in the six years 1924-1929. From the peak year 1929 there was a marked tendency for the wheels of the land reform machinery to turn more slowly (at least so far as distribution of land to villages was concerned) and definitive grants in 1933 embraced only 195,948 hectares as compared with over a million hectares in 1929—a drop of around 81 per cent.[12] (Fig. 28.)

How is this sudden toboggan slide in the curve of ejido grants to be explained? Do these statistics with reference to the movement of ejido petitions and of ejido grants mean as was stated in the chapters on the course of the agrarian reform that the reform, or more specifically the ejido program, began to suffer a bad attack of weakening of the backbone from 1930 on, or do they mean that the villages in need had for the most part received land and that the

being carried out, there shall be placed at the disposal of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit 1,000,000 pesos annually which shall be invested exclusively in the construction of such works." The records do not show, however, that either one of the laws cited was enforced in the particulars mentioned.

[11] Appendix A, Table 32.

[12] Appendix A, Table 17.

program was beginning to draw to a natural close? In other words, we come back to our questions: first, how many villages and how many ejidatarios have received land as compared with those theo-

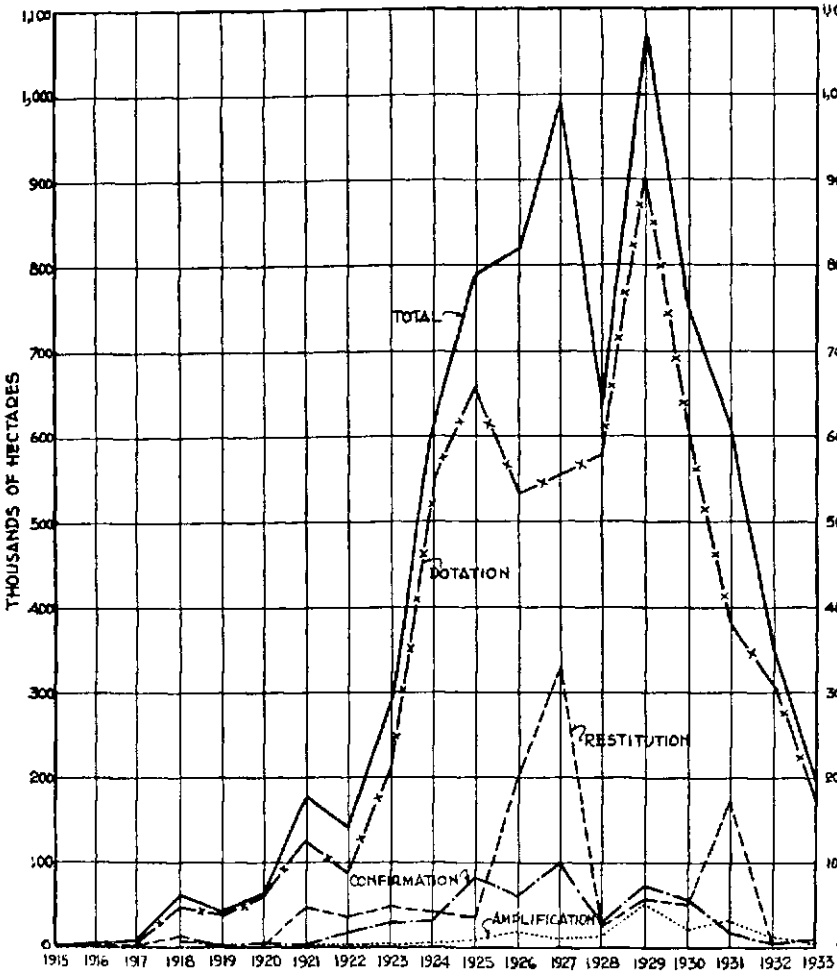

FIG. 28.—Definitive distribution of land in ejidos by years and type of grant, 1915-1933. (See Appendix A, Table 17.)

retically entitled to land under the present laws; and, second, how much land has been distributed as compared with the total amount of land which will have to be distributed if the ejido program is carried out under the dictates of the laws now in force?

According to the best estimates that the present writer can make,

if and when the ejido program as envisaged in the current laws is completed:

(1) Approximately 17,000 agricultural communities will have received definitive possession of ejido lands, or around 3.5 times as many communities as have already (December 31, 1933) had petitions for land definitively granted;

(2) Some 2 million ejidatarios, or approximately 2.6 times as many ejidatarios as have already received definitive possession of their land, will be the recipients of ejido grants; and

(3) There will have been distributed around 6.6 times as much crop land as has been distributed up to the present time, or a total of some 15 million hectares.

The method for arriving at these estimates is as follows:

(1) According to the census of 1930 (adjusted in certain particulars),[13] there are at the present time 74,200 inhabited places in the Republic. If, as the ejido law now in force requires, there be subtracted from the total number of inhabited places: (a) all communities with less than twenty heads of families engaged in agriculture (or, roughly, all communities with a total population of less than 100); (b) the capitals of the states, territories, and federation; (c) seaports dedicated to sea traffic and frontier communities with international railway connections; and (d) communities located on approved colonization projects—there will be left a total of 24,310 communities with theoretically valid rights to petition for ejido lands.[14]

It is fair to assume that, if the present procedure for granting ejidos whereby the responsibility for making requests for land rests with the

[13] See footnotes 3 and 4 of Table 34, Appendix A.

[14] Appendix A, Table 34. The computation referred to does not exclude certain other types of communities which under the law do not have the right to petition for land: (a) Communities with a population greater than 10,000 in which an agrarian census reveals less than 200 heads of families qualifying as ejidatarios. There is no way, short of taking a census, to tell how many communities of the type in question have 200 or more heads of agrarian families. However, there are only 40 such communities in this class which are not capitals, railroad centers with international connections, or ports. (b) Centers of population on government irrigation projects. These communities—relatively few, in all events—were not excluded because of the inability of the National Irrigation Commission to supply information concerning their number and population. (c) Communities of resident laborers on haciendas. There are no statistics available with reference to the number of *acasillado* communities. However, the fact that they were not excluded in the estimates here under discussion probably does not involve a very large per cent of error—i.e., most *acasillado* communities are small in size and hence are included in the class "communities with less than twenty heads of families engaged in agriculture"; and, in any case, the law does not entirely exclude these communities from rights to petition for land. (See below p. 458.)

communities is continued in force, not all of the 24,310 villages just mentioned will actually make petitions.[15] Just how many of the communities with theoretical rights to petition for land will not exercise their rights it is impossible to state, but there are more or less defensible grounds based on past experience for assuming that about 30 per cent of the total communities in question will fall in this class.[16] If, then, this number (30 per cent of 24,310) be subtracted from the total estimated villages with theoretically valid rights to request land, we are left with 17,018 villages with rights which also may be expected to make petitions and have them granted. As a matter of fact 4,909 of these 17,018 villages have already made petitions and had them granted. In addition a large, if indeterminable, number have made petitions and are waiting for the final decisions of the Agrarian Department.[17] Leaving the last mentioned aside, we have, then, 12,109 communities which have not yet received definitive grants but which have theoretically valid rights to make petitions and which may be expected to make petitions, and have them granted.[18]

(2) The evidence available indicates that of the 12,109 communities which according to our calculation are still to receive grants of land, something more than six times as many will be in the class 20 to 125 ejidatarios per community as in the class 126 and over.[19] In other words, the average number of ejidatarios in the communities yet to receive land will be appreciably smaller than the

[15] Because they are lacking in initiative; because they already have sufficient land; because they prefer to buy land; because they are mining, fishing, commercial or other types of communities with sources of livelihood other than agriculture, etc.

[16] Fabila, "Apuntes relativas al problema de la distribución ejidal en México," p. 34.

[17] Appendix A, Table 33. The exact number of communities with *valid legal rights* which have made petitions now pending action cannot be stated because the records do not tell us how many petitions are included in the total number which for one reason or another are illegal. A study of the petitions denied up to 1929 (*Anuario de 1930, Departamento de la Estadística Nacional*, p. 380) indicates that all but a very few of the petitions denied between 1915 and 1929 were so disposed of because by the laws then in force the petitions were judged illegal. However, under the present relatively more liberal laws many communities previously denied land may reapply.

[18] No deduction is made from the figure of 12,109 communities on the score of possible future denials of petitions because by definition the figure in question includes only villages with theoretically valid rights to make petitions. Nevertheless, as will be pointed out later, in actual practice it is more than likely that some of the 12,109 communities which have theoretically valid rights and which may be expected to make petitions, will not in the end receive land. That is to say, unless the present laws are changed to reduce the limits of nonaffectable private property, in some regions there will undoubtedly be insufficient land to go round. What success the government may have in moving villages (as the law provides) to regions where there *is* sufficient land remains to be seen.

[19] Estimates based on Table 26, Appendix A.

average number in those which have already received land. Although there is no way to determine exactly what the figure will be, we will probably not go far wrong if we assume, in view of what has just been said, that on the average there will be 110 ejidatarios per community in the villages yet to receive land. If this number be taken as a reasonable guess, then the total number of ejidatarios, to be given land in the future will be 110 times 12,109, or 1,331,990. Now, according to the statistics of the Agrarian Department the number of ejidatarios who have already (December 31, 1933) received definitive possession of their lands is 754,577. If this number be added to the number of those yet to receive lands just indicated we come out with a total of 2,086,567. In order to take care to some extent of the "padding" mentioned in connection with the discussion of the Agrarian Department's figures, let us knock off the odd numbers and say: approximately 2 million ejidatarios will be in possession of lands if and when the ejido program as conceived under the present law is completed.

(3) The new Agrarian Code now in effect requires that land must be distributed on the basis of units composed of 4 hectares of actual or potential moist crop land *or* 8 hectares of actual or potential seasonal crop land (*temporal*) for each ejidatario listed in an agrarian census. The law also provides that each village must be given such quantities of other land—pasture, brush, woodland, and so forth—as may be necessary for its needs. Finally, the law states that communities which have already received ejido grants shall, wherever necessary, receive sufficient additional land to bring each ejidatario's allotment of crop land up to the standard of 4 or 8 hectares.

The ratio of moist (irrigated plus naturally humid) crop land to all crop land, actual and potential, in the Republic according to the 1930 census[20] is of the order 1 to 8—that is, 3.0 million hectares, the total moist land, is approximately 12.8 per cent of 23.3 million hectares, the total of all actual and potential crop land. It is obvious that the ratio of moist crop land to seasonal crop land in the typical ejido parcel cannot exceed the ratio of 1 to 8—or, in other words, taking the Republic as a whole, for every unit of moist land on the average there must be granted 7 units of seasonal land. At the same time the law sets up an equivalence of: 4 units of moist land equals 8 units of seasonal land. If these two ratios be related to each other it turns out that, on the average, the size of the typical ejido parcel will be 7.5 hectares of which the greater part necessarily will be seasonal land. This being the case, a simple and perhaps fairly accurate way

[20] Appendix A, Tables 13 and 15.

of estimating the amount of actual and potential crop land necessary to distribute if the ejido program is carried out as required by the present laws is to multiply the total number of ejidatarios by the theoretically typical ejido parcel—to wit: 2 million times 7.5 equals 15 million hectares. As was previously stated (p. 177), the amount of actual and potential crop land distributed in ejidos up to the end of 1933 was approximately 2.3 million hectares.

The Agrarian Code now in force, by simply stating that each village shall receive such amounts of pasture, brush, and other types of land as may be required in each individual case, does not afford any basis for making an estimate of the quantity of land other than crop land which it will be necessary to distribute to ejido communities. Heretofore there has been a tendency to give villages anywhere from two to three times as much land of all other classes as of actual and potential crop land. If this tendency still prevails under the new code it would appear that, in addition to 15 million hectares of crop land, ejido villages upon the completion of the reform will be in possession of anywhere from 30 to 45 million hectares of pasture, forest, brush and mountain lands.

Distribution of Land by Other Means

In order to round out our picture of the accomplishments of the agrarian reform in the field of land distribution, we may pause here for a moment to note the amount of land which has been distributed by methods other than those involved in land grants to villages. The principal subsidiary procedures for the redistribution of land tenure set up at one time or another have been those covered by the following laws with their subsequent reforms and modifications: (1) the Idle Lands Law of June 23, 1920 (see above pp. 85-86); (2) the "Agrarian Laws" enacted by the several states (footnote 23 p. 71); (3) the so-called "homestead" law of August 2, 1923 (p. 86); (4) the Law of Colonization of April 5, 1926 (pp. 94-96); and (5) the Law of New Centers of Agricultural Population of August 31, 1932 (p. 124).

In addition to the foregoing there has been one other important aspect of the reform directly related to the redistribution of land tenure. The last paragraph of Article 27 of the 1917 constitution states: "All 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 corporation, are declared subject to revision, and the Executive is authorized to declare those null and void which seriously prejudice the public interest."

Although no enabling legislation has been passed putting the above section of Article 27 into effect, the federal government has, nevertheless, on the authority of the article itself, proceeded to carry out its provisions, and the voiding of contracts, which during the Díaz regime alienated large areas of the public domain, has been a most important part of the program of agrarian reform. In some cases the government has reimbursed individuals and companies from whom national lands have been recaptured; but, as a rule, legal ways have been found for the recovery of the public domain without the necessity of payment.

The avowed purpose of this part of the agrarian reform is to put an end to land monopoly for speculative and other nonagricultural purposes and by opening up this land for settlement and colonization to increase the area under cultivation and hence production.

Such fragmentary statistics as are available[21] show that at the end of the Díaz regime in 1912, the total government-owned lands had been reduced (for the most part by contracts with colonization enterprises, land companies and other dubious undertakings) to a little more than 22.8 million hectares. By 1923, the government had regained some 7.7 million hectares of public lands and by 1933 another 9.8 million hectares had been added to the public domain making the total holdings 39.8 million hectares—an increase of some 17.0 million hectares or around 75 per cent over the year 1912.[22]

With regard to the recovery of national waters, no statistics are available, nor, in a sense, are they necessary. The Irrigation Law of January 1926 and the Law of Nationally Owned Waters of August 1929 simply give the government blanket control over all streams, lakes, and so forth, of any importance whatsoever. National waters may be leased to private persons, but never completely alienated. Moreover, such concessions as are granted are subject to review at any time and may be cancelled when in the opinion of the government they are operating to the detriment of the public interest.

No figures are to be had concerning the amount of land which has permanently changed hands as the result of the operation of the idle land laws and the state agrarian laws. Such evidence as comes to

[21] Appendix A, Table 35.

[22] "It should be noted, however, that the largest gains by the government, as well as the greater portion of the lands now in government hands, are located in the three states of Lower California, Sonora, and Chihuahua where the population is very sparse and where large portions of the area are more or less of desert type. The gains by the government have thus had but little bearing upon the problem of landholding and land distribution among the rural population in Mexico. . . ." Frank Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 320. Reprinted by permission of the Brookings Institution.

hand would seem to indicate that the amount has been relatively insignificant.

In the case of the laws affecting only national lands—that is, the the so-called homestead laws—the latest figures[23] show that up to the end of 1933 some 1.6 million hectares had been granted to 9,159 settlers. Over two-thirds of this land was distributed in the states of Chiapas, Chihuahua, Durango and Sonora, and the rest was scattered through 14 other states.

Under the colonization laws and the Law of New Centers of Agricultural Population (which differ from the homestead laws in that private as well as national lands may be affected and in that these laws operate in the first instance through and to the benefit of a group and only secondarily and eventually in the interest of individuals), reasonably complete statistics are to be had only with reference to the first mentioned. According to the official figures,[24] by the end of 1933, 4,068 colonists were occupying approximately 147,000 hectares on 17 different colonization projects.[25] Concerning the results of the operation of the Law of New Centers of Agricultural Population, the best guess obtainable was that approximately 10,000 colonists had been settled on 100,000 hectares of land in 70 new centers.

To sum up, the amount of land distributed and the number of individuals benefited under the agrarian reform by methods other than those involved in the ejido laws are about as follows:

	Persons	*Thousands of Hectares*
"Homesteads"	9,159	1,600
Colonies (Colonization Law)	4,068	147
Colonies (New Centers Law)	10,000	100
	23,227	1,847

If one adds in—as one may with a certain amount of fairness—the

[23] Appendix A, Table 36.

[24] Appendix A, Table 37.

[25] Since 1926 the government has spent approximately 2.2 million pesos on colonization projects to the benefit of 4,068 colonists—or an expenditure of around 540 pesos for each colonist. The reason for this not very impressive showing has been explained recently as due: (a) to the fact that for a considerable period of time the Direction of Colonization was in charge "of a person who was intimately connected with the Catholic Church . . . and whose ideas would not permit the application of a revolutionary law"; (b) to the want of technical personnel for putting the law into effect; and (c) to the "lack of faith on the part of many of the employees of the Ministry of Agriculture in the possibility of solving the agrarian problem." See López Ocampo, *op. cit.*

figures cited on p. 190 with reference to government irrigation projects, the grand total of all land other than that in ejidos distributed under the agrarian reform up to the end of 1933 was a little over 2 million hectares and the number of beneficiaries was approximately 39,000. By way of comparison it may be recalled that on the same date in round numbers 755,000 ejidatarios had received definitive possession of 7.6 million hectares of land.

Land Tenure in Present-Day Mexico

The best source of information with reference to the character and distribution of landholding in Mexico at the present time is the 1930 agricultural census.[26] The principal facts brought out by this census are briefly summarized in the following paragraphs.

In the first place the census shows that there are in Mexico 614,101 farm properties of more than one hectare in extent[27] embracing 131.5 million hectares and valued at 2,587.4 million pesos. As between privately-owned farms and ejidos these properties were (are) distributed as follows:

	No.	*% of Total*	*Millions of Hectares*	*% of Total*	*Millions of Pesos*	*% of Total*
Private Farms	609,912	99.3	123.2	93.7	2,344.1	90.6
Ejidos	4,189	0.7	8.3	6.3	243.3	9.4

It will be observed at once that despite all the laws, despite the

[26] Although the census was taken in the year 1930 it may be regarded as revealing with considerable accuracy the situation at the present time for, as has already been pointed out, the amount of land in definitive grants in ejidos and the number of definitely constituted ejido villages as shown by the latest statistics of the Agrarian Department are respectively 8.6 per cent and 2.4 per cent less than the figures given by the 1930 agricultural census for both provisional and definitive grants. (As has also been indicated, for the purposes at hand, it makes little difference that in the first instance the figures refer to definitive ejidos only and in the second instance to both provisional and definitive ejidos—see Table 29 in Appendix A, and footnote 33 on p. 172.) However, what has just been said applies only to the totals for the whole Republic; for individual states the differences between the two sets of statistics in question are often considerable. In 18 states the 1930 census shows a lesser area in ejidos than is indicated in the figures of the Agrarian Department. Nevertheless, in only 8 states is the negative difference more than 10 per cent. In all other states, by using the 1930 figures to show land in definitive grants, a more favorable picture of the amount of land in ejidos, and hence of the progress of the agrarian reform, is given than if the figures of the Agrarian Department for definitive grants are used.

[27] Appendix A, Table 30.

Farm properties of less than one hectare numbered 244,108 with an aggregate area of 100,070 hectares.

very considerable expenditure of money, and despite a revolution which rocked the country to its very foundations, the net result so far as the prize exhibit in agrarian reform is concerned—the distribution of land to villages—is that some 4,000 communities now

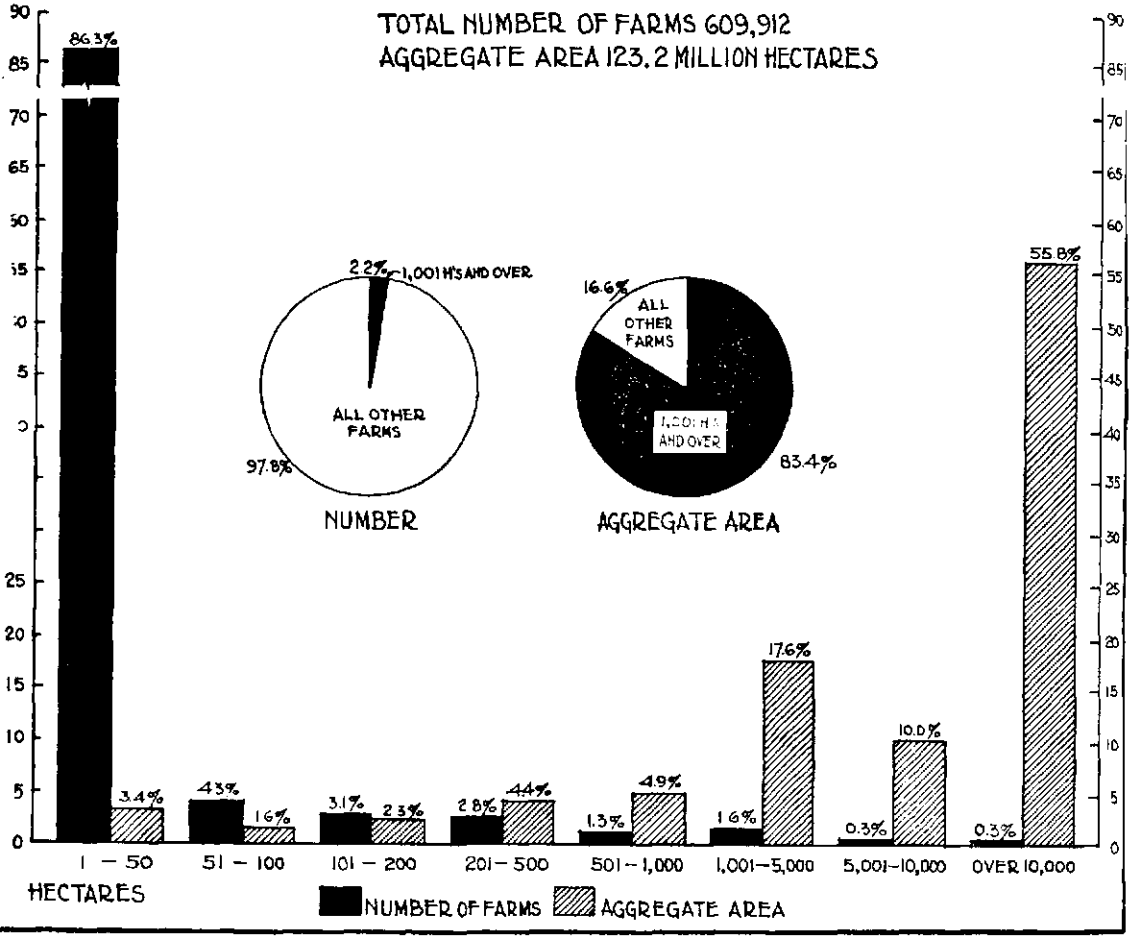

FIG. 29.—Number and aggregate area of privately-owned farms distributed according to area, 1930. (See Appendix A, Tables 39, 40, and 41.)

have definitive possession of around 8 million hectares of land which for the most part[28] used to belong to the landlords. In some states—

[28] That is, no account is taken here of "confirmations" or of national lands given to villages.

notably Hidalgo, México, Morelos, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and Yucatán—the proportion of land in ejidos as compared with privately-owned property is, of course, considerably higher than the average just given for the whole Republic. Nevertheless, the fact remains that 93.7 per cent of the area and 90.6 per cent of the value of all land in farms in Mexico is privately-owned and controlled very much in the same fashion that it has always been owned and controlled.[29]

Moreover—and here we come to the second revelation of the 1930 census—the privately held land in Mexico is still concentrated in the hands of a relatively few individuals. Mexico is still predominantly a land of haciendas and *hacendados*.[30]

In Fig. 29, where all privately-owned farms have been distributed according to area classes, it will be observed that although the largest concentration of the number of properties (86.3 per cent of the total) is to be found in the class 1-50 hectares, these properties embrace only 3.4 per cent of the aggregate area of all properties in privately-owned farms. At the opposite extreme, farms of 10,001 hectares or over total only 0.3 per cent of the privately-owned farms, but the aggregate area of these properties is 55.8 per cent of the total area of all privately-owned farm properties.[31]

If 1,000 hectares be selected as the dividing line between large farms (haciendas) on the one hand and small and medium sized farms on the other, then it turns out that the 2.2 per cent of all farms in the hacienda class embrace more than eight-tenths (83.4 per cent) of all the land in privately-owned farms! The persistence and dominance of the hacienda, as shown in Fig. 30, varies somewhat from one part of the country to another, but in only one region (the Central zone) does the aggregate amount of land in units of hacienda size drop below two-thirds of the total land in privately-owned farms and in the North and North Pacific zones the percentages rise to 91.8 and 86.0 per cent respectively.

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[29] Appendix A, Table 30.

[30] In the following remarks for convenience the number of farms will on occasion be regarded as corresponding to the number of farm owners. However, this is not the case in fact, for in the census "farms" means units of agricultural exploitation irrespective of ownership. The total number of farms within any given classification, therefore, does not represent the number of property owners but only indicates the theoretically maximum number of such owners. One individual may, and in an undetermined but undoubtedly appreciable number of cases, does own more than one farm. It follows that the extent of the concentration of landholding is even greater than here indicated.

[31] The concentration of land tenure in large properties in some states is little short of amazing. Note the percentages of the total of all privately-held land in properties of over 10,000 hectares each in the following states: Coahuila 83.1; Chihuahua 79.7; Campeche 77.0; Durango 71.0; Zacatecas 68.1; and San Luis Potosí 67.7. Appendix A, Table 40.

Although in not quite so startling a fashion, the statistics for the distribution of land tenure in terms of value also reveal disproportions in the relations between numbers of farms and aggregate values

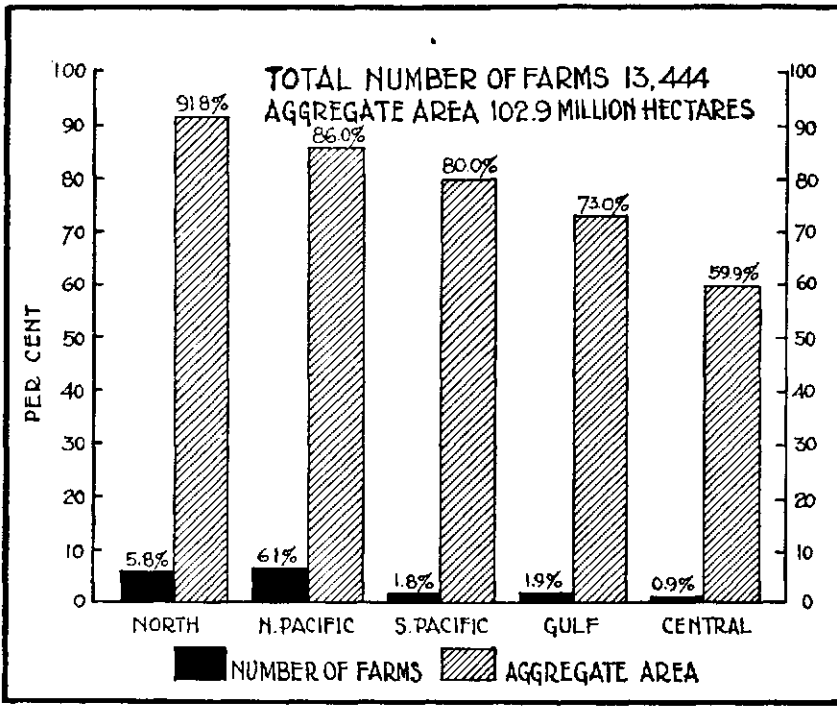

FIG. 30.—Number and aggregate area of privately-owned farms of more than 1,000 hectares compared with all privately-owned farms by zones, 1930. (See Appendix A, Tables 39 and 40.)

which support the contention that the agrarian reform has failed in large measure to effect a more equitable allocation of landholdings, and is still far from achieving the destruction of the *latifundia* system. Thus in Fig. 31, it will be noted that almost eight-tenths of the privately-owned farms are valued at less than 1,001 pesos and that the aggregate value of this overwhelming majority of the total number of farms is only 5.4 per cent of the total value of all privately-owned farms. By way of contrast at the opposite end of the scale, less than 0.1 per cent of the total number of farms valued at over 500,000 pesos each have an aggregate value equal to more than one-fourth the total value of all farms.

If once again we draw a line between large properties on the one hand and small and medium sized properties on the other—say, at

the point of 50,000 pesos[22]—we have: 98.9 per cent of the total number of farms valued at less than 50,001 pesos and with an aggre-

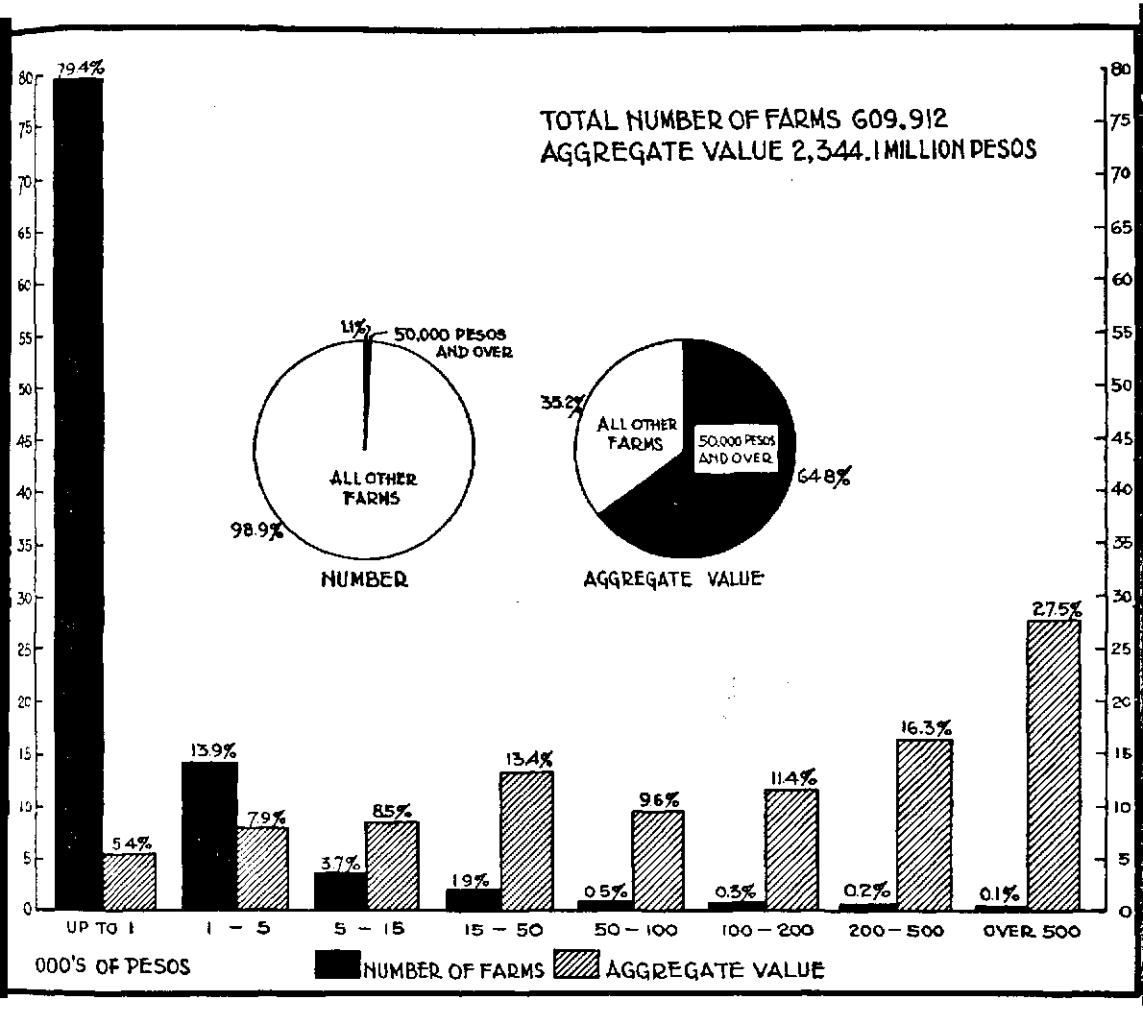

FIG. 31.—Number and aggregate value of privately-owned farms distributed according to value, 1930. (See Appendix A, Tables 42, 43, and 44.)

gate value of a little over one-third of the total value of all farms; and 1.1 per cent of the total properties each with a value of 50,001

[22] Thirty thousand pesos would probably be much nearer an equivalence to 1,000 hectares. The figure of 50,000 pesos is used here as a dividing line because the census returns are so arranged that no break is possible within the class 15,000 to 50,000 pesos.

pesos or more with an aggregate value of almost two-thirds of the total value of all farms.

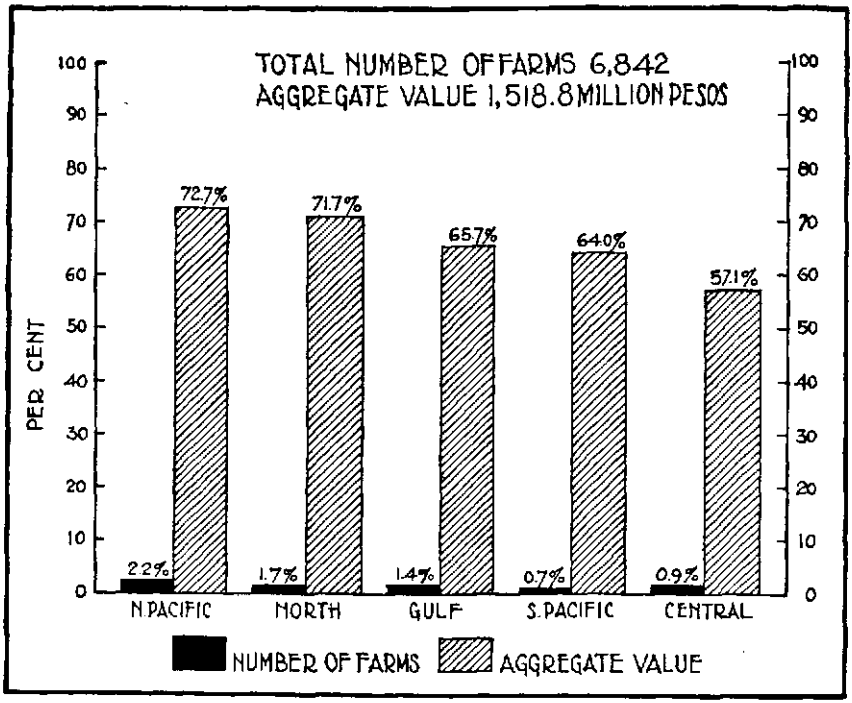

FIG. 32.—Number and aggregate value of privately-owned farms valued at more than 50,000 pesos compared with all privately-owned farms by zones, 1930. (See Appendix A, Tables 42 and 43.)

Also, once again we may note that (Fig. 32) the dominance of the large property is general throughout the country. Properties valued at 50,001 pesos or more, although in no zone totaling more than 2.2 per cent of the number of all privately-owned farms, vary in aggregate value from 57.1 per cent of the total value of all farms in the Central zone up to 72.7 per cent in the North Pacific zone.[33]

[33] Recently an ingenious effort has been made by the Mexican statistician, Gilberto Loyo, to summarize the extent of the concentration of land tenure in Mexico as revealed by the 1930 census by stating the whole matter in terms of a single figure. Without attempting to enter here into an explanation of the mathematical basis of the formula used, it may simply be said that this figure, or coefficient of concentration (*raporto de concentración*), is so devised that if all of the land in a given area were owned by a single individual the value of the coefficient would be represented by 100; if, on the other hand, the land were distributed absolutely equally among all of the individuals owning land in a given area the value of the coefficient would be zero. In a word: the nearer the coefficient

So far we have spoken of land tenure in present day Mexico only in terms of the distribution of landholdings as between those individuals who are fortunate enough to possess land either as ejidatarios or as private individuals. But what of those who own no land at all?

The 1930 agricultural census does not show the number of landowners. It is nevertheless possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the number of individuals occupied in agriculture who do *not* own land. According to the 1930 population census the total economically active population is, in round numbers, 5.2 million. Of this number 3.6 million or 70.2 per cent are listed as occupied in agriculture. Now, if we subtract from the total economically active population engaged in agriculture those listed in the agricultural census as ejidatarios (provisional and definitive) plus those classified as proprietors[34] and as administrators or managers[35] we have left some 2.5 million individuals occupied in agriculture who do not own land. This number can, in turn, be divided into two classes: approximately 53,000 tenants, share-croppers, and caretakers; and something over 2.4 million persons who may be described as agricultural laborers.[36] In other words, in 1930, fifteen years after the inauguration of the agrarian reform, almost seven-tenths of the total economically active population engaged in agri-

approaches 100 the greater the amount of concentration. According to Loyo's calculations the coefficient of land ownership (figured on the basis of all forms of landholding, including ejidos) varied between 83.6 for the state of Tabasco and 95.9 for the state of San Luis Potosí. For the whole Republic the figure was 95.2! Coefficients worked out in similar fashion for other countries were, for example: the United States 64.3 (for the year 1930); Canada 47.8 (1921); Denmark 55.3 (1919); Chile 90.8 (1927-1928); and Brazil 86.6 (1920). Loyo concludes on the basis of his studies:

"The Mexican revolution has not destroyed the system of *latifundia* . . . it has simply distributed to groups of population land which, in many regions, is deficient both quantitatively and qualitatively. The organization of the ejido economy is still in the programmatic stage. Despite all that has been said in the American and European press with respect to the radicalism of the Mexican agrarian reform, the coefficients of concentration show without a shadow of a doubt, the very slight extent to which . . . the reform has contributed to the equal distribution of the area of agricultural properties. . . ." Loyo, *La concentración agraria en el mundo*, p. 133; also see the statement of the *Instituto de Estudios Sociales del Partido Nacional Revolucionario* published in *El Nacional*, November 18, 1934.

[34] The proprietors here in question are not the total number of all landowners, but only those who were personally engaged in working their land at the time the census was taken.

[35] Managers (*administradores*) are included here with proprietors because, although in the majority of cases it may be assumed that these individuals do not own land, their economic status in Mexican agricultural economy is, generally speaking, much higher than that of the renter, share-cropper and day laborer.

[36] There is a slight margin of error involved in these figures—i.e., some of those listed as agricultural laborers may actually make their living by fishing or hunting; it is also conceivable that some tenants, share-croppers and caretakers may own land which they were not working at the time the census was taken.

culture still belonged to the disinherited landless masses dependent upon day wages or such meager earnings as may be derived from tenant farming or share-cropping. In only one state did the percentage of the landless drop below 40; in eighteen states the percentage was between 70 and 85 and in three states the percentage rose above 85.[37]

Since 1930 there has, of course, been some change in these figures. According to the best estimates that can be made, the number of ejidatarios (provisional and definitive) has been increased by about 500,000, thus bringing the total number of ejidatarios at the present time (December 31, 1933) to something over a million. It may be assumed that practically all the "new" ejidatarios who have received land since 1930 are from the class described here as the "landless masses." This being the case the present distribution of the economically active population engaged in agriculture is probably about as follows: ejidatarios, 1.0 million; landless laborers, tenants and share-croppers, 2.0 million; all others, 0.6 million.

The Distribution of Land to Villages—Summary and Comment

By any test that can be made it is clear that the ejido program is still very far indeed from having achieved its first and most important objective. Less than three-tenths of the villages and only a little more than one-third of the individuals who under the present laws have the right to petition for, and who may be expected to receive, land have so far actually been given definitive possession of land. Of even greater significance is the fact that only about 15 per cent of the total amount of crop land which it will be necessary to distribute if the present laws are carried out has so far been definitively granted. Few villages which have received land have been given enough land or land of sufficiently good quality to permit anything more than a bare living to be made out of it. Indeed, although in the new Agrarian Code there is some evidence of a changed conception of the role of the ejido in the economic organization of the country and hence of the amount of land which must be given to the ejidatarios, the constant reiteration in the preambles of laws, in political platforms and in the speeches and writings of the revolutionary leaders of the idea that the purpose of the ejido is simply to satisfy the necessities of the beneficiaries[38] clearly indicates that the

[37] Appendix A, Table 45.

[38] For example, the following from the "platform" of the National Revolutionary Party: ". . . The restitution and dotation of ejidos must be continued so that . . . the necessities of the peasant classes shall be satisfied in that they shall be given lands sufficient in

ejido has been thought of largely in terms of a subsistence unit.[39] The idea that the ejido might be an agency of surplus production in

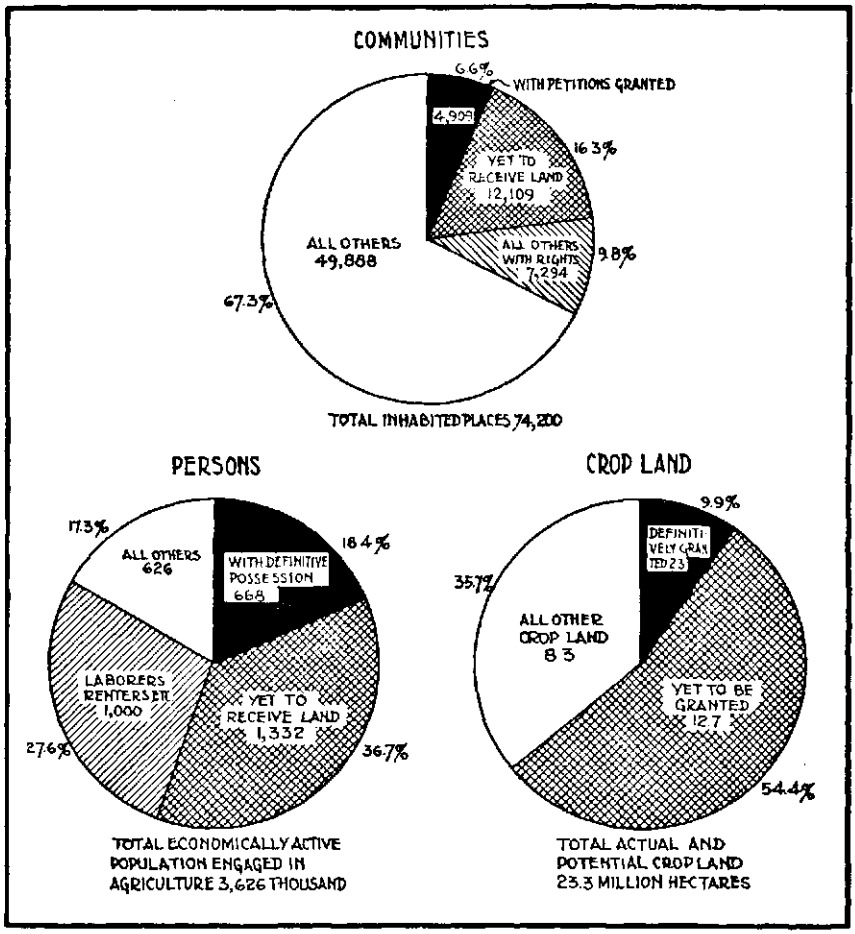

FIG. 33.—Estimated present status and future course of the ejido land distribution program. (Note that in the case of "Persons With Definitive Possession" a reduction in the Agrarian Department's figure of 754,577 has been made to take care, to some extent, of the "padding" of agrarian censuses. All estimates in the circle "Persons" are made on the assumption that there will be no increase in the total economically active population engaged in agriculture.)

the national economy has only recently occurred to a few of the more

quantity to guarantee . . . a living for the persons benefited and the members of their families." *Constitución del P.N.R.*, p. 13.

[39] . . . "In the majority of cases it is the Colonial idea which [the authorities] have had in mind—that is to give communities . . . only the amount of land requisite to produce

daring leaders of the reform; that the ejido should be *the* instrument of production, the principal unit out of which the structure of the industry of agriculture should be built and around which the whole farming economy should be organized is a notion hardly yet glimpsed.[40]

The new Agrarian Code as we shall see in Chapter XXIV is the most liberal of all the ejido laws. It enlarges the rights of villages to petition for land and it increases the amount of land which must be granted to each ejidatario and each village—including those villages and individuals which have already received land. Nevertheless, the new code fails to extend the privileges of reform to the some 49,000 villages with less than 20 heads of agrarian families; it does not, except in a backhanded and very inadequate fashion, provide for the communities of resident laborers on haciendas; and it still leaves the responsibility of petitioning for and obtaining land resting on the villages rather than the government itself undertaking to grant land where land is needed. It would appear, therefore, that *even if the present laws are carried out to the very last period and comma* around 55,000 communities or more than three-fourths of all the communities will not receive land; approximately one million individuals or some 27 per cent of the total economically active population engaged in agriculture will have no land whatsoever; and over a third of the actual and potential crop land will still be in the hands of private landowners (Fig. 33). In a word, not only has the agrarian reform so far failed to achieve its goal of giving land to villages, but when, if, and as the goal envisaged in the present laws *is* achieved, the land problem in Mexico in very appreciable degree will still remain unsolved.

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the biologically indispensable necessities. . . ." García de la Cadena, "Desenvolvimiento agrícola en México," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, II, 501.

[40] Fabila, "El ejido," *El Nacional*, May 26, 1934.

CHAPTER XII

CASE II: POOR LAND AND LITTLE WATER

Perhaps the earth of Mexico conspired to create the tragic mood of the Aztec, and to fulfill it in the Conquest from which modern Mexico was born. It is an earth unwieldy to man's pleasure. Titanic and volcanic mountains, mesetas of thin air, exuberant valleys, burning deserts. . . . This earth is a tyrant: it exiles valley from valley, it begrudges loam for corn or overwhelms it with torrential rains. Man is a stranger within it. . . .

—WALDO FRANK, *America Hispana.*[1]

FOR THE purpose of illustrating the problem of land and water in relation to the ejido we will depart from the procedure to be followed in later chapters in connection with other problems of the ejido and, instead of making an intensive study of a single village, point our moral by summoning a cloud of witnesses. There are, of course, many ejidos with good land and plenty of water, either from rainfall or irrigation. But it is also true, as the case materials presented here show only too clearly, that most ejidos have little land, and that poor, and less water, and that scarce.

The materials in the following paragraphs cover twenty-three administrative zones in ten different states and refer to some 850 ejidos. In all but one instance (Oaxaca), the source of the quotations is a questionnaire sent out by the National Agrarian Commission in March 1933 to the field agents of the Commission (*Jefes de Zona*) in the various states.

PUEBLA, ZONE 8-8 (64 EJIDOS):

This zone is characterized by lack of water, not only for the irrigation of the ejido lands but even for the most indispensable domestic uses. The result of this is the general state of poverty and the lack of hygiene which may be noted among the ejidatarios . . . of the whole region.

All of the ejidos in this area are forced to engage exclusively in dry farming (*cultivo de temporal*). Stock raising cannot prosper because of the lack of water and the consequent poorness and scarcity of forage. . . .

[1] Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.

Because of the dryness the production is so niggardly that it gives rise to an excessive demand for land and the ejidatarios seek to compensate for the poor harvests by cultivating larger and larger areas. . . . The struggle for water is tremendous, not only between the ejidatarios of a given village but also between the villages. . . . If there were sufficient irrigated lands, the struggle over the land would not be so intense, but the great scarcity of water serves to complicate in a most hopeless fashion the problem of the economic and equitable distribution of the land. . . .

The general poverty in this region [has the advantage] that the "political racketeers" with mercenary ambitions do not get very far. Generally these grafters prefer regions with a benign climate and above all those in which there are "juicy" ejidatarios ready for squeezing.

MICHOACAN, ZONE 7-1 (62 EJIDOS):

This is a poor zone because more than 60 per cent of the ejidos in it have no water for irrigation.

GUANAJUATO, ZONE 3-5 (21 EJIDOS):

One of the principal problems in this zone is the scarcity of irrigated land. The majority of the ejidos are formed of hill lands and irrigation is slight and difficult. The ejidos which enjoy fortuitous irrigations are very few and small in area, and almost none are permanently irrigated. . . . In some ejidos frequent difficulties arise over the distribution of parcels because of the dearth of land. . . . Another cause of numerous difficulties, not only between ejidatarios of the same village but between ejido communities, is the scarcity of water. The only way to solve this problem is to build small irrigation works. . . .

HIDALGO, ZONE 4-4 (18 EJIDOS):

The situation in Zone 4-4 is really serious because almost all the villages lack irrigation and are thus forced to depend on the rains which often come late—as in the present year. With the exception of five villages which receive water from National Irrigation Project No. 3, all of the ejidos of this region must depend on dry farming.

JALISCO, ZONE 5-3 (27 EJIDOS):

The poor quality of the land is one of the problems of this area; the ejidatarios with the greatest sacrifice are able to obtain only mid-

dling-fair results. . . . In practically the whole zone the ejidatarios show little initiative, and are mostly resigned to a life of misery.

COAHUILA, ZONE 13-1 (27 EJIDOS):

With the exception of one *municipio*, economically this zone is in a bad way because of the lack of that most important element: *water*. Year by year water becomes more and more scarce even for domestic uses. About once every five or six years this region produces a good wheat crop.

GUANAJUATO, ZONE 3-9 (10 EJIDOS):

. . . The economic situation in this zone is bad and the social conditions even worse. . . . The reason for the [unfortunate] state of affairs economically can be explained in a few simple words: poor quality of land, lack of rains and early frosts.

HIDALGO, ZONE 4-8 (58 EJIDOS):

Because of the absolute nullity of the rainfall during the past year, the economic conditions in this zone are bad—especially in the 85 per cent of the ejidos which have no means of irrigation.

GUERRERO, ZONE 18-3 (110 EJIDOS):

The general situation is bad. The land is poorly cultivated and of notorious inferiority. Most of the land is sloping and neglected. The ravines contain good lands but, since they are improperly cultivated, they yield very poor results.

MÉXICO, ZONE 6-6 (27 EJIDOS):

The ejido zone in my charge is extremely arid; the principal problem is the dearth of water.

HIDALGO, ZONE 4-6 (41 EJIDOS):

The lack of water for domestic uses and for livestock is one of the main problems in this zone. This year the ejidatarios have had to go more than eight kilometers to obtain the precious liquid [for domestic consumption]. They have had to transport their cattle to places where there are springs and many of the cattle have died of thirst. . . .

PUEBLA, ZONE 8-7 (64 EJIDOS):

Although there is enough fairly good land in this zone to satisfy the necessities of the villages, they have been given small areas of

cultivable land and the rest hilly and pasture land [sometimes?] two leagues away. . . . In making the dotation [the agrarian authorities] never take into account the number of individuals who need land . . . and the result is that the majority of the ejidatarios are left without any land, scrapping among themselves. . . . If the land which they are given were to be divided equally, each would get about one-half a hectare—and with this amount it is impossible for them to improve their situation.

CHIHUAHUA, ZONE 1-5 (53 EJIDOS):

Most of the ejidos in this zone are located on dry farming lands. Some of these lands are very arid and almost completely lacking in water. . . . The ejidatarios are forced to buy water for domestic uses and for their animals.

PUEBLA, ZONE 8-9 (42 EJIDOS):

The eastern section of this zone is extremely mountainous [and characterized] by poor lands and the absence of water whether from irrigation works or from rainfall. . . . The western part is [also] exceedingly mountainous and arid . . . and as a consequence the ejidatarios live in frightful poverty.

MÉXICO, ZONE 6-15 (30 EJIDOS):

The principal problem is the lack of water. . . . Even when permission is given and water rights are assigned . . . no one respects the legal regulations. Everyone tries to take more than his share and this gives rise to quarrels between the villages and the *hacendados.*

HIDALGO, ZONE 4-5 (45 EJIDOS):

Generally speaking the situation in this zone is bad. The area is characterized by the poor quality of the land; the scarcity of rainfall and other sources of water; the poverty of all of the inhabitants; and the lack of commercial activity of any importance.

MÉXICO, ZONE 6-3 (38 EJIDOS):

It is the general custom for the ejidatarios in the flat part of this zone to seek their living in activities having no connection with their ejidos. Because of the smallness of the ejido parcels and the almost complete lack of water for irrigation, they can engage only in dry farming and since the products thereof are not sufficient to meet their necessities they spend the rest of their time (which is the larger

part of it) as itinerant merchants or working in gangs away from their villages. . . . Some of them organize bands [musical] and travel even as far as the states of Puebla and Morelos. . . .

The ejidatarios who live in the villages in the hills are practically all dedicated to itinerant commerce or to working as day laborers . . . on the near-by haciendas. . . . Some of them also engage in the illegal exploitation of the mountain forests and, under the pretext of gathering dead wood, burn charcoal. . . .

One of the principal problems I have to contend with in this zone is the lack of coöperation and the poor attendance of the ejidatarios at the meetings called to deal with matters concerning the ejidos. . . . The failure to attend meetings is not due to the fact that the ejidatarios are lacking in good will but rather it is due to the necessity which obliges them to leave their villages . . . in search of work. . . . In no ejido is the agricultural work carried on in a systematic fashion; for many of the ejidatarios do not have any oxen and must wait until those who own the oxen are through with their work and willing to rent them.

OAXACA[2]

In the inspection I have been making of the ejidos in this state, I have noted that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the villages do not have enough land or land of sufficiently good quality to permit the ejidatarios to satisfy their agricultural necessities. Indeed, in place of being satisfied, the villages are stirred up by the injustice of giving them parcels which are [too] small and in the majority of cases of poor quality. In other words, the [agrarian reform] has been carried out in that the villages have been given land, but the problem has not been solved definitely. . . .

There are ejidos (and they are in the majority) in which each ejidatario has received [only] one or two hectares because there wasn't enough land even of poor quality to create parcels of the size required by law. . . . There are other ejidos in which, although the area is sufficiently large, the lands are sterile. . . . and on these sterile lands no one can produce anything—not even enough to pay taxes. . . .

There are [still] other ejidos too numerous to mention in which the *Banco de Crédito Agrícola* has not been able to organize coöperative societies (as the villages have requested) because the harvests are not

[2] The case material herewith quoted is taken from a special report made by the Regional Organizer for the state on November 4, 1933. In 1933, there were six ejido zones in the state of Oaxaca and 110 ejidos under the supervision of the Regional Organizer's office.

even sufficient for the daily domestic necessities of the ejidatarios, let alone accumulating something with which to improve their situation. . . . And it is not a question of there being no land, or land in large properties [subject to expropriation under the ejido laws]; the fact is that the landlords are being protected. . . .

When we add together the lack of irrigation, the difficulties in the way of obtaining agricultural credit, high taxes, the poor quality of the land granted in some places and the small amount of land in others, it is clear that in Oaxaca it is impossible for the ejidatarios to make any progress except in a very small number of cases. . . .

All of the foregoing clearly demonstrates . . . that the ejido given in the name of the Law and the Revolution in Oaxaca does not even satisfy the agricultural necessities of the ejidatarios, and still less can the ejido be regarded as a basis for individual and collective progress. . . . And what is true of Oaxaca is also true of many other states in the Republic.

CHAPTER XIII

FINANCING LAND GRANTS TO VILLAGES

The Problem

In the early days of the agrarian reform little attention was paid to the matter of compensation for expropriated properties. There was no time to be wasted on such abstruse subjects; the country was torn by revolution and the people were clamoring for land. There was no choice; the people had to be given land. The problem of who should make payments to injured landlords could, indeed, *had* to be left for solution to some later and presumably more propitious time.[1]

If the government had continued along the lines upon which it actually did proceed during the first fine flush of revolutionary fervor, the problem of financing land grants to villages would have been solved with neatness and dispatch. As in the case of many another social revolution, the tyrants and the oppressors would simply have been thrown out and their property confiscated; for revolutions of the sort which Mexico went through from 1910 to 1921 have never been distinguished by their regard for legal delicacy. But partly because of the Don Quixote strain in the Mexican character, and partly because of the strong pressure brought to bear by foreign powers,[2] Mexico was forced into the position of trying to accomplish by the slow and painful processes of law and order work which might have been done by the revolution itself.[3] A revolutionary

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[1] "This Administration succeeded in quelling . . . rebellion and in reëstablishing peace . . . not so much by military force and bloodshed as by the quick application of agrarian laws. . . . Repression by force . . . would have affected . . . interests throughout the country, with its eternal trail of evils of every kind. This undoubted fact sufficiently justifies the hasty action of the Federal Executive to restitute or grant community lands (*ejidos*) to the villages, taking the necessary lands from the neighboring farms (*haciendas*), even postponing the indemnity for expropriations. . . ." Letter dated March 31, 1923, from the Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy of the United States in Mexico, quoted in: *Proceedings of the United States-Mexican Commission*, p. 28.

[2] See, for example, the representation of the United States in *ibid.*, pp. 25 ff.

[3] ". . . In Mexico before a single fundamental reform had been effected . . . the dynamic Revolution was over. The old house remained to be built over with peace-time tools, and with due regard for the niceties of law, and property—especially international law, since any vital remodeling in Mexico could not but touch foreign interests which were so largely built into the old feudal edifice." Ernest Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage*, p. 148. Reprinted by permission of the Century Company.

program whose only point of reference might have been the social and political necessities of the people was made to take its cue from the presumptive principles of international law and to state its aims with reference to pecuniary considerations. The result was that Mexico embarked upon the task of cleaning out the Augean stables of monopoly and special privilege with one hand tied behind her back.

Having once accepted the principle that lands given to villages must be paid for, the question then became: how? That is, how could a country which had just been through ten years and more of revolutionary strife, a country without money or credit, nevertheless acquire properties of great value owned by private individuals, with the intention and for the purpose of turning these properties over to indigent villages?

The Program

The first thought of the revolutionary leaders, or at least of those associated with the Carranza regime, was that the villages themselves should pay for the land they received. The original agrarian decree of January 1915, to be sure, stated that lands for dotation to villages should be "expropriated for the account of the National Government," and that "interested parties who believed themselves injured" could present demands for compensation to the courts. Article 27 of the 1917 constitution assumed with equal definiteness the Nation's responsibility for the payment of properties expropriated for the purpose of ejido grants. But nothing was said in either the decree of 1915 or in Article 27 about the manner in which payments were to be made or whether the government was to assume final as well as initial responsibility for such payments. From other sources, however, it is clear that it was the original intention for the government, in the case of properties expropriated for ejido grants, to undertake only the functions of a financial intermediary.

The principal evidence in support of the foregoing assertion is to be found, first, in the already mentioned[4] Circular No. 34 of the National Agrarian Commission (issued on January 31, 1919) requiring the inhabitants of villages petitioning for lands to agree in writing "to pay the Nation the value of the lands which they were going to receive by dotation, in accordance with the indemnity which the Nation must pay to the proprietors of the land expropriated";[5] and, second, in the original enabling act of January 10, 1920, that authorized the creation of the Public Agrarian Debt.[6] This decree

[4] See above p. 78.

[5] Bolaños, *C.A.*, p. 273.

[6] Appendix B, IV, 1.

(which is still in force) states in Article 6 that for the payment of the bonds and coupons attached thereto, issued to indemnify owners of properties expropriated for ejidos, the government will apply all the revenues coming into the Treasury from the sale of ejido lands to the residents of the respective localities. The plain implication of Article 6 is that it was intended that the villages receiving ejido lands would, sooner or later, reimburse the government for the outlays for land made on their behalf.

When Obregón came into power one of his earliest political moves was to have the National Agrarian Commission rescind Circular No. 34.[7] Although no change has ever been made in the sections of the decree of January 10, 1920, quoted above, generally speaking since Obregón's action removing Circular 34 from the books, there has been no further recognition of even the possibility of villages paying for ejidos.[8]

In the matter of agrarian bonds and indemnification in expropriations for ejidos, as in the case of all other aspects of the agrarian reform, there has been a very considerable amount of patching up and making over of the laws. The enabling act of January 10, 1920, was first regulated by the law of January 26, 1922.[9] After being reformed on three occasions,[10] this law was finally annulled and a new regulation was enacted on December 31, 1925. It is this regulation, together with its five modifications and reforms, that is in force at the present time.[11]

For the purposes at hand it will be sufficient to summarize briefly the laws now in effect without attempting to trace out in any detail their chronological development.

The government is authorized to issue Agrarian Public Debt,

[7] See Circular No. 44, March 15, 1921, reprinted in Bolaños, *C.A.*, pp. 287-88. It is interesting to note that only a few weeks before the signing of the order declaring Circular No. 34 null and void Obregón presented in Congress a project for an agrarian law requiring ejidatarios to pay the government for lands received within a period of twenty years. See Palomo Valencia, "¿Quién pagará los ejidos?" *El Universal*, November 12, 1929.

[8] This statement is not entirely accurate, for, as late as June 4, 1923, the Mexican government assured representatives of the United States that it was the intention of the government to use money received from the sale of ejido lands to the inhabitants of beneficiary villages for the payment of agrarian bonds. (See *Proceedings of the United States-Mexican Commission*, pp. 32-33.) Also, it may be noted that on July 28, 1924, Obregón signed a decree (Appendix B, II, 15) requiring villages to pay the government for lands expropriated for the purpose of enlarging ejidos. This provision, however, does not appear in the succeeding laws concerning amplifications.

[9] Appendix B, IV, 2.

[10] Appendix B, IV, 3, 6 and 7.

[11] Appendix B, IV, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

twenty-year, 5 per cent bearer bonds to the extent of 50 million pesos in series as and when required. Amortization is by annual drawings when the market quotation of the bonds is equal to or greater than par at the time of the drawing (January of each year). Whenever the market value is less than par, bonds are retired by purchase in the open market.[12]

In case of nonpayment of interest (due at the end of each calendar year), or of the nonpayment of bonds favored in a drawing, both bonds and interest coupons may be used at their face value to pay "any federal taxes not especially pledged." Agrarian bonds are receivable at any time, whether drawn or not, at par in payment for public lands; for the payment of rentals or the purchase price of lands granted to villages and subdivided among their inhabitants; for guarantee deposits in any case where bonds of the public debt are permitted in place of cash, and for the payment of certain taxes.[13] Also, agrarian bonds may be offered as collateral in the National Bank of Agricultural Credit up to 66 per cent of their commercial value.

Any person whose land has been expropriated for the purpose of ejido dotations may solicit indemnification from the Ministry of Agriculture within one year after official notification of such expropriation.[14] The basis of indemnity in all cases is the assessed tax value of the land in question plus 10 per cent and allowances for the value of any improvements made after the date of assessment. Those dissatisfied with the evaluation placed on their lands have the right to request a review of their case before the District Courts.

Finally, it should be recalled in connection with this summary of

[12] This "foxy" measure, not introduced in the law until December 29, 1928 (Appendix B, IV, 13), is to be credited to the Portes Gil administration. It means in practice that agrarian bonds are always retired by purchase in the open market, since they have never been quoted at anywhere near par, much less at more than par.

[13] On various occasions, by special decrees, holders of agrarian bonds have been allowed to offer them in part payment of taxes on pulque, water concessions, liquors manufactured in the country, and back taxes on passengers and freight carried by automobile and bus companies. See Appendix B, IV, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, and 22.

[14] For those whose lands were expropriated before the enactment of agrarian debt laws a special period of one year was allowed and extensions of time were made on several occasions—i.e., the first regulation of January 26, 1922, set the limit for petitions for indemnifications for all expropriations made up to that time at January 26, 1923; this limit was extended to April 16, 1924, by the decree of March 28, 1923; to June 19, 1926, by the decree of June 10, 1925; and finally (for all expropriations made before December 31, 1925) by a decree of June 18, 1926, the limit was extended to January 1, 1927. (Appendix B, IV, 2, 3, 6, and 10.) Also, a special procedure was decreed (Appendix B, IV, 4) for cases of expropriations made before May 1, 1917 (i.e., in the so-called "pre-Constitutional period").

the laws governing compensation in agrarian expropriation cases, that the decree of December 23, 1931, which reformed the original agrarian decree of January 1915 and denied the right of landowners to be granted *amparos* in agrarian cases involving the dotation of lands to villages, expressly states that the only legal recourse open to landowners affected by such dotations is to petition the government for indemnification and that solely in the manner set forth in the agrarian debt laws.[15]

Progress

The present status of the *Deuda Pública Agraria* may be indicated in the following schematic fashion :[16]

Total issue of bonds authorized by the Law of January 10, 1920	50,000,000	pesos
Total bonds approved by the Ministry of Agriculture for issue to claimants	27,322,060	pesos
Total claimants authorized to receive bonds by the Ministry of Agriculture	170	persons
Total claims approved by the Ministry of Agriculture (in many cases one person has put in several claims)	387	claims
Total bonds actually delivered to claimants by the Ministry of Public Finance	24,426,800	pesos
Total claims covered by bonds delivered to claimants	381	claims
Total amount of expropriated land for which bonds have been delivered to claimants	222,797	hectares
Total bonds amortized :		
By drawings and payment in cash	497,200	pesos
By ordinary purchases in the open market	6,639,200	pesos
Retired from circulation by "special" purchases in open market	1,502,700	pesos
Received in payment for public lands	40,000	pesos
Received in payment for taxes and other debts	979,000	pesos
	9,658,100	pesos
Interest payments on bonds outstanding in :		
1926	30,951	pesos
1927	341,868	pesos
1928	481,562	pesos
1929	471,267	pesos

[15] See above pp. 118-20.

[16] The figures (supplied by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Public Finance) are for June 1933. The writer is informed that no substantial change has been made in the status of the debt since that date.

1930	576,295	pesos
1931	(suspended)	
1932	(suspended)	
1933 (to June 22)	424,902	pesos
	2,326,845	pesos

It would be interesting to know to what extent claims have been approved by the government in comparison with the total claims which could be made under the present laws for land already expropriated. Unfortunately, the lack of adequate statistical information and the complicated nature of the problem make it almost impossible even to guess at the probable amount of the potential agrarian debt. In December 1930, the then Minister of Agriculture, Manuel Pérez Treviño, stated: "According to the data which we have in the National Agrarian Commission, the agrarian debt amounts to about 800 million pesos, and still, in our opinion, we have not solved even 50 per cent of the [agrarian] problem."[17] If this estimate be accepted as a statement of the potential liability of the government for all land given in definitive possession by dotation and amplification, it would mean a liability of approximately 156 pesos per hectare for every hectare distributed up to the end of 1930.[18] Since that time (that is, up to December 31, 1933, the last date for which definitive figures are available) close to one million additional hectares have been distributed against which, theoretically at least, claims may be made. Figured at the same value per hectare, this would mean 156 million pesos more to be added to the Minister of Agriculture's estimate, or a total potential liability for all land distributed up to the end of 1933 of around 956 million pesos.

Another way of estimating theoretically potential claims for land already given to villages is on the basis of a comparison between the total amount of land distributed by dotation and amplification with the amount and value of the land for which bonds have already been delivered. At the end of 1933 the total amount of land distributed by dotation and amplification was approximately 6 million hectares;[19] at the same time, bonds to the amount of some 24.4 million pesos had been delivered covering around 223,000 hectares, or, on

[17] See speech printed in *Ley de crédito agrícola . . . y decreto que reforma . . . la ley sobre dotaciones y restituciones de tierras y aguas*, p. 109.

[18] No claims can be made for *restitutions* or *confirmations*. The amount of land given in definitive possession by dotation and amplification up to December 31, 1930, was approximately 5.1 million hectares (Appendix A, Table 17) which, divided into 800 million gives an average value per hectare of around 156 pesos.

[19] Appendix A, Table 17.

the average, 110 pesos per hectare. This would leave approximately 5.8 million hectares still to be paid for, which, at the same value per hectare, would mean 638 million pesos of bonds still to be delivered, or a total of over 662 million pesos as the potential agrarian debt, assuming that claims should be made for all land granted to villages up to December 31, 1933.

Estimates such as those just made are at best only approximations because, among other reasons, several hundred thousand hectares of the total lands distributed were public lands and hence will not have to be paid for, and because claims covering many thousands of hectares have been allowed to lapse.[20] About the only conclusion that can be drawn on the basis of any calculation possible at present is that the agrarian debt, whether by that term is meant the potential debt for land already expropriated or what might with some awkwardness be called the potentially potential debt for the possibly 12.7 million hectares of crop land and anywhere from 25 to 40 million hectares of other types of land yet to be expropriated,[21] is very large. Indeed, so large is the debt compared with Mexico's fiscal resources that one may say without fear of contradiction that it will never be acknowledged in an amount even approximating its entirety and that part which is acknowledged will not be paid at more than a fraction of its face value.

Some support for the foregoing statement may be found in the fact that of the total of approximately 9.7 million pesos of bonds amortized, less than 16 per cent have been retired at their face value, either in cash or in payments for certain classes of taxes, national lands, and so forth. The remaining 84 per cent has been amortized by purchases in the open market at prices far below the face value of the bonds. (The quotation on agrarian bonds at the present time—June 1934—is around twelve centavos.) The failure of the government in recent years to pay interest regularly on the bonds outstanding has, of course, greatly facilitated the business of buying the bonds in the open market.

In the final analysis, the attitude the government will take with reference to its liabilities assumed and yet to be assumed under the laws governing indemnification in agrarian expropriation cases will be determined by the position eventually adopted toward the whole problem of the ejido. Attention has already been drawn to the fact

[20] For an illustration of the many hazards involved in any attempt to estimate the amount of the potential agrarian debt, see the careful study by Paloma Valencia, entitled "La deuda pública agraria y algunos datos sobre la cuestión de ejidos," *Revista Mexicana de Economía*, I, 297-325.

[21] See above p. 198 and p. 209.

that some of the older and more conservative of the revolutionary leaders have advocated, as part of their general policy of bringing the distribution of ejido lands to a speedy close, that in the near future the agrarian bond mill should be stopped and that the government should undertake to pay in cash for any further expropriations necessary to complete the program of giving land to villages. This idea expressed by ex-President Calles in his New York interview of December, 1929, and later reiterated on other occasions,[22] was given the status of an official statement of policy by its inclusion as one of the planks in the program of the all-powerful National Revolutionary Party.[23] The first definite application of the principle of payment in cash rather than in bonds for land expropriated for ejidos, it will be recalled, was made in the decree of December 26, 1930.[24] This stated that expropriations for the purpose of making additional grants (*ampliaciones*) to villages which had already received a dotation of ejido lands should be effected only after payment in cash.[25]

But the rivers of agrarian doctrine and practice run fast in

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[22] Notably in the "conversation" published on June 23, 1930. A further reason for stopping as soon as possible the issue of agrarian bonds, in addition to those indicated in the quotation from Calles' conversation on page 113, was given by Calles on the same occasion when he said that many of the agrarian bonds already put in circulation had been bought up "by American bankers . . . and what is worse . . . at the ridiculous price of fourteen cents on the peso. As these bonds cost the Nation 5 per cent annually, it can easily be understood that in a very short time we shall have handed over integrally the entire value of our land to the American bankers."

[23] This plank (curiously neglected by the opponents of the agrarian reform in search of comfort) was written into the original declaration of principles of the National Revolutionary Party, adopted on March 4, 1929, and reads as follows:

"When the economic conditions of the Republic permit, there shall be fixed, with the object of stabilizing the obligations of the State, an amount in the annual budget destined for the immediate payment of [expropriated lands] and calculated on the basis of the average amount of the indemnifications granted in the years of greatest activity of the National Agrarian Commission." *Constitución del P.N.R.*, p. 22.

[24] See above p. 116.

[25] The following statement was made by the then Minister of Agriculture, Pérez Treviño, in presenting the decree of December 26, 1930 to Congress:

"If we consider the general interests of the country, we must conclude that the stabilization of the economic values of the nation is absolutely necessary. . . . We cannot live in a truly organic regime unless we bring our budget into line with the economic resources of the government.

"The first stage of the agrarian problem was of such urgency, of such necessity, that it would have been most indefensible had the revolutionary Government stopped to take thought about where money could be obtained to acquire lands with which to satisfy the necessities of the villages; but this [position], which none of us think was in error, it is now necessary to define more clearly. . . . Now that we come to the second stage, to the stage involving additional grants of land (*ampliaciones*) to villages, I think we will commit a

Mexico and already much water has passed under the bridge since the Calles declarations of 1929 and 1930 and the decree of December 26, 1930. When the new Agrarian Code was enacted in March, 1934, nothing at all was said about payment in cash for initial ejido grants and even the provision regarding payment for *ampliaciones* was quietly omitted. If the younger group of *agraristas* now actively pushing the distribution of ejido lands "to the last man and the last village" has its way, the payment for expropriated lands in bonds will continue to be the order of the day. When these bonds will be redeemed, if ever, is another matter. It has already been suggested by one of the prominent leaders in the revolutionary group that the government will probably have to extend the date of maturity for agrarian bonds anywhere from twenty to sixty years.[26] It may even come to pass that, while the laws are kept on the books as a gesture of international good-will and while bonds will continue to be handed out to those with an appetitie for unraveling red tape, the bonds will never be redeemed and the problem of compensation for lands expropriated for ejidos will be solved by the simple process of allowing it to sink deeper and deeper in the morass of bureaucratic inaction until finally it disappears altogether.

Whatever the future disposition of the agrarian debt problem may be, it does not appear that up to the present time the revolution has shirked its responsibilities in this matter.

The vast majority of the landowners affected by the agrarian laws have undoubtedly felt that they have been very badly treated. They have held, quite naturally, that the whole system of compensation for expropriated lands is grossly unjust on the grounds: (a) that, in view of the chaotic and often confiscatory system of taxation, it has been the traditional and accepted practice in many states in Mexico to declare rural properties at something less than their real value and that, hence, indemnification on the basis of 110 per cent of the tax valuation is unfair; (b) that the interpreting of the phrase "by means of indemnification" (*mediante indemnización*) in Article 27 of the constitution[27] in such fashion as to permit the government to compensate the person affected *after* expropriation is a distortion of language and generally accepted practice; and (c) that the payment in bonds of doubtful present value and even more doubtful future value is practically no payment at all.[28]

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grave error if we do not seek to resolve this aspect of the problem within the limit set by the government budget." *Ley de crédito agrícola. . . ,* pp. 108-9.

[26] Luis León, in a speech made in February 1930. *op. cit.*, p. 19. [27] See p. 166.

[28] For a good illustration of the *hacendado* position with reference to the question of compensation for agrarian expropriations, see Noriega, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-84.

In reply to the charges and complaints of the landlords, the revolutionary government has said in effect that so far as the basis used in the evaluation of expropriated properties is concerned, if the *hacendados* have found this unfair, they have no one to blame but themselves. What could be more just than to take the *hacendados'* own statements, sworn before the tax authorities, of the value of their properties? Is the government in any way responsible for the fact that the landlords chose to undervalue their properties in order to defraud the government of taxes? Moreover, the landlords have been given repeated opportunities to rectify the valuation they have placed on their lands. Nevertheless, they have refused to take advantage of the government's efforts to make it possible for them to declare their properties at their true worth. Can the government be blamed for this?[29] Finally, the government has pointed out that it is an acknowledged fact that the pre-revolutionary market values of farm properties were greatly exaggerated and dependent upon artificial tariff barriers and the exploitation of the peon. Since the revolution these values have been deflated and the post-revolutionary market values are probably not far from the fiscal values which the *hacendados* saw fit to place on their properties during their heydey.[30]

In justifying its position with reference to the right to interpret the phrase *mediante indemnización* as permitting the state to indemnify owners of expropriated properties by the method of deferred payment (that is, in bonds) instead of in cash at the time of the making of such expropriations, the government has pointed first to the new conceptions of property established in Article 27 of the constitution and, second, to the doctrine of social necessity. As long as the protection and preservation of private property was conceived as the

[29] "The Mexican Commissioners further stated that since 1914 the Government had given the owners various opportunities to rectify the fiscal value [of their property]. On the 19th of September of that year a law was passed to determine the value of real property in the Republic, and provided that said assessment would serve as a basis to establish the value in case of expropriation. Later the Constitution of 1917 established the same basis. The owners, however, did not correct their declarations at that time, nor have they up to the present time; as in spite of the fact that a regulation of the decree of October 11, 1922, was issued the 30th of May of the present year [1923], its object being also to determine the value of real property in the country, the owners continued to resist complying with the legislation in that regard.

"Under these circumstances, the Mexican Government believes that the owners have had the opportunity of placing themselves in a position not to suffer damage, and if any of them have not wished to take advantage of this opportunity granted them by the law, it is their own fault." *Proceedings of the United States-Mexican Commission*, p. 34.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

be-all and end-all of society, it was natural to consider that the right of expropriation was a right to be exercised with the utmost caution. Article 27, however, "in keeping with modern theories," is based on the assumption that "individual private property is social in nature, for it is society which creates the right of private property and not private property which creates society."[31] Under this conception expropriation becomes a right which the state exercises with as much freedom as social needs may demand. The point of departure, the entity to be protected, is society and not the individual.[32] Whereas it is desirable whenever possible that, in expropriating private property, payment should be made previous to or at the time of the act, the state is by no means bound to follow this procedure. It may—and that is clearly the implication of the word *mediante* in Article 27—if social necessity so dictates and if the financial resources of the nation so determine, defer payment.[33]

In answer to the third charge of the *hacendados* to the effect that the bonds offered in payment for land taken for ejidos were without value, the government has held that, whereas it is true that these agrarian bonds cannot be sold in the open market for their face value, it cannot be claimed for this reason that the bonds are worthless. They may be used to pay certain taxes and in a variety of other ways in government transactions. Moreover, on the bonds which have been issued, interest payments have been kept up with at least a fair degree of regularity. Nor must it be forgotten that the government, although under no obligation to do so, has repeatedly extended

[31] Molina Enríquez, "Cuando deben pagarse las indemnizaciones," *El Excelsior*, January 30, 1933; reprinted in Bolaños, *C.A.*, pp. 543-46.

[32] ". . . It is understandable, when it was believed that an expropriation was a hole which could undo society like a hole in a stocking, that a plug for this hole should have been anticipated in the doctrine of *previous* indemnification; but now that it is known that the interests of society stand before those of the individual, the primal response of society must be to the satisfaction of its own necessities: the ruin of the individual is nothing in the presence of the benefit of the social aggregate." *Ibid.*

[33] "The word *mediante* was in reality a grammatical term skillfully employed by the Constitutional Convention which thus placed in the hands of the government a financial procedure for solving a problem of extraordinary importance. . . . The term *mediante* opens the way legally . . . for payment previous to, simultaneously with, or posterior to expropriation. . . . As a political measure it has been and it will continue to be convenient to pay indemnification [for agrarian expropriations] *a posteriori*, for that is the only form in which Mexico can solve the agrarian problem. . . . The financial conditions of the government since the initiation of the agrarian reform have not permitted the making of previous payments and possibly will not permit such payments for a long time to come." Statement made by the then Minister of Public Finance, Luis Montes de Oca, *El Excelsior*, December 21, 1931.

the period within which petitions for bonds could be made by landowners whose properties have been affected under the ejido laws. The fact that the landowners have, for the most part, refused to avail themselves of this privilege[34] and have consistently declared on all and sundry occasions that the bonds are worthless, is precisely one of the principal reasons why the bonds do not, and cannot, increase in value.[35]

Has the method of expropriation and indemnification in agrarian cases in Mexico been in fact confiscatory? And, if so, can any real justification be found in law or morals for what the revolutionary governments have done? Had one been seeking an answer to these questions a few years ago with a view to defending the actions of the Mexican government, one would undoubtedly have entered at this point into a lengthy analysis of cases in international law. Also, it would have been appropriate to make a comparative study of the not altogether happy experience of landlords in other countries—Greece, Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia—that have gone through agrarian reforms in recent years. For the benefit of American readers one might have pointed to the numerous ways in which citizens of the United States have had their equities in property diminished or completely destroyed without any sort of indemnification whatsoever. It might have been interesting, for example, to review the laws in the United States whereby: estates tail were abolished and joint tenancies turned into tenancies in common; the right to sell liquor prohibited; the right to own slaves annulled. Or one might have pondered the subject of the numerous laws whereby businesses may be destroyed through the exercise of the license powers; or the legal dispositions by which solvent banks have been forced to come to the aid of depositors in insolvent banks and profit-making railroads to contribute to a fund for the less successful.[36]

But somehow in this era of New Deals, repudiations of gold clauses in government bonds, and renunciations of intergovernmental debts, any such excursus as that just suggested would appear to be somewhat beside the point, if not an unforgivable elaboration of the obvious. In this day and time when the concept of property as a sacred right is a merry-go-round which nations jump on and off as it suits their

[34] Landlords by refusing to petition for or accept agrarian bonds believed that they thereby preserved their rights to appeal to the courts. Since the enactment of the decree of December 23, 1931 (see p. 120) the right to appeal to the courts is no longer open.

[35] Compare Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

[36] For these and other illustrations of "confiscatory" legislation in the United States, see the excellent "Note on Expropriation in International Law," in *Survey of American Foreign Relations (1931)*, pp. 99-112.

convenience, surely even a "weak" country like Mexico, when confronted with problems of such profound significance as those involved in the just and equitable distribution of land, may be conceded without further argument or appeal to precedent the right to invoke the principle of social necessity and to solve her problems as best she may. The world has moved along since Mexico decided in 1915 that peons were human beings. It may be that the Mexican government will never come to the point of adopting the policy expressed in a recently popular folksong—

> Abajo la deuda agraria,
> no pagar ni un solo cobre,
> dar la tierra necessaria
> para el campesino pobre.[37]

But even this extreme, if resorted to in the name of "national emergency," "the forgotten man," or simply that old standby "the greatest good for the greatest number," ought not to ring so strange in the ears of the world as apparently it once did.

The reconstruction of the ejido presents many and difficult problems, but the least of these is, or, certainly, henceforth should be, the problem of financing land grants to villages.

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[37] Down with the agrarian debt,
not a single copper cent
to give the necessary lands
to the poor peasant.

CHAPTER XIV

EDUCATION—THE CULTURAL PROBLEM

Tierra y Libros—Land and Books—was a battle cry of the revolution as deeply felt, as expressive of the needs and aspirations of the masses, as that other and more famous refrain—*Tierra y Libertad*.[1] Between *libertad* and *libros* there is an obvious connection. The one implies the other. The Mexican revolution of 1910 was fought to obtain both. The land first; but after that books and freedom!

What were these "books" for which ignorant peasants were willing to fight and die? What lay behind the cry *Tierra y Libros*? Land—that is easy to understand. But books, schools, education? Under what conditions and for what reasons do these become matters of revolutionary import? In a word: what was and is the problem of education in Mexico and what progress has been made in its solution?

In attempting to state the problem of education, and more particularly that of rural education, in Mexico and the advances which have been achieved in this field during the last fifteen years our principal interest, as usual, will be in the ejido and the ejidatario. The ejido community it is clear, however, is identical with, or, better said, a special subdivision within the general class "Mexican rural communities." Also, as we shall see in due time, the revolutionary program of rural education has been developed without any special reference to the ejido. This being the case, it will be necessary to treat the question of rural education first in its more general aspects. Later, in so far as statistical and other types of information permit and to the extent that special considerations make it desirable, the educational problems of the ejido community will be singled out for specific comment.

Education is sometimes defined as the process by which the social heritage of a given group is passed on to successive generations. Any such definition as this presupposes, first, that there is a common social heritage to be passed on and, second, that there are means and methods by which the transmission may take place. If a reasonably homogeneous and commonly recognized body of customs and institutional structures does not exist, if means of social communica-

[1] Un Maestro Rural (pseud. for Moisés Sáenz), "Tierras y libros," *El Universal*, January 1, 1933.

tion are lacking or are blocked, then the educational process is at the least slowed down and at the most completely stopped. Generally speaking, the conditions just described are precisely the conditions which exists in rural Mexico. In other words, rural education is in the first instance a problem : (a) of cultural heterogeneity ; and (b) of missing and choked channels of communication.

Cultural Heterogeneity and Social Sufficiency

As an introduction to this section and as a text and general summary of the concrete data to be presented in the succeeding pages it would be difficult to find a passage more pregnant with meaning than the following from a brilliant lecture delivered by the Mexican historian and philosopher José Vasconcelos at the University of Chicago in 1926 :

. . . Mexico's most striking feature is the extreme difference in the appearance of the inhabitants, in the nature of the soil, in the climate of near-by sections, abysmal differences in the thought of the people and in the landscape of the country. Perhaps there is no other nation on earth where you can find, in the same accentuated form, a coexistence of human types separated by centuries and even by epochs of ethnographical development—people different in blood, race tradition, and habits. And such plurality of types is not a new condition . . . long before the Spaniards landed, a mixture of peoples existed, and the Spaniards only contributed one more race-wave in the already mixed waters of our national plasma. . . .

A series of layers composed of materials that do not mix—such is the sketch of our history. A compound of races that have not yet become thoroughly combined—such is the social condition of Mexico. . . .[2]

In addition to affirming the fact of Mexico's cultural heterogeneity Vasconcelos suggests the factors which have entered into the situation as determining causes to account for this fact. These factors, which may be roughly classified under the headings historical, racial, and environmental, each demand separate treatment.

Thanks to the enduring popularity of Prescott's famous work and, more recently, to the warmed-over versions of Prescott and other standard authorities served up in the flood of travel books, tourist impressions and whatnot which have deluged the reading public, almost everyone is familiar with the facts : (a) that (largely) within the borders of what is now called Mexico there came into being two civilizations—the Maya, reaching its greatest development before

[2] "Similarity and Contrast," in *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*, pp. 3-5. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

the year 500 and later flourishing again in the peninsula of Yucatán; and the Aztec, centered in the Valley of Mexico and achieving its greatest power and influence in the years from 1000 to 1500; (b) that both the Aztec and Maya cultures evolved complex systems of social, economic, military, and religious institutional structures and, apparently without contact with any other peoples of the world, made tremendous advances in art, agriculture, and astronomical and mathematical sciences; and (c) that the Mayas and Aztecs fell before the sword and cunning of Hernando Cortés and his followers during the first half of the sixteenth century and thereafter for 300 years were ruled by the Spanish Crown.

What may not be so generally known, or, if known, recognized at its true importance is, first, that the Mayas and Aztecs were by no means the only peoples in Mexico; and, second, that the Conquest, if by that word there is meant anything more than military subjugation, of the New World by Spain did not end in 1521—or, for that matter, in any other year. The Spaniards found in Mexico not only Aztecs in the glory of their strength and pride, and Mayas, decaying yet still the possessors of a cultural heritage bearing the marks of greatness, but also Zapotecans, Tlaxcaltecans, Yaquis, Mixes, Huicholes, Tarascans—to mention only a few of the hundreds[3] of tribes scattered from California to Panama. Some of these tribes, like the Aztecs whom many grudgingly acknowledged as master, had reached relatively high stages of development. Others were of the most primitive type of wandering groups snatching a meager and precarious living from forest and stream. But each of these tribes —and this is the important point to note—differed in greater or less degree one from the other. Their religious beliefs and practices were unlike, their economic organizations were dissimilar, their social systems were diverse and, most significant of all, they spoke anywhere from 50 to 100 different dialects and languages.[4] In short, at the time of the Conquest, Mexico was an agglomeration of culturally disparate groups, scattered over a vast area and, except for the loosely held together Aztec Confederacy, either, for all practical purposes, isolated, or having only such contacts as those involved in warfare or desultory and intermittent trade.

To the cultural medley which was aboriginal Mexico there were

[3] According to the Mexican historian Orozco y Berra there were over 600 tribes which could be identified by name at the time of the Conquest. Cited in Molina Enríquez, *La revolución agraria de México, Libro Primero*, pp. 38-47.

[4] Some would place the number of dialects spoken in pre-Conquest Mexico as high as 150. See Starr, *Mexico and the Caribbean*, pp. 16-17, cited in Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 25.

added in driblets over a period of 300 years the contributions of Spain and through Spain of the great outside world. On the foundations of the indigenous cultures there was erected a superstructure which was European and imported. The significance of this fact may best be appreciated by calling attention to the difference between the course of history in Mexico and in the United States.

Those who live in the United States and refer to themselves as "Americans" are not always aware perhaps of how arrogant their appropriation of this word may sound or how little American they are as compared with their neighbor to the south. The citizens of the United States are American largely by virtue of the fact that they occupy part of the geographical area of the Americas. Their culture, however, both base and superstructure, is fundamentally European. Mexico, on the other hand, is American in the more original and deep-seated sense that Mexico's very mode of life is still in large degree indigenous and autochthonous.

The contrast between the cultural complex in the United States and in Mexico springs partly from a basically different experience and procedure in the settlement of the two countries. As Priestley, Beals, Gruening, and other writers have pointed out, in the North the Anglo-Saxon pioneer encountered a country with few inhabitants and those, for the most part, leading a wandering nomadic existence. In the South, the Latin pioneer found a relatively densely populated country in the central and southern sections of which there were already settled agricultural civilizations of a high order.

In the North the Puritans, their associates and successors, engaged in a campaign of extermination based on the principle later formulated by General Philip Sheridan—"there are no good Indians but dead Indians"—a campaign waged unceasingly and which, if in somewhat less sanguinary form, apparently continues down to the present day. In the South, once the carnage of conquest was over, the Spaniards stopped killing the Indians and settled down to the business of exploiting and "christianizing" them.

In sum : the United States was to all intents and purposes a wilderness which was occupied and settled ; Mexico was a settled land which was subjugated and conquered. Mexican culture, in general, then, as was pointed out in an earlier chapter with respect to the specific institutions of land tenure, is the result of the grafting of Spanish branches on ancient and indigenous plants ; the culture of the United States is essentially a new growth from roots transferred from Europe to a new and virgin soil.

Had the Spanish conquest really conquered, had Spain in the long years of her rule, or Mexico in the period since Independence,

succeeded in pulling together the many strands native and foreign and weaving them into a single fabric, all that has been said up to this point would be mainly of historical interest. That this has not taken place, that the texture of Mexican culture is still but loosely woven, with stray ends and frayed edges more in evidence than clear design and discernible pattern, will be demonstrated shortly. Accepting the fact for the moment, let us turn to the second conditioning factor which has played an important role in the Mexican cultural mélange.

According to the best anthropological thought on the subject, the original inhabitants of Mexico were descendants of those Mongoloid stocks which, somewhere between 10,000 and 25,000 years ago, began to migrate from Asia via the Bering Strait (and possibly by other routes) and to wander farther and farther south until they had spread over the whole of the Western Hemisphere.[5] These peoples, whom, thanks to a slight geographical miscalculation on the part of Christopher Columbus, we call "Indians," at the time of the Conquest were present in large numbers in the area now known as Mexico. Just what the population of Mexico was in 1521 when Cortés officially conquered the country, it is impossible to state with any accuracy. It may have been 10 million or it may have been 30 million; certainly it was at least 8 million.[6]

To the original Indian stock during the three centuries of Colonial rule were added about 300,000[7] Spaniards and practically no other Europeans. During Colonial times there were also introduced into New Spain possibly 30,000 Negroes.[8] Both the Negroes and the Spaniards interbred freely with the indigenous population.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century (1805) as the result

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[5] Martin, "The First Americans," *New York Times*, July 20, 1930.

[6] For a summary of the available data on pre-Conquest population see: Soto, "La población indígena de México," *Revista Mexicana de Economía*, I, 197-98; and Molina Enríquez, *La revolución agraria de México, Libro Primero*, pp. 67-70.

[7] Hijar y Haro, *La colonización rural en México*, p. 142, cited in Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 69. Molina Enríquez states: . . . "At no time during the Spanish Domination did the combined numbers of the Spaniards and the Creoles [Spaniards born in Mexico] amount to as much as ten per cent of the total population." *La revolución agraria de México, Libro Primero*, p. 72.

[8] The number of Negroes brought to Mexico is a matter of dispute. The figure here cited is a conservative estimate. Some writers, however, would apparently regard 30,000 as an understatement. Alfonso Toro, basing his statement on a census taken during the second half of the sixteenth century, points out that at that time there were more Negroes in Mexico than Spaniards—or 18,569 as compared with 17,711. The same author then adds:

"The Negroes, at the time of the arrival of the first Viceroy of New Spain, were already very numerous due to the treaties or contracts various individuals had made with the

of the mixture of these various racial elements, the population of Mexico (5.8 million) was divided about as follows: 1,075,000 or 18.7 per cent of the total population were classified as white—that is, unmixed Spanish immigrants and their descendants; 2,369,000 or 41.2 per cent were mestizos—that is, Indians containing various amounts of Spanish blood or *vice versa;* 2,300,000 or 40.0 per cent were "pure" Indian; and 20,731 or 0.2 per cent were Negroes.[9]

In the century and more since Mexico gained her independence from Spain permanent foreign immigration has been negligible. Such racial changes as have taken place have been internal and in the direction of Indianization. This is shown by comparing the figures given in the 1921 census with those just noted. In 1921, of the total population of some 14.3 million: 1,474,000 or 10.3 per cent were classified as white; 8,664,000 or 60.5 per cent were mestizo; and 4,179,000 or 29.2 per cent were Indian.[10]

In other words, a little more than a century ago nearly one-fifth of the population was counted as white; in 1921 the whites numbered almost exactly one-tenth—a decrease in relation to the total popula-

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Crown and also to the great contraband trade in which slaves were brought from Africa or from the Caribbean Islands.

"Indeed, the number of slaves was so great that, as is well known, during the Viceroyship of Antonio de Mendoza, they attempted an uprising. When this was discovered on September 24, 1537, it was suppressed in a most bloody fashion. . . .

"Since after the middle of the century the number of Negroes increased so as to be greater than that of the Spaniards, we must assume either that the black race was very prolific or continued to be brought in as contraband.

"From the figures of the census we are examining compared with the later censuses it may be deduced that black blood has entered into the formation of the Mexican people in much greater quantity than has been thought up until now and to an amount almost equal to that contributed by the white race [sic!]. . . ." Toro, "Influencia de la raza negro en la formación del pueblo mexicano," *Ethnos*, I, 217.

Similar conclusions to the above quoted were reached in an article published by Salado Alvarez in 1929:

"It may be stated that the Negro race, pure or mixed with other races, exists on the Pacific coast from Acapulco to San Blas; on the Gulf from Cosamaloapan to Tehuantepec; and in many places in Colima, Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca and in all the old mining districts. . . .

"The facts I present change many . . . accepted notions. Justo Sierra's very beautiful metaphor . . . would lead us to believe that the Mexican race blossomed from a kiss of love between Cortés and Marina. It [now] appears that some additional kisses with Cleopatra or the Sulamite were necessary to bring forth the [race] we now know [in Mexico]. . . ." Salado Alvarez, "Influencia de los negros," *El Excelsior*, April 27, 1929.

[9] Soto, "Los elementos actuales de la población de México," *Estadística Nacional* (June 1931), p. 251.

[10] *Ibid.* Long before 1921 the Negroes had been almost completely absorbed into the rest of the population. The 1921 census lists only 147 individuals as Negroes.

tion of approximately 100.0 per cent. During the same period the number of mestizos increased 3.7 times, or from 41.2 to 60.5 per cent of the total population, while the number of Indians increased by 81.7 per cent. Nine-tenths of the population in Mexico in 1921 was either Indian or mestizo. When we recall the relatively small amount of Spanish blood present in the mestizo hybrid it is clear that Mexico is now and always has been predominantly Indian in its racial composition.[11]

Having presented the foregoing statements with regard to the racial make-up of Mexico it must now be added that unfortunately the "facts" on which these statements are based represent only approximations to reality. Census takers are not trained ethnologists and a careful study of the statistics of race in the various censuses from 1805 to 1921 reveal sudden variations and fluctuations which cannot be explained except in political, psychological, or other terms having little or no relation to biological reality.[12] It is this fact, indeed, which led the Department of National Statistics to abandon entirely any attempt to collect figures on the racial distribution of the population in the 1930 census.

Inaccurate though these statistics on race are, there can be no doubt, however, concerning the general conclusion that racially Mexico is something of a hodge-podge. There is no Mexican race in any strict meaning of the term. There is biological heterogeneity in

[11] The racial picture is in reality even more complex than here indicated, for no one of these principal categories used represents a "pure" racial stock. The term whites, of course, refers, in the main, to the Spanish element. But the Spaniard, it must be remembered, is a hybridization of whatever is represented racially by such terms as Basques, Iberians, Celts, Celtiberians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Suabians, Visigoths, and Mohammedans (Gamio, "Incorporating the Indian in the Mexican Population," in *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*, p. 107). Again, that which the census lists as "Indian" is made up of a variety of racial stocks in which a large number of subtypes are distinguishable. The mestizos are anything that cannot be put into one or the other of the two classes just mentioned.

It should also be noted that the extent of racial hybridization differs considerably from one part of the country to another. The proportion of Indians to the total population according to the 1921 census varied from 3.0 per cent in the state of Guanajuato to 69.2 per cent in Oaxaca. In the following states 40.0 per cent or more of the population was listed as Indian: Oaxaca, Puebla, Tlaxcala, México, Guerrero, Chiapas, Campeche and Yucatán. The states having the smallest percentages (10.0 or less) of Indian population were: Nuevo León, Baja California, Sinaloa, Zacatecas and Guanajuato. Of the total of some 4.2 million Indians listed in the 1921 census, 2.7 million or almost two-thirds were in Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo, México, Oaxaca, Puebla and Veracruz. In other words, it is the central and southern states where the Indian tends to predominate. Compare Mendieta y Nuñez, "Cuando el indio despierte," *El Universal*, October 3, 1934.

[12] See Bojórquez and Alanís Patiño, *La clasificación cultural en las estadísticas del movimiento de la población de los países de la américa latina*, p. 6.

the double sense that the Mexicans are not sufficiently like one another and that many of them bear too close a resemblance to other races—Mongoloids or "Mediterranean Caucasoids" as the case may be—while still others are examples of an, as yet, unstabilized mixture.[13] It may be held with a considerable show of reason that biologically Mexico is predominantly Indian. But no less significant is the fact that, looking at the country as a whole, what we are confronted with is diversity, a race in the process of becoming rather than a race in being, a mixture in which Indian blood runs thick and strong, but a mixture still boiling and bubbling. It may be that the dream of some of the more ardent nationalists of *La Raza* will some day be a reality but at the present time the "Mexican race" is a political collective representation rather than a biological fact.[14]

Mexico's racial diversity was introduced in this section as "a conditioning factor . . . in the Mexican cultural mélange." And that, indeed, would appear to be the case. The statement of this point, however, is much easier than its proof. One may not doubt that the racial heterogeneity and the fundamental Indianism of the population has some bearing upon the Mexican people's psychological make-up, the way they react to their environment and hence to the way they live and have their being. But, given the present state of anthropological knowledge, exactly what weight should be attached to the factor of race, in comparison and contrast to the numerous other factors which have entered into the formation of the Mexican cultural complex cannot be stated.[15]

[13] "Where the physical traits characterizing the family lines making up a population tend to be much the same, as one family line is compared with another, and where the resemblances become a difference when this population is compared with others, the anthropologist tends to describe the population as a race, particularly if the circumstances suggest that the population has been, to a degree, isolated and inbred. These requirements are not met in Mexico; intermixture is too recent and incomplete; and there are other populations in similar states of intermixtures." Redfield, "Race and Culture in Mexico," p. 1.

[14] See in this connection: Vasconcelos, *Indología*, and, "The Race Problem in Latin America," in *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*.

[15] There is very little support either in anthropology or biology for the popular short-cut method which would explain the Mexican (and, hence, by implication, Mexican culture) in terms of a conflict between the two principal ethnical strains. By this theory the *mestizo* is conceived as a "plaything of primal forces," a being in whom the "stolid contemplative Indian" struggles with the "urge of the Spanish *conquistador* and pioneer." (e.g.: "The Hispano-American carries in his character the brand of the combat sustained so long between the two races which gave him his origin. Duality and clash of rival natures explain much that is inexplicable in Mexican history." Riva Palacio, *México á través de los siglos*, II, 914, cited in Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 87.) This kind of explaining is not only based upon doubtful biological principles, but has the additional defect of assuming that which it seeks to explain.

A third predisposing factor in Mexican cultural diversity to which it is also difficult to assign a proper weight is found in the geographical basis and background of Mexican life. Crossed and crisscrossed with mountain ranges; drenched with perfect deluges of rain in some parts and gasping for a drop of water in others; tropics along the coasts and peaks with never-melting snows on the central plateau; hot and cold; wet and dry; high and low—surely no country was ever blessed, or, if you will, cursed, with so curious a medley of climates and topographies shoved up together in places almost within shouting distance of one another as this land of the snake and eagle. There is no need to repeat here the systematic description of the great and sudden variations in the Mexican landscape already given in Chapter IX. Five minutes' contemplation of a good relief map tells the story more eloquently than hundreds of words.

The significance of the geographical diversity of Mexico in relation to the subject under discussion is two-fold. First, the widely different conditions of life in the tropics and in the *tierras frías*, in the northern plains and deserts and in the southern, eastern, and western mountain slopes, have through the ages made diverse demands upon the inhabitants. There have grown up, accordingly, in these several regions institutions, folkways, habits of life—in short, cultures—which present in some respects as great variations as the regions in which they are found.[16] In the second place, the mountain ranges have acted as highly effective barriers to communication.[17] This means that to the socially differentiating demands of diverse environ-

[16] It is not necessary to imply an inflexible one-to-one correspondence between physical environment and specific cultural traits to admit the *influence* of geography. For example:

"Some of the cultural differences between villages have their origin in geographic differences. . . . In Tepoztlán a location with reference to the speaker is not usually given in terms of north, south, east or west but is instead described as 'down below' or 'a little way above.' The general appearance of the hamlet of San Juanico differs markedly from that of Tepotzlán. The two are no more than four miles apart, but one is two thousand feet above the other. Therefore the flora is different; and furthermore the soil is not suitable for *adobe*, so that most of the houses are of cane, straw, or wattle.

"Differences in altitude and in aridity produce differences in the sorts of natural products of these eight villages; thus it comes about that villages have agricultural and economic specialties." Robert Redfield, *Tepoztlán—A Mexican Village*, pp. 57-58. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

[17] "Despite our thirteen thousand miles of railways . . . a school inspector may have to travel two weeks on horseback to reach a certain school within his district. It is easier and quicker to go from San Francisco to New York than to go from Mexico City to Hermosillo, the capital of the state of Sonora. The capital of the state of Chiapas is reached only after two days on train and four days on horseback. It is easier for the Yucatecan to come to New York than to go to Mexico City." Sáenz, "Integrating Mexico Through Education," in *Some Mexican Problems*, p. 56. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

mental conditions is added the culturally solidifying force of isolation. The end result is that to this day throughout the length and breadth of Mexico are found groups in "cultural pockets" ; almost completely cut off from intercourse with their neighbors, these groups live uncontaminated and unchanged the life of their forefathers.

Whatever may be the relative importance of the various causative factors we have canvassed, the fact is that Mexican culture as it actually exists presents almost every conceivable variation. Rather than a mixture or a compound Mexican culture is a solution in which the blending and mingling process has been only partially completed. If we analyze this solution we discover the presence of three more or less clearly distinguishable elements : at the bottom there is a heavy dark brown Indian sediment ; on top there is a lighter, more volatile Spanish element, and in between there is a thick, murky, imperfect coagulation which we may call Indo-Hispanic or, using the racial term, mestizo.

The most striking illustrations of Mexico's cultural heterogeneity and the ones most generally dwelt on by serious students as well as persons in search of the exotic and the picturesque are those to be drawn from a consideration of the survival of pure Indian traits. And of all the cases in point easily the most significant for the purposes here at hand is that of language ; for if groups speak different languages it is almost a foregone conclusion that they will vary in other elements in their culture—in customs, beliefs, and institutions. Language is both an evidence and an index of cultural disparity.

At the time of the Conquest there were scattered over Mexico several hundred Indian tribes. Linguistically these tribes could be divided into a dozen or more families. Such a division, however, is the work of philologists and does not mean that members of the same linguistic family were necessarily able to talk to one another. Indeed, we know that quite the contrary was the case and that these dozen or more families were in turn made up of somewhere between fifty and a hundred distinct dialects. Now the point of interest here is that over fifty of these indigenous tongues are still spoken in present-day Mexico. To be exact, according to the 1930 census, approximately 2.3 million individuals, or 16.0 per cent of the total population five years of age and over, speak 54 different dialects classified under 13 linguistic families. The percentage of those speaking indigenous tongues varies all the way from less than 0.1 per cent of the total population of five years of age and over in the states of Zacatecas, Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, and Aguascalientes to over 40.0 per cent in Quintana Roo, Campeche, Oaxaca and Yucatán (Fig. 34). Generally speaking, it is central and southern Mexico where Indian

languages tend to predominate both relatively and absolutely. Oaxaca, Puebla, Yucatán, and Veracruz lead the list in absolute numbers each one having over 200,000 and together accounting for 1.3 million individuals or almost 58 per cent of the total persons speaking indigenous languages. Of the 54 dialects listed by the census, Mexicano with a total of almost 671,000 persons is by far the most widely spoken. The next in order of importance are Maya with some 279,000 persons, Otomí 219,000, Zapoteco 217,000 and Mixteco 172,000.[18]

The relevance of these figures on language, as has been suggested, is double. On the one hand they are evidence and indices of cultural diversity. These fifty-four native dialects still spoken in Mexico are like red flags announcing the presence within the body politic of undigested "cultural lumps"—complexes of incongruous habits, customs and institutions. At the same time they also indicate barriers to communication. The fact that 2.3 million persons in Mexico cannot or do not habitually[19] speak the language common to the country means that at least 16 per cent of the people are cut off from ordinary intercourse with the rest of the nation. They live to all intents and purposes in a closed world so far as the rest of the country is concerned.

The survival of indigenous languages, important as it is in any description of the Mexican cultural landscape, does not by any means exhaust the roster of still vital aboriginal cultural traits or delimit the extent to which these traits, either pure or slightly mixed with Spanish and other elements, are shot through the whole fabric of present-day Mexican society. If space permitted and were sufficient reliable data available, one might run through the complete list of the principal institutional complexes—legal, religious, familial, artistic, and so forth—and show in each case the presence and in many places the complete dominance of the Indian strain. One more bit of concrete evidence, however, will have to suffice for the moment.

A little more than an hour's drive on a paved road from Mexico City is located the Valley of Teotihuacán, Mecca of all tourists and famous throughout the world, for in this valley are located the great Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, monumental relics of the glory that was Nahua. This valley is also famous in the world of science because under the direction of the Mexican anthropologist, Manuel

[18] Appendix A, Tables 46 and 47.

[19] As may be seen in Table 46 in Appendix A, of the some 2.3 million persons speaking autochthonous tongues approximately 1.1 million are listed as also speaking Spanish. However, as anyone who has traveled in rural Mexico can testify, for the most part the so-called *bi-linguales*, with few exceptions, speak very little Spanish and that badly.

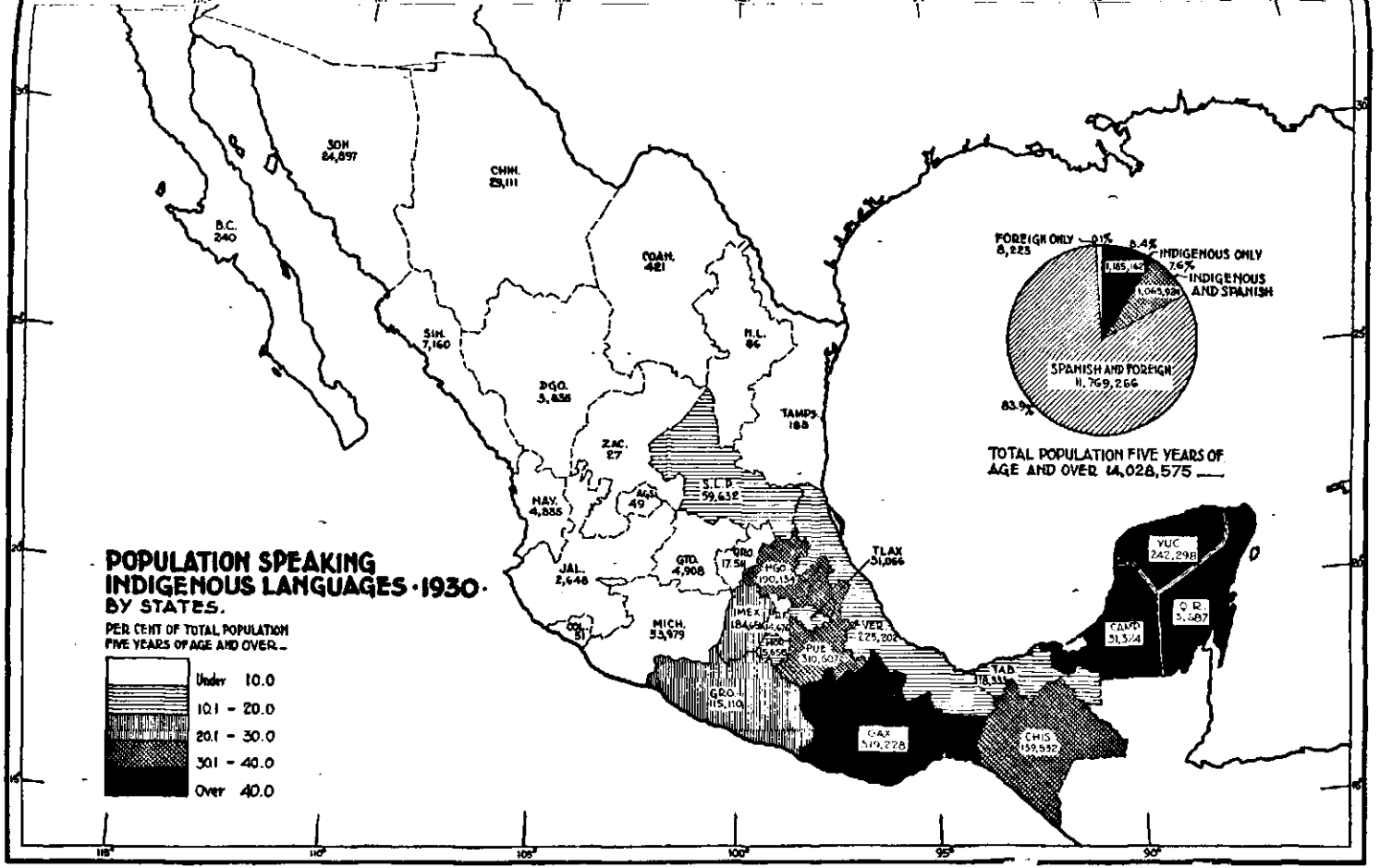

FIG. 34.—Population speaking indigenous languages by states, 1930. (In the class "Population Speaking Indigenous Languages" are included those speaking: "Indigenous Languages Only" and "Indigenous Languages and Spanish." See Appendix A, Table 46.)

Gamio, it was the subject of the most thoroughgoing study ever made of a single region in Mexico. Here is Gamio's summary of his findings with reference to the way of life of 65 per cent of the people living in the 22 villages in the shadow of the great pyramids:

Today as before the discovery of America, the food of the Indian of Teotihuacán consists mostly of corn, *chile*, *pulque* (made of maguey) and occasionally *frijoles* (beans). There are individual cases where the economic situation would warrant luxuries such as bread, meat, etc., etc., but they do not indulge in them, they prefer to continue their customary diet. . . . The habitation or home is, with but very few exceptions, the *jacal*, *xacally*, which was in use before the Conquest, barely changed in a few details by contact with the Spaniards; and the same [is true] with regard to furniture and implements, the *estera* or *petate* (mat), the *mortero* or *metate* (grinding stone or mortar), the *comal* (pan) in which to cook the *tortillas*, the *hogar* (hearth or fireplace).

The use of preparations from the vegetal and animal kingdom for medicinal purposes continues, almost all of them conserving their aboriginal names.

All intellectual activities bear a strong indigenous mark . . . transmission of ideas is not made in writing for, as a rule, there are no books or periodicals, or printed matter of any kind in the valley, so that ethical aesthetical, religious or political ideas or any other ideas are transmitted verbally as has been done for centuries. They have suffered more or less intensely from the influence of European culture, without, however, losing their typically Indian traits.

It is true that since the conquest, the Indians have accepted many of the civilized comforts and commodities such as implements of metal, domestic animals, wearing apparel like the hat, powder for their feasts and for their firearms, etc., together with new ideas of all kinds which have more or less influenced their mode of thinking. Nevertheless . . . [they belong to the Indian type of civilization] because the striking characteristics of the latter are far more numerous and much more deeply rooted than those of European or modern culture, or civilization.[20]

Mexico is, then, in large part an Indian country. Moreover, the essential Indianism of Mexico implies a large measure of cultural disparity and heterogeneity, for not only do the several Indian cultures differ from one another in greater or less degree, but all of them vary in appreciable extent from the superimposed Spanish culture of the sixteenth century *et sequens* and from the culture of the Great Society more and more making its influence felt since the days of Díaz.

The survival of Indian traits, interesting as this fact is to the archae-

[20] Gamio, *Introduction, Synthesis and Conclusions. . . . The Population of the Valley of Teotihuacán*, pp. xxviii-xxix.

ologist, the antiquarian, the folklorist and others concerned with isolating and "staining out" the sundry elements in cultural patterns, can be, and usually is, overemphasized in attempts to describe the social complexities of Mexico. There are communities in Mexico high in the mountain fastnesses and shut away in the tropical jungles—for example, the Lacandones on the borders of Chiapas and Yucatán or the Tarahumares in Chihuahua—with relatively "pure" Indian cultures, which are true preliterate societies, living as they have always lived, unwashed by the stream of cultural influence from the outside world. But in the great majority of Mexico's rural communities what we are confronted with is a combination —a combination, be it noted which is not a simple addition of one and one, not a structure erected by placing one block on top of another as a child would build a house, but rather a chemical compound in which through a process of interaction the elements have lost their original identity with the result that a new entity has come into being, a culture neither Spanish nor Indian.[21] It follows that the Indianism of Mexico is by no means the complete measure of the cultural heterogeneity of that country. Moreover, the pointing to the survival of Indian traits tells us very little concerning the dynamics of the cultural situation. The significance of the essentially Indian character of a large part of the culture of Mexico is not revealed by the mere statement and illustration of this fact. From the point of a social as opposed to a purely historical analysis it is of no particular importance whether the culture of a given community is pure Indian or Indian and Spanish mixed. What *is* important is the fact that the Indianism of a very large part of Mexico coincides with and in part determines the *folk* character of Mexican society. Mexico presents a picture of cultural disparity and disunity because it is a congeries of folk communities.

What is meant by "folk community" and why does the presence

[21] See Redfield, in *Informe anual de la Subsección de Historia Antigua de América, Institución Carnegie de Washington*, p. 25.

In this connection it should be noted that whatever diverse origins the historian may be able to assign to the sundry elements in the cultural complex of any given Mexican village, so far as the villagers themselves are concerned, their culture is homogenous. Generally speaking it is only the intellectuals in the cities who are aware—and that only in recent years—of the fact that the cultural "complexion" of Mexico is, so to speak, spotty. Except in those cases where cultural conflict is acute, where the introduction of new cultural elements has been rapid and voluminous and sufficient time has not elapsed for the process of acculturation to run its course, the native, like the man speaking prose, is indifferent to, if not entirely unconscious of, the facts concerning the historical origins of his customary practices and modes of behavior.

". . . While a separation of Indian from European elements," writes Redfield, "is of

of such communities in large numbers imply cultural heterogeneity?[22] The folk community in Mexico is relatively isolated and self-sufficient. It tends to be a closed circle, tight and impermeable. The mental outlook of those who live in the folk community tends to be limited and bounded by the actual physical limits of the village. In this circumscribed world the continuity of the social plasma is governed by local traditions and habits and supported by local memories. Example and instruction, communication, education is by word of mouth; books bulk small in the life of folk people. The folk may be able to read, but they seldom do. The number of literates revealed by the census is no adequate indication in a folk community of the number of ideas actually circulated by the printed page.

Looking at the country as a whole, all of this means localism, particularism, and pluralism rather than unity, universalism, and homogeneity. Herein lies the fundamental reason why Mexico, as has been so often observed, is an agglomeration of *patrias chicas* (little fatherlands).[23] The *tierra*—the little patch of land on which one was raised, the village in which one was born—these are the objects of primary interest and attachment, and the nation is apprehended very secondarily, if at all, either by the understanding or the affections of the folk. Indeed, the very concept of the nation, even in villages sometimes quite close to the capital, is likely to be vague and hazy when it is not entirely outside the ken of the Mexican folk.[24] As

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interest to the culture-historian, it is of no interest to the native of Tepoztlán. The integration of certain European elements with Indian features is complete. Although few introduced elements bear completely Nahuatl names . . . the Tepoztecan is unconscious of any difference between these and pre-Columbian elements. He feels the same with regard to his sandals, which are almost wholly Indian in origin, as he does with regard to his white trousers, which are wholly European. The *machete* is as Mexican as the *petate*." *Tepoztlán—A Mexican Village*, p. 50. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

[22] In this and the following paragraphs the writer has borrowed freely from the writings of Robert Redfield (see bibliography), especially his interesting paper, "Race and Culture in Mexico."

[23] "Prior to Cortez, local patriotism had just been inflamed by Aztec aggression. This internecine antagonism, while it enabled Cortez to conquer, endured as a greedy cancer in the social organism, to become one of the most potent dissolving forces of to-day. Greater than the Indian's love for the *patria grande* often burns his love for the *patria chica*." From *Mexico: An Interpretation* by Carleton Beals, pp. 6-7. Copyright 1923. Published by Viking Press, Inc., New York.

[24] "The native [in the Valley of Teotihuacán] is incapable of understanding the idea of the fatherland. . . . He does not know that Mexico is a Republic, nor is he interested in knowing his rights and obligations as a citizen. . . .

"It is natural that an individual whose ignorance of public matters is so vast, does not love his country nor feel any desire to defend it when its autonomy is in danger.

"The only manifestation of solidarity and of love for the fatherland among the natives

with political institutions so also with religious institutions; localism and particularism are the realities; universalism is the unrealized theory. The notion of a common God or of a universal church is as strange, as unreal, as ungraspable as the idea of a fatherland larger than the eye can see or than one might cover in a good day's walk.[25] And, incidentally, it may be remarked in passing that herein lies the explanation why the Mexican people have not attempted more organized and effective resistance to the various strictures the revolutionary governments have placed upon the Catholic Church. Ninety-nine per cent of the people in Mexico are reported by the census as being adherents of the Catholic faith. These figures, however, suggest a unity of conception and action which does not exist; there are almost as many Catholic churches in Mexico as there are separate communities. As long as the government does not step on the toes of our particular *santo*, what care we what they do to the

is the absolute and almost irrational affection which they feel for their pueblo.

"If it is impossible for them to understand, not only the existence of the [larger] political conglomerate of which they form a part, but even of the state or municipal government to which they belong, on the other hand, they deeply love their village, and this love sometimes manifests itself in violent forms.

"The most profound hate [may?] exist between the inhabitants of several neighboring pueblos; old quarrels have separated them from time immemorial. . . . The hate and the sympathy have the same force and arise from the same causes as three hundred years ago. . . .

"The pueblos of San Francisco Mazapan and of San Martín de las Pirámides are an eloquent proof of the foregoing. They are divided by a single street in such fashion that for an outsider they form one community. The inhabitants continually go from their own pueblo to the neighboring one and they have the same customs. And, yet, a profound and inextinguishable hate has separated them from time immemorial . . . without anyone at the present time knowing the cause of this antipathy." Noriega Hope, "Apuntes etnográficos" in *La población del Valle de Teotihuacán*, II, 263-64.

[25] "Religion like patriotism takes on a completely local character. It is curious to observe the firm belief among the natives that their religion . . . is limited to their own territory. This idea is never expressed clearly. . . . When the natives are questioned concerning the existence of a religion superior to their own, they always respond in a confused manner. . . . The idea of an Omnipotent and Omniscient God such as is conceived by Catholicism does not exist among the natives. Invocations to God, to be sure, are frequent; but it is really the [local] saints who are addressed." (*Ibid.*, p. 209.)

"Chan Kom is separate and largely self-sufficient; and so it feels itself to be. Therefore it is the village that has its particular gods. There are thought to be four special balams that watch over the village. But these balams have no special names or attributes to distinguish them from the balams that watch over other villages. . . . The village patron *par excellence* is the *santo*. The *santo patron* has a special name, a special appearance and a special reputation. Thus there can be no comparison between one *santo* and another. . . . The *santo* is as distinct a symbol of the village-group as would be a flag; as in the case with flags, *santos* are all different while they are all the same kind of thing." Robert Redfield and Alfonso Villa, *Chan Kom—A Maya Village*, pp. 107-08, Published by The Carnegie Institution of Washington.

santo in the village down the road—thus the attitude of thousands of Mexican pueblos.

The fact that the majority of Mexico's inhabitants live in folk communities carries with it implications concerning the nature of individual attitudes of the utmost importance. The sense of the small in-group, the intimate we-group, is stressed at the expense of the out-group, small or large. The outsider, the foreigner is by that very fact suspect.[26] And this is true even in those villages where contacts with the alien world may have been few and pleasant. It is doubly true in those communities which have been exploited and duped by politicians, landlords and other self-seekers from the outside. Inside the we-group, within the metes and bounds of the folk community, each individual has a status, a place in the world—be it high or low. A man knows where he stands. No man need be lonely in a Mexican village; every man is a "person" in the sociological sense of the term. While for the individual all this means "warmth" and the sense of social security that is inherent in primary group relationships wherever they are found, it also means a certain circumscription of his mental horizon; a tendency to look inward rather than outward; an imperviousness, despite (what to the outsider appears to be) a life of poverty and discomfort, to new desires; an unresponsiveness to the stirrings of ambitions.[27] Progress, change, growth—these are no

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[26] "The economic isolation [of the village of San Miguel Tenancingo in the state of Tlaxcala] corresponds to a social segregation. All of the inhabitants of this place speak Mexicano in addition to Spanish; a few speak only Mexicano. Within the pueblo all of the conversations and all of the official documents are in Mexicano. All of the inhabitants know each other personally. There is a kind of sense of the tribe which makes them view all strangers as enemies. They oppose the arrival of people from other regions in their pueblo and receive them with hostility. . . .

"We were trying to make a study of a general character—a kind of 'land survey.' Scarcely had we arrived when the villagers were apprised of the fact by means of signals given by the ringing of a bell. . . . There was a meeting in the plaza and through the Municipal President we were informed of their opposition to our work. . . . Four times we spoke to the whole village and each time the manifestations of hostility were greater, culminating at last in threats and insults. 'This village,' they said, 'does not want any kind of a study made and we will oppose it even though you bring federal troops with you; here we are men and we have already taken up arms in rebellion many times.'" Fernández y Fernández, "Aspectos de nuestro economía agrícola," *El Economista*, Núm. 129, p. 323.

[27] The following written by a supercilious but observant English traveler in 1848 is as true now as it was then and applies not only to the semitropical but to many other parts of the country as well:

"The soil [near Puente Nacional, Veracruz] is well adapted to the growth of cotton, sugar and tobacco. I asked a farmer why he did not pay more attention to the cultivation of his land. '*Quién sabe*,' was his answer: '*con maíz y chile, no falta nada*'—who wants more than corn and chile, *vaya*!" (Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains*, p. 35.)

But this and sundry other writings of more recent date which describe the Mexican

bright words in the lexicon of the folk. The point of reference for individual behavior is the lore of the folk, the local body of traditions and memories. Here "is the storehouse of techniques and ritual which provides for any of life's emergencies, big or little." And if the storehouse does not contain the proper techniques for dealing with an emergency? Then it is not dealt with—the child suffering from intestinal dysentery dies, the tooth continues to ache, or the corn withers on the stalk. For it is not the nature of the folk to look beyond the lore of the land; objective standards, secular evaluations enter into the situation only incompletely and inadequately.

To the fact, then, that the Mexican folk community tends to be unique and in its uniqueness to be separate and distinct from the other communities round about we have the additional fact that the folk community tends to be self-contained and socially self-sufficient. Correlatively it may now be observed that the folk community is change-resistant.[28] Social change is one of the products of the communication and interaction attendant upon social mobility. Without

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"Indian psychology" as "dark and stolid; docile, fatalistic, and capable of cruelty and bloodthirstiness; non-acquisitive and unambitious; superstitious and poetical in melancholic vein" (Howland, *Survey of American Foreign Relations*, pp. 16-17) in the opinion of the present writer are much more accurate as statements of fact than they are as explanations of the reasons for these facts. If the Mexican peasant is lacking in ambition, is non-acquisitive, stolid, etc., it is not because he is an Indian, but rather because he is a member of the type of social group described here as a folk community. Among others, these are precisely the kinds of attitudes which he achieves by virtue of his participation in the life of the folk. And this would seem to be true whether the folk community is in Russia, China, South Africa or Mexico.

[28] This is especially true when the folk are also different in language and "race" from those with whom they come in contact:

"The villages in this zone are inhabited by almost pure Indians of the Otomí race whose language is divided into various dialects and whose customs have remained unchanged. Many of them cannot express themselves in Spanish. Almost all of them live in adobe houses and use utensils of clay. They sleep on the ground, the animals along with the people, very much, I imagine, as they did before the Conquest.

"The inhospitable character of this race is very marked and as a result they are unsociable and suspicious. In spite of their continuous contact with what they call '*gente de razón*' ["people of reason"—i.e., people who can read and write, wear shoes and do other "city tricks"]—for in these indigenous villages live others with different customs who may be compared with those of civilized societies—they do not imitate them in any way, but, on the contrary, it seems that these [*gente de razón*] influence the natives to conserve what is theirs. The Indians view them and treat them with repugnance, suspicion and even hate. . . .

"In a word: the race which populates these places has not changed either physically or morally. Every village in this area has ejidos and it is easy to understand the difficulties of the *Jefes de Zona* in their efforts to obtain even the sympathy and confidence of these people, not to mention the transformation of their character. . . ." Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 6-11, México (43 ejidos).

mobility the social processes of communication and interaction, so to speak, chase their own tails. It is hardly surprising in a land made up in large part of communities where local tradition is considered to be an adequate perspective on life, where books and newspapers are conspicuous by their absence, where inside the group the individual has a place, a home and a future while outside there is insecurity, a world of strangers with strange ways of life, strange gods and often strange tongues, that there is relatively little social mobility.[29]

The Mexican folk community is change-resistant, but it is not changeless. Social mobility is limited, but it is not nonexistent. People and ideas do move about and, what is more, they come into conflict with one another. Out of this conflict comes change. And here we reach the final point in this brief discussion. It is useful and to a very large extent accurate to describe Mexico as a land of folk, a country in which the overwhelming majority of the communities share in greater or less degree those characteristics attributed here to folk peoples and groups. But it also must be noted that folk communities are not the only types of social aggregations in Mexico and, moreover, that those places which do fit with more or less accuracy in the category are in many cases in a stage of transition. Highways, rural schools, radios, automobiles, the cinema, a rising standard of living —all these and many other factors and forces are daily taking their toll of the folk. Civilization in Mexico as in other parts of the world is a by-product of urbanization. The real social conflict in Mexico is only incidentally—one might almost say accidentally—a racial matter; for, as we have seen, many "Indians" are now part Spaniard and most "Spaniards" are part Indian. The ferment in the Mexican melting pot, the new complications in the "Mexican maze," are the result of the folk being brought into contact with the city. Horizons are being pushed back and widened, news is taking the place of rumor, tradition stumps its toe on objective fact, ambitions are awakened—in a word, the folk give way to *demos* and peasants are transformed into people.

Choked Channels of Communication

Of the changes taking place in rural Mexico we shall have more to say shortly. Meantime, let us complete our analysis of the problem of rural education viewed from the cultural angle.

The bearing of the type of geographical layout with which Mexico is endowed on the subject of communication is perhaps sufficiently

[29] For additional comment on the lack of "horizontal" and "vertical" social mobility in Mexico, see Gamio, *Mexican Immigration to the United States*, pp. 148-58.

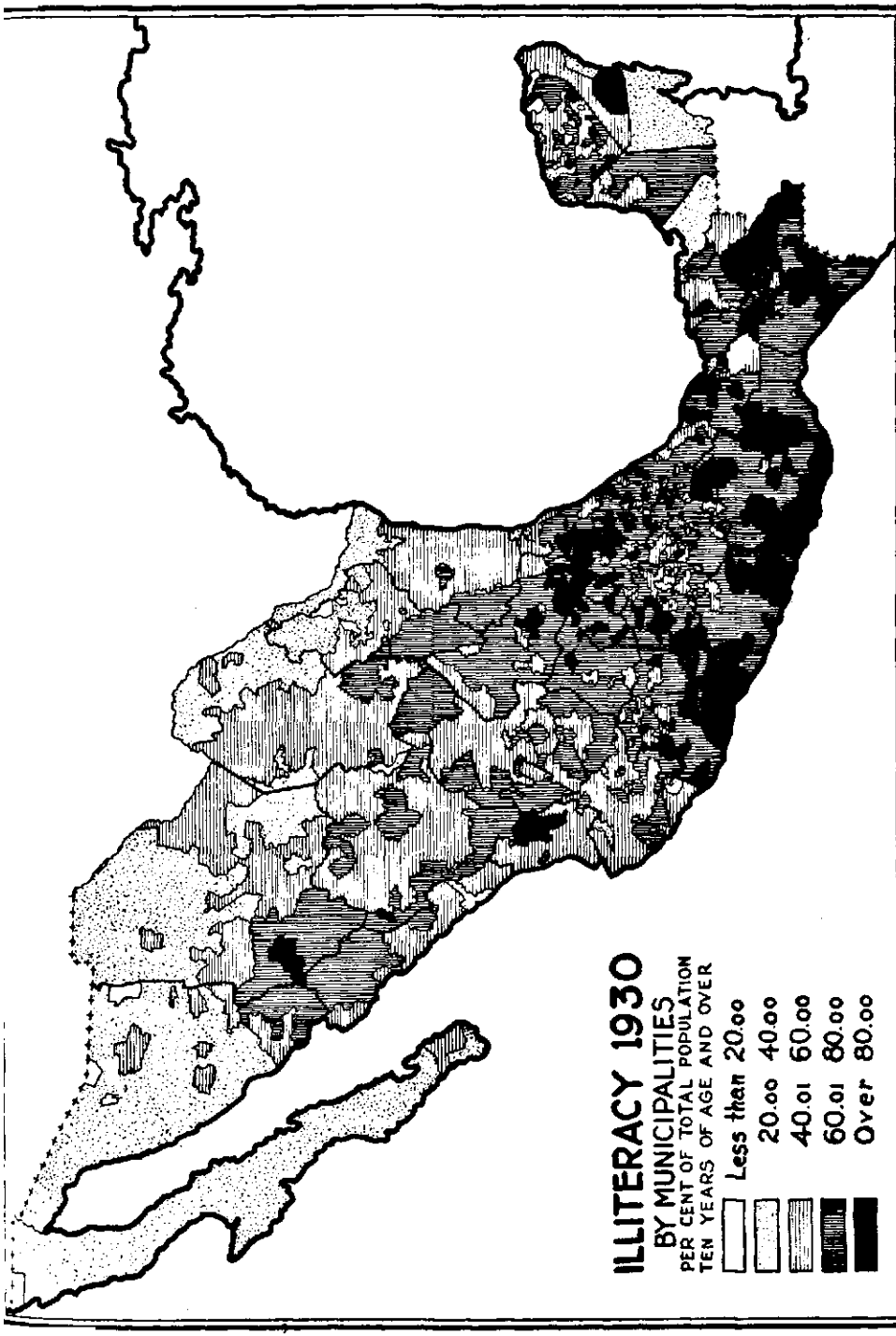

FIG. 35.—Illiterate persons ten years of age and over compared with the total population ten years of age and over distributed by municipalities, 1930. (Based on map prepared by the *Dirección General de Estadística*. See Appendix A, Table 48.)

clear to make further discussion on this point unnecessary. Likewise sufficient attention has doubtless been given to the hurdles which linguistic diversity in Mexico places in the way of communication and social interaction. There are two matters, however, of the greatest importance in connection with any analysis of the cultural aspects of rural education which have not been touched upon—literacy and schools. Books and schools are traditionally the channels of communication and the means of education. Communication may take place and education may be achieved without books and schools, but if a people cannot read and if there are no, or inadequate, formal institutions for teaching, then the educational process is hampered and limited.

The 1930 census gives the total population of Mexico ten years of age and over as 11.7 million. Of this number almost 7.0 million or 59.3 per cent were illiterate. By states the percentage of illiterates as compared with the total population ten years of age and over varied from 23.1 in the Federal District up to 79.4 per cent in Guerrero. In 14 states the percentage was greater than the average (59.3 per cent) for the whole Republic and in numerous sections of the country (see Fig. 35) the proportion of illiterates rose above 80 per cent![30] In few countries of the western world is it possible to equal these figures for Mexico.[31] Their significance as indices of choked channels of communication becomes even greater when one recalls that a very large proportion of those who are theoretically supposed to be able to read and write seldom do so for the simple reason that they have nothing to read and no occasion for writing.[32] It may be said with

[30] Appendix A, Table 48.

It is not without significance that the states and municipalities having the highest percentages of illiterates were also the regions having the highest percentages of individuals "speaking indigenous languages only." Thus, for example, in the state of Oaxaca, 78.0 per cent of the population ten years of age and over is classed as illiterate, and 34.3 per cent of the population five years and over is listed as speaking indigenous languages only, while the corresponding figures for Nuevo León are 37.8 per cent and less than 0.1 per cent. A similar correlation may be indicated between literacy and urbanization.

[31] By way of comparison: the percentage of illiteracy in the United States in 1930 varied from 0.8 in Iowa up to 14.9 in South Carolina; the percentage for the whole country was 4.3. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1932*, p. 33.

[32] "Most of the people [in Chan Kom] whom the schools have taught to read and write seldom or never do so. In many cases the literacy means an ability to pronounce Spanish words without much understanding of their meaning. Indeed 16 of the persons reported in the census as literate are also described as not knowing how to speak Spanish. As no instruction is given in reading or writing Maya, this means either that these persons do in fact have some knowledge of Spanish or that—and this is the larger share of the truth—their reading knowledge of Spanish is a superficial ability, an accomplishment, not an instrument of communication.

some show of reason that in a predominantly agricultural country where life is relatively simple the ability to read and write may not be as important as it is in a highly complicated industrial civilization. While this is true, it is also true that any attempt to change this relatively simple agricultural society immediately confronts the blank wall of the fact that almost two-thirds of the people in Mexico over ten years of age cannot be reached through the printed page or communicate with one another by means of the written word. The implications of this fact for democracy, education, the agrarian reform, a rising standard of living, or any of the other several aims of the revolution cannot be overemphasized.

It will not be necessary to review in any detail the history of education in Mexico to show that the country has never had a sufficient number of schools and teachers to meet the needs of the population. During the Colonial period popular education, except for a few notable mission schools, was practically nil. As Priestley, with admirable academic restraint, states in summarizing this aspect of the "refinements of the Colonial period" : "Education of Indians was not entirely neglected, though their intellectual emancipation was hardly a policy of government. There was little reason for any great expenditure of energy in educating a class of society the place of which was intended to be perpetually at the base of the social pyramid."[38] After Independence, although Juárez saw the educational problem in Mexico and made valiant efforts to deal with it, the constant internal and external strife kept the minds of the leaders too occupied for them to give much thought to schools. As for the period immediately preceding the revolution of 1910, after thirty years of peace and relative prosperity the most that the Díaz government could show, if one may accept the figures of Peñafiel, was some 615,000 children in public schools and another 163,000 in private (including clerical) schools—or, in all, a total of 778,000 out of a theoretical

"The actual uses of literacy are so few as to be easily mentioned. The *comisario*, or some other literate man, reads the official communications occasionally sent to the village by the national or the state government, by the *Liga* [a labor organization] or by the Agrarian Commission. One or two men are able to compose replies without the aid of the teacher. Two kinds of books exist and are consulted. One is the church calendar ; to this recourse is had when a name is sought for a new-born infant. The other is the booklet of Catholic prayers, in print or in manuscript. . . . There is one man (and probably no other) who owns and occasionally reads a Spanish New Testament. . . . This man has also come very recently to read the Merida newspaper, which is occasionally sent to Chan Kom for the teacher; sometimes he explains to others of the village items that have interested him." Robert Redfield and Alfonso Villa, *Chan Kom—A Maya Village*, p. 17, published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

[38] *Op. cit.*, p. 154.

school population of around 3 million.[34] The number of schools in Mexico at the end of the Díaz regime cannot be stated with any great degree of accuracy. The source just cited places the number of private and clerical schools at 2,562. The figure generally accepted for the number of public schools of all classes is 12,000.

The relatively few schools in existence before the revolution of 1910 were ill-adapted to the needs of the country. Of the sometimes costly and always ostentatious schools in the capital and the larger cities, perhaps the less said the better. Pale copies of French models, the principal purposes which they served were to keep the bureaucracy supplied with reasonably literate clerks, to provide jobs for "distinguished gentlemen in frock coats and silk hats who arrived every day around noon to sign the register," and to encourage a "frock-coated science" as pretentious as it was sterile.[35] As for rural schools—they were virtually nonexistent. A few states—notably Veracruz, Sonora, and Puebla—devoted some money and thought to the problem of the education of the country folk and established a few schools. But even in these states, because of a lack of understanding of the problem[36] involved and the slavish imitation of European models, the rural schools were singularly "routine-ridden" and ineffective.[37] Little wonder that the 1910 census revealed that out of a total population of 10.8 million persons ten years of age and over, 7.5 million or almost 70 per cent were illiterate.

[34] *Cuadro sinóptico de la administración del Sr. Gral. D. Porfirio Díaz hasta 1909;* cited in Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

[35] Un Maestro Rural, *op. cit.*

[36] "Laws, educational dispositions, political systems, etc., were established . . . [for] the exclusive betterment of the supposed white, Spanish-speaking modern majority, which is in reality a very small minority, for most of the inhabitants of Mexico are native, racially and culturally, though a large portion of them speak Spanish. This prolonged official error has left more than ten million Indians and half-breeds entirely abandoned to their ignorant and miserable living, for the projects to help and educate them, supposing them white, always proved exotic and quite useless." Manuel Gamio, "The Education of Indo-Hispanic Peoples," in *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*, p. 133. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

[37] "One's attention is called to the fact that despite the diffusion and persistence of schools [in the Sierra de Puebla] the Spanish language is little spoken. . . . One has to ride but a few hours on horseback to discover communities in which Spanish is completely unknown.

"The case of Xochiapulco is typical. Since the seventies there has been a school in this place. . . . And yet three-fourths of the adult population of Xochiapulco do not understand or speak Castilian. . . .

"In this region isolated and lacking in cultural stimulation, the grown-ups undoubtedly forget what they learned as children in the school, because they have never been able to

CHAPTER XV

EDUCATION—THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM

FROM THE discussion in the preceding chapter two conclusions emerge with reasonable clarity. In the first place, however one may choose to analyze and illustrate the cultural pattern, or lack of it, in present-day Mexico it is obvious that neither the Spaniards during the three hundred years of the Colonial regime, nor the Mexicans in the century and more of Independence have been able to bring together the disparate and isolated groups scattered from one end of the country to the other and weld them into a homogeneous, self-conscious nation sharing a common heritage, working for common ends and aspiring to common ideals. Most of the people of Mexico, the "twelve million on the fringe of civilization" as former President Calles has called them, are yet too widely separated one from another and from the minority of city dwellers. The unity of human groups depends upon their possession of a common background of experience and tradition and their reaction to communally held symbols and collective representations. If Mexico is not a nation it is in part because even the most obvious symbols of nationhood are not yet imbued with meaning and significance for the vast majority of the people. "The historical tradition which imposes uniformity on the customs and aspirations of a people," writes Cosío Villegas, "properly speaking does not exist in Mexico. . . . There are no popular legends, no popular heroes. . . . Even our great bull-fighters and our great bandits, heroes of the middle class, are known only to those

put their knowledge into practice. And what is true of Castilian is with much more reason true of reading and arithmetic. . . .

"The Indians are not opposed to the Spanish language. If the work of the school were definitely in favor of the language, I believe they would accept it with internal satisfaction although externally maintaining the same apathetic attitude with which they receive all of the efforts of the whites and the mestizos on their behalf.

"In truth, the traveler is a little disillusioned to find, despite the educational effort which with enthusiasm, tenacity and intelligence [sic!] has been developed for more than half a century among these people their way of life as well as their ideas and attitudes remain primitive. The school . . . has failed because it has been able to affect the lives of the inhabitants of this region in only a very fragmentary manner. . . ." Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla*, pp. 86-88.

individuals who read the daily newspapers."[1] The *gran familia nacional* is yet to be achieved.[2] In the second place, even if Mexico possessed a homogeneous culture, the channels of communication have been so blocked, the primary conditions and instruments for education have been so lacking or, if present, so inadequate that it would be impossible to transmit this culture in any effective fashion from generation to generation.

Economic Insufficiency

The problem of rural education in Mexico, in all conscience, would be serious and complicated enough if it were only a question of teaching a few million Indians to speak Spanish, of stamping out illiteracy, of breaking down the cultural self-sufficiency of folk communities and of producing an integrated nation. But this is only part, and from some points of view the easiest part, of the task confronting the Mexican people. If we expand our definition and agree that education means not only transmission but also transformation, that the purpose of the educative process is not only to pass on the group heritage but also to modify and improve this heritage so that the lot of future generations shall be better than that of the past, then it at once becomes clear that the job to be accomplished is one of far greater magnitude. In rural Mexico it is nothing less than that of raising the standard of living of practically a whole people from a level of miserable subsistence almost always below the line of comfort, decency, and good health and often bordering on starvation. More than reading and writing and arithmetic, more than the meaning of the national flag, more than any of the subjects or matters ordinarily associated with the word education, what these people need to be taught is how to keep body and soul together; before anything else they need to be given the elementary techniques of existence. Let no one be misled by the raptures of tourists who, after visiting a few of the more picturesque villages, write glowing articles about the quaintness and the charm of the Mexican rural scene. The quaint and charming are there all right, but they are there in spite of a hard, cruel struggle for existence.

Basic to all other considerations is the crying need, recognized by every student of the situation, for an improvement in agricultural techniques, for a complete transformation of farming methods and a thoroughgoing education of the majority of the people in the fundamental business of making a living out of the soil. There are regions

[1] Cosío Villegas, *Sociología mexicana*, II, 26.

[2] Simpson, "Introducing the Mexican Indian to 1932," *Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*, II, 279.

in Mexico, certain parts of Sonora, the Laguna District in Durango and Coahuila, sections of Yucatán and Tamaulipas and spots here and there in various other states, where agriculture (for a few crops, at any rate) is carried on with the use of modern machinery and scientific methods in the most up-to-date and approved style. There are other regions of the country, such as those inhabited by the Lacandones, the Seris and the Tarahumares, where agriculture is so primitive as for all practical purposes to be nonexistent. But these are at once the extremes and the exceptions. The great bulk of Mexico's farming lies somewhere in between, backward rather than completely primitive, retarded and stagnant rather than aboriginal. While Mexican railways, mining, and manufacturing are, on the average, as modern, as abreast of the times as these industries are in most countries of the western world, agriculture lags somewhere between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. The introduction of beasts of burden by the Spaniards shortly after the Conquest in large sections of the country is the only important innovation in agriculture made during the last five hundred years. These statements, true in relation to Mexican agriculture in general, are doubly true as applied to the farming methods and techniques of those thousands of little communities which the agrarian reform is slowly converting into ejidos.

As was pointed out and illustrated graphically (Fig. 16) in Chapter IX, Mexico, despite a variety of soils and climates and despite a wide range of natural conditions, comes very close to being a one-crop country. What sugar is to Cuba, cattle to the Argentine, coffee to Brazil, corn is to Mexico. A greater area is planted in corn than in all other crops combined. Corn represents well over a third of the annual value of all crops produced.[3] But even these figures hardly reveal the importance of corn. "To appreciate the 'weight' of corn . . . in Mexican agriculture," writes Gilberto Fabila, "it must be understood that the economy of every farm enterprise in Mexico rests on corn. . . . The area planted in corn is what determines the area of all other crops; the amount of capital and labor devoted to other crops depends upon corn; from corn comes the principal income. . . . In a word, this crop is the one which establishes all of the characteristic features of our farming and it is for this reason that we must be considered as mono-culturists."[4]

[3] In 1929-1930, for example, the value of the 18 most important crops was approximately 385 million pesos of which 147 million pesos, or 38.2 per cent was attributed to corn. Appendix A, Tables 81 and 83.

[4] "La producción ejidal frente a la producción agrícola privada," *El Nacional*, August 4, 1934.

The predominance of corn in Mexican agriculture in general is even more marked in ejido agriculture in particular and by implication in all village agriculture as opposed to that of the haciendas and the *ranchos*. Corn represented 73.0 per cent of the total area harvested and 60.6 per cent of the value of the principal crops raised on ejido lands in the year 1929-1930.[5] In the agricultural economy of the so-called "free villages" corn is king. "The ways of life, both practical and religious, rest upon the growing of maize. Maize is the people's food, their work and their prayer—it fills the days and the talk."[6] These words written with reference to the little village of Chan Kom in Yucatán apply with equal force to literally tens of thousands of other "Chan Koms" in the length and breadth of the land. He who does not understand the importance and significance of corn in Mexico cannot expect to understand either the culture or the agriculture of Mexico.[7] It is undoubtedly true that the country can produce a great variety of crops; it may even be true that, as some of the more enthusiastic have claimed, "Mexico can produce any plant under the sun." But, be this as it may, for the most part what Mexico, and more particularly that part of the country with which we are here chiefly concerned, *does* produce is corn.

It follows that a description of the methods and procedures of corn culture will come very near to taking the measure of Mexican farming and incidentally revealing the nature of the problem of agricultural education in the ejido and other village communities.

The methods of planting and harvesting corn vary somewhat from one part of the country to another; but the fundamental pattern is everywhere practically the same. The simplest and most primitive

[5] Appendix A, Tables 81 and 83. In 15 states the area harvested in corn was 85 per cent or more of the total area harvested in all ejido crops and the value of the corn crop was 75 per cent or more of the value of all ejido crops in 12 states! In only two states did the area harvested in corn in ejidos fall below 50 per cent of the total area harvested in all crops, and in only three states did the value of the corn crop drop below 50 per cent of the value of all crops harvested.

[6] Redfield and Villa, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[7] "From the dependence upon maize there is in Chan Kom no escape. To live is to 'make milpa' [i.e., work a small patch of land]; there is no other way. 'How do people live,' asked one of Chan Kom who for the first time visited the sea coast, 'here where there are no milpas?' There are few opportunities for a man to sell his labor, and these are only to work in the fields of another instead of his own. If a man is to be fed he must make the land produce corn. . . . How to accomplish this is therefore a knowledge that all men have and that they learn following their fathers to the milpas, almost as they learn to speak, hardly knowing that they learn it." Robert Redfield and Alfonso Villa, *Chan Kom—A Maya Village*, pp. 32-33, published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

procedure, commonly employed in the tropical coastal regions and in the more isolated highland sections, has been described as follows :

An area a few acres in extent is selected, where the soil appears to be richer than usual, and the trees and larger bushes are cut down a short distance above the ground. The timber is then left to dry and is burned over in March or April. At the approach of the rains, in May, the corn is planted in the clearing. The seeds are dropped in holes made with a pointed stick, usually half a dozen or more together, the several groups being one to two feet apart. Pumpkins or beans are often grown in the intervening spaces in the cornfields. No attempt is made, however, to keep the field, or *milpa*, . . . free of weeds, which generally overrun the cleared area in a few weeks. When the corn is ripe, the ears are gathered at leisure, while the stalks are left standing. Next spring they will be burned, together with the dry weeds, and a new crop planted. In Yucatan, during April, the air is often hazy with the smoke of the many burning fields, the fires, of course, spreading to the surrounding forest. A number of successive crops are thus grown on the same field ; but, as no fertilizer is used, the several burnings rapidly exhaust the soil, while the heavy rains wash away the unprotected loam. Every few years the cornfields must be moved to freshly made clearings.[8]

In the Mesa Central area and in the densely populated parts of the country in general a more advanced technique is found. Oxen and wooden plows are used to clear and prepare the land for planting ; leveling and breaking up of the soil are effected by dragging a heavy log over the plowed fields ; and planting is by rows rather than by individual hillocks. Also the land is commonly worked over with the wooden plow or sometimes by hand with a hoe once or twice during the growing season in order to clean out weeds and loosen up the soil.[9]

The wooden plow (the same in almost every respect as the one with which Abraham and Isaac tilled their fields in Biblical times), the hoe, a long pointed wooden stick, an ax and the omnipresent machete (the long knife which serves for everything from a scythe to a toothpick)—these are the implements with which the Mexican farmer in the vast majority of cases must wrest a living from the soil. Steel plows are, even in fairly progressive sections of the country, still the

[8] Joseph C. Bequaert, "Contributions to Natural History," in *The Peninsula of Yucatan*, p. 510, published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

[9] Gonzalo González, "Condiciones agrícolas y forestales," in *La Población del Valle de Teotihuacán*, II, 109-11.

exception rather than the rule;[10] in many regions even the primitive wooden plow is unknown.[11]

To what extent are these statements true? In what degree may it be said that Mexican agriculture is a stick and hoe, or at best a wooden plow agriculture, that Mexican farms are run by the sweat of the human brow and the energy of plodding oxen rather than by gasoline, oil, electricity and other forms of inanimate energy? Consider the following figures:

For the 609,912 farms (not counting ejidos or farms of less than one hectare in area) listed by the 1930 census there were reported 1 plow for every 0.8 farms; 1 sower for every 29.5 farms; 1 reaper for every 76.1 farms; 1 thrasher for every 148.3 farms; 1 truck for every 149.7 farms and 1 tractor for every 156.4 farms. "Decorticators" and "Other Fixed Motors" averaged 1 for each 60.8 farms. The total capital investment in machinery, utensils, implements and tools for the 609,912 farms in question was 66.9 million pesos, or 110 pesos per farm.[12]

For the 4,189 ejido communities and 535,192 ejidatarios listed in the 1930 census the following figures for agricultural implements and equipment were reported:[13]

[10] The following are samples of dozens of similar responses from the field representatives of the National Agrarian Commission to a questionnaire (see above p. 211) sent out in 1933:

"The wooden plow is the only one used in this zone. A few ejidatarios in Molcaxac use steel plows; but all the others say that their experience has shown that the steel plow is bad for the soil." Zone 8-7, Puebla (64 ejidos).

"The implements used in this zone are very rudimentary and consist mainly of wooden plows, *zadones* [an adz-like implement used for breaking the soil], and hoes. . . ." Zone 3-5, Guanajuato (21 ejidos).

"All of the ejidatarios in this region work with the wooden plow with the exception of those in El Capulino who are this year using steel plows, having bought ten such plows . . . with the community coöperative fund. . . . The ejidatarios in this region do not like to use the steel-tipped or steel plows because due to their ignorance they have the firm belief that these plows chill the earth and thus cause the loss of crops." Zone 6-16, México (30 ejidos).

[11] Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 77.

[12] Appendix A, Tables 74 and 75.

By way of comparison, the following figures (1930) for Texas (agriculturally by no means one of the most advanced states in the United States) may be cited: 1 tractor for every 13.3 farms; 1 truck for every 9.4 farms; 1 automobile for every 1.7 farms; 1 electric motor or stationary gas engine for every 20.4 farms. The average capital investment in Texas farms in 1930 in "implements and machinery" was $368, or at a nominal exchange rate of two for one, 736 pesos—6.7 times as much as the average investment in Mexican farms. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1932*, pp. 592-93.

[13] Since the significance of these figures depends partly on whether each ejidatario cultivates his land individually or whether the community pools its resources, both community and individual ratios are given.

		Ejidatarios		*Ejido Communities*
1 sower	for every	308.3	or, for every	2.4
1 reaper		1,967.6		15.4
1 thrasher		4,955.4		38.8
1 truck		3,742.6		29.3
1 tractor		7,336.6		57.4
1 decorticator or other stationary motor		15,740.9		123.2

With respect to plows the figures were 40.4 plows for every ejido community or 1 plow for every 3.1 ejidatarios. The total investments in machinery, tools, and implements owned by ejidatarios in 1930 was in round numbers 3.9 million pesos or slightly less than 7.3 pesos per ejidatario, or 930.2 pesos per ejido community.[14] And this, it must be remembered, was the situation of communities which have been the object of special consideration on the part of the government. What the equipment for farming was and is in the thousands of agricultural communities which have not yet enjoyed the benefits of the agrarian reform can only be guessed.

But it is not only in equipment that the typical Mexican agricultural community is deficient. Quite as important is the extreme backwardness, already indicated in the description of the procedure used in corn culture, in farming methods and techniques. The artificial fertilization of the soil and the selection and fumigation of seeds are arts known only to a few and practiced by still fewer.[15] The rotation of crops so far as most Mexican farmers are concerned is about as familiar and as much used as the Eleusinian mysteries.[16]

The repeated cropping of land with the soil-debilitating corn, the failure to use fertilizers or to renew the soil by crop rotation, the widespread disregard for and often wanton destruction of forest

[14] Appendix A, Tables 74 and 75.

[15] "The greatest problem I have encountered in this zone is the refractory character of our ejidatarios to accept any kind of a suggestion for the improvement of their systems of cultivation. Even when I have given them objective instructions in these matters, I have made very little progress . . . in convincing them of the necessity of selecting their seeds and of applying to the same disinfectants to avoid the development of fungus growths." Zone 4-4, Hidalgo (18 ejidos).

[16] "The majority of our peasants are accustomed to certain crops—corn, beans, etc. . . . crops which in general show very poor returns. It is the hardest kind of work to get them to change even when they are sure that a change of crops will improve their lot 50 per cent or more. This is one of the reasons why many ejidos are not making any progress." Zone 4-8, Hidalgo (58 ejidos).

cover[17] inevitably means that large areas of Mexico's crop lands are in a state of almost complete exhaustion and that still other areas have been lost forever through erosion. Not without reason have students of Mexican agricultural problems pointed out that there has been a "continuous and progressive dimunition in the yields from corn in the Central zone of Mexico from Colonial days down to the present time."[18] It is these facts which help to explain the startling proportion of crop land left fallow each year in Mexico. According to the 1930 census more than half of all the actual crop land in existence is left unplanted; in some states the proportion is well over three-fourths.[19]

Part of the price Mexico pays for backward and primitive agricultural techniques is low returns from the time, money, and effort expended. The figures in this connection for corn, wheat, and beans

[17] To treat adequately the subject of the shameful waste of Mexico's forest resources through ignorance and sometimes willful misuse would take at least a chapter and perhaps a whole book to do it justice. Laws, decrees, and regulations have been enacted almost without number, but to no avail. To supply Mexico City alone with charcoal for cooking and heating purposes involves the destruction—largely without plan, rhyme or reason—of almost 5,000 hectares of standing timber a year. And this goes on year after year despite the fact that it is well known that the Mexican charcoal burning *brasero* and *anafe* are among the most expensive and inefficient cooking appliances that the ingenuity of man has ever devised and despite the fact that other sources of fuel are available. The waste of timber resources through forest fires and plant diseases in Mexico is almost incalculable. From fire alone it is estimated that Mexico loses every year around 400,000 hectares of forests. For additional data on this subject, see: García Martínez, "Algunos aspectos del problema forestal en México," *Irrigación en México*, VII, 45-57; Reyes, "La agricultura de México está en peligro de desaparecer a causa de la destrucción de los bosques," *El Maestro Rural*, May 1 and 15, 1933; Espinosa de los Monteros and Collaborators, *El problema del carbón en el Distrito Federal*; and Gill, *op. cit.*, Chapter X.

[18] Miguel O. de Mendizábal, cited in Fernández y Fernández, "Aspectos de nuestro economía agrícola," *El Economista*, Núm. 125, p. 196.

McBride quotes figures which indicate that there has been a decline of at least 50 per cent in yields of corn in the region around Monterrey during the last century and a quarter and adds: "It is not at all surprising that under the present system, 'the most wasteful of extensive cultivation,' the soil should become exhausted. With no careful administration, with the poorest of poor labor, with no attempt at rotation of crops—except that intended to get two or three crops from the same area each year—with little attention to the use of artificial fertilizers, the lands of the haciendas cannot but deteriorate. Furthermore, the ruthless cutting of timbered areas leaves the slopes of the hills denuded, exposes them to gullying during the tropical showers of the summer time and to abrasion by the strong mountain winds." *The Land Systems of Mexico*, p. 39, published by the American Geographical Society of New York.

Bulnes even goes so far as to state: "The constant extensive cultivation of exhausting plants such as corn and wheat has impoverished three-quarters of our land to such a degree that it yields only twenty or twenty-five per cent of what it did in 1803 when Baron Humboldt visited New Spain." *Op. cit.*, p. 153.

[19] Appendix A, Table 11.

have already been given in Chapter IX. Here it may be added that according to the estimates of García Robledo[20] the direct loss from largely evitable plant diseases and plagues in Mexico is 50 million pesos a year with 23 million pesos more to be charged up to losses from locusts and field mice—a total equal to very near one-fifth of the value of the principal crops produced in 1929-1930. Losses in livestock "from disease and inefficient techniques of exploitation" are placed by Martínez Barragán[21] at close to 28 million pesos annually. A comparison of agriculture with manufacturing and mining shows that whereas the gross value of production in agriculture (approximately 722.5 million pesos including crops, livestock and forest products) in 1929, for example, represented a return of only 19.6 per cent on the capital invested, the gross returns in manufacturing were 92.8 per cent of the capital invested and in mining 24.9 per cent.[22] Again : the gross value produced per person occupied in agriculture in 1929 was only 199 pesos as compared with 2,851 pesos in manufacturing, 4,996 pesos in mining, and 7,670 pesos in the oil industry.[23] Although in the nature of the case these figures are not entirely comparable and, in any case, cannot be taken as more than approximations to reality, they are believed to be sufficiently accurate to offer support to the statement : whatever else Mexican agriculture may be, taken by and large, it can hardly be regarded as good business.[24]

And so one might go on quoting statistics and piling up evidence. Perhaps enough has been said, however, to make clear the main point here under discussion : Agriculturally Mexico is essentially a low energy, underproduction country ; for this fact, as we have already seen in a previous chapter, nature is partly responsible ; the rest of the "blame"—perhaps even the major portion—we may now add, must rest with man and the present state of the agricultural arts in Mexico.

Economic Insufficiency and the Standard of Living

To say that Mexico is an underproduction country does not mean that on occasion there is not overproduction measured in terms of the

[20] "Las pérdidas de la producción agrícola por plagas y enfermedades," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, I, 278-79.

[21] "Las pérdidas de la ganadería mexicana por enfermedades y mala técnica de explotación," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, I, 52.

[22] Appendix A, Table 86. [23] *Ibid.*

[24] If any further proof of this point is needed it may be found in the fact that, according to the 1930 agricultural census the farm value of the principal crops produced (95 per cent of the total area harvested) was 385.3 million pesos or an average value of 66 pesos per hectare harvested. Appendix A, Tables 79 and 81.

effective demand of the market; it does mean that very rarely, if ever, has the country produced fundamental food and other basic farm products sufficient for the consumptive needs of the population if these needs be measured against an adequate as opposed to the customary standard of living of the great majority of the people. The final price which Mexico pays for ineffective and unscientific agricultural techniques, the real toll which ignorance takes is—poverty. Agricultural ineffectiveness, where agriculture is the staff and stuff of life, means economic insufficiency. Most of the villages in Mexico are mere subsistence units—and sometimes not even that.

Some light may be thrown on the standard of living of the Mexican agricultural community by citing the figures for the average annual income for farm families. Thus it has already been pointed out that the average annual gross value produced per person engaged in agriculture in 1929 was approximately 199 pesos. These figures, however, cover all persons engaged in and the total gross returns from all forms of farming activity. For ejido communities the average annual gross farm value produced from crops and forest products in 1929-1930 was only 80.35 pesos per ejidatario.[25] Statistics for other sources of income—livestock, wages received for work on haciendas, commerce, arts and crafts, and so forth—are not available, but it is extremely unlikely that even if these should be added in the figure for the average annual farm income per ejidatario for the agricultural year 1929-1930 would be more than doubled. In other words, a liberal estimate would place the total average daily income per ejido family of the some 535,000 ejidatarios reported in the 1930 census at approximately 44 centavos![26]

Statistics of income at best are only so many figures. To appreciate what these figures mean in terms of a standard of living, they must be translated into food, clothing and housing. In so doing we will reveal not only the need of the Mexican peasant for education in the techniques of production, but also for training and direction in a

[25] Appendix A, Table 82.

[26] By states the average annual farm value per ejidatario of ejido crops and forest products varied from 15.38 pesos in Baja California to 261.23 pesos in Morelos. In 20 states, the average annual income was less than the 80.35 pesos average for the whole Republic; and in 6 states the average was even below half the average for the whole Republic. In other words, in 20 states the supposedly self-supporting ejidos were that only to the extent of an average income of anywhere from 4 to 22 centavos a day per ejido family from crops and forest products. What these families were able to add to their income by crafts, commerce, wages as day laborers, etc., is not known, but, if the families are still alive, it must have been anywhere from two to ten times the income derived from farming their own ejido lands.

way of life. The powers of ignorance rule not only in the field of production; they also control the economy of every other phase of existence. The Mexican peasant needs to be taught not only how to raise food but what kind of food to raise and how to cook it; not only how to produce cloth, or the money to buy it, but also how to make it into clothing; not only how to provide himself with shelter, but also that his houses must have air and sunlight; not only that he must live, but also that he must live in health and comfort.

In the diet of most parts of rural Mexico corn figures in the first place. Corn is consumed in a variety of forms,[27] but by far the most important is the tortilla or Mexican maize bread.[28] A book could be, and, indeed, should be written on the tortilla. For what potatoes are to the Irish, rice to the Chinese, black bread to the Russians, the tortilla is to rural Mexico—the principal item of diet, the staff and support of life. In addition to tortillas the Mexican peasant eats frijoles and chile. Fresh vegetables, fruits, rice, wheat bread, potatoes and other tubers, coffee and tea are in most parts of the country occasional rather than daily articles of consumption. Red meat (except in the northern states), fish (except along the coasts), poultry, eggs, milk and sweets of all kinds (including the native chocolate in solid form or as a drink) are luxuries reserved for special occasions. The consumption of fats whether animal or vegetable (peanuts, sesame, rape, and so forth) is low. There is no lack of variety of foods in Mexico, but as is the case with many other things, the enjoyment of a varied diet is restricted to a relatively small minority living in the cities. Country folk may on occasion eat fruits, vegetables, meats, and sweets but these things for most of the people most of the time are of necessity regarded as frills and decorative extras.

[27] In tamales (corn meal or crushed corn steamed, flavored with a little meat or chile and served hot wrapped in corn husks or, in some parts of the country, banana leaves); *pinole* and *atole* (both forms of a thick gruel made by grinding or crushing corn soaked in water—usually served warm as a drink); etc. Corn on the cob is rarely eaten and corn removed from the cob and fried or boiled is almost unknown in the rural districts.

[28] The tortilla (tōr-tēl yä) is not to be confused either with American "hot cakes" or with corn (meal) bread. In preparing tortillas there are four stages: (1) the grains of corn are soaked in hot water to which lime has been added until the husks can be easily removed by the pressure of the finger; (2) the softened grains are then ground or crushed into a kind of dough (*nixtamal*); (3) a small pellet of this dough is flattened out (usually by patting with the heel of the hands) into a thin disk about the thickness of a phonograph record and the size of a dessert plate; (4) finally, it is toasted on both sides by placing it on a piece of tin or sheet iron over a charcoal fire. The result is a spongy, grayish "cake" looking very much like a flexible piece of cardboard. Foreigners at first usually think it tastes as it looks, but after a little experience one learns that tortillas served hot off the griddle have their points.

The "prunes and potatoes" of existence, the staples of diet day in and day out, breakfast, lunch and supper, are: tortillas, frijoles, and chile.[29]

No scientific studies of a comprehensive nature have ever been made of diet in rural Mexico. Such data as are available, however, would seem to indicate that the national diet is deficient both quantitatively and qualitatively. It is not only that the food which the peasant consumes is lacking in variety but also that he does not get enough to eat and what he does eat is badly balanced. It may not be true, as one Mexican writer has claimed, that "the Mexican diet is the worst diet in the world,"[30] but certainly it is true that even if the Mexican peasant were able to fill his stomach each day with all the tortillas, frijoles and chile it would hold—an assumption which is far from being always and everywhere true—he would still be malnourished, for these articles simply do not contain the fats, sugar, and other energy-giving and growth-producing substances necessary to health and well-being.[31]

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[29] These generalizations concerning food habits in rural Mexico are based primarily on the writer's personal observations in various parts of the country. Additional information of a scientific though fragmentary character will be found in: Shattuck (Ed.), *The Peninsula of Yucatan*, pp. 67-71 and 141; Izquierdo, "Estudio fisiológico del indígena adulto del Valle de Teotihuacán," in *La población del Valle de Teotihuacán*, II, 173-86; Molina Enríquez, *Los grandes problemas nacionales*, pp. 196-201; and Redfield, *Tepoztlán*, pp. 39-42.

A recent study made by Francisco Moguel of the annual per capita consumption in kilograms of meat in Mexico for the year 1931, although admittedly based on incomplete data, makes possible the following interesting contrast with per capita consumption in the United States (average for 1923-27):

	Beef and Veal	*Mutton and Lamb*	*Goat*	*Pork*	*Total*
Mexico	6.7	0.3	0.5	2.4	9.8
United States	31.5	2.4	..	31.8	65.8

Statistics from: Moguel, "El consumo de la carne en México," in *Los problemas agrícolas en México*, I, 79-81; and Montgomery and Kardell, *Apparent Per Capita Consumption of Principal Foodstuffs in the United States*, p. 5.

[30] Juan M. González, "Perdimos y seguiremos perdiendo," *El Universal*, June 6, 1934.

[31] ". . . The principal defect in the diet of the native [of the Valley of Teotihuacán] is its poverty in the so-called *tonic foods* such as meat and eggs which are still articles of true luxury." (Izquierdo, *op. cit.*, p. 185.)

"The national diet is notably acid, bulky and heavy; it does not stimulate the mind but rather benumbs it for work after eating. [Our diet] provides enough calories, but it is very deficient in vitamines. It is very rich in useless bulk which does not leave any place for other and more important food. It contains irritating elements such as chile and spices, real poisons which produce dyspepsia, disorders of the liver, cirrhosis and abscesses. . . .

"The Mexican diet is a producer of acids and easily develops chronic acidosis [and] dental caries . . . it increases blood pressure, favors arteriosclerosis and, as a consequence, premature old age and many other ills which diminish resistance to disease. When

TORTILLA : STAFF AND SUPPORT OF LIFE

The essential poverty of the diet of the peasant is undoubtedly one of the factors responsible for the disproportionate consumption of alcohol in rural Mexico. And of the several forms in which alcohol is consumed by far the most important is pulque.[32]

Tradition has it that pulque was first discovered by the Toltecs. Definite records exist of its use by the Aztecs in religious and other festivals and the custom of drinking the fermented juice of the agave plant has been handed down in an unbroken line from pre-Conquest days to the present time. The only difference is that whereas the Aztecs enforced strict rules of temperance and restricted the drinking of pulque to special groups and special occasions, it is now an article of daily consumption for the poorer classes throughout central Mexico. Indeed, the manufacture and sale of pulque is one of the largest industries in the Mesa Central area.

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the absence of fruits and vegetables is complete . . . there is chronic anemia. Premature old age is the most direct consequence of the Mexican diet. Before fifty years of age the signs of vital degeneration begin to appear. . . .

"As a people we are poor, weak and malnourished; for many years, perhaps for centuries, we will occupy the first place in infant mortality, adult mortality and shortness of the life span if we continue to feed ourselves with *atole*, tortillas and frijoles." Juan M. González, "Mortalidad infantil," *El Universal*, July 14, 1931.

[32] The agave plant (*Agave Salmiana* or *Agave Americana*) which, with its thick, green leaves ending in a sharp spine is sometimes mistaken for a cactus, is grown under semiarid conditions extensively in Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, Puebla, Veracruz, Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Michoacán, México and the Federal District. If the heart of the agave plant is cut out after the plant reaches maturity (at about eight years of age), for a number of months thereafter the plant "bleeds" into the cavity thus made a sweetish, light yellow liquid. This liquid (*aguamiel*) may be easily fermented by adding to it almost any kind of activating substance. The result is a thick, milky liquid slightly sour to the taste and very sour and musty in odor. Because of the rapidity with which it putrifies pulque must be drunk within a relatively few hours after it has been made. It is shipped in barrels and sold in special dispensaries known as *pulquerías*. The last mentioned—the poor man's club in Mexico—are found on almost every corner in the poorer sections of the larger centers and small indeed is a village in the Mesa Central region which does not have at least two or three *pulquerías*. Sometimes the decorations and names of these shops are colorful and amusing. A stone's throw from where these words are being written (in Cuernavaca, Morelos) there is a *pulquería*, for example, which boasts the name: *El Triunfo de Todas Las Emociones* (The Triumph of All the Emotions)!

The other principal alcoholic beverages consumed in Mexico are beer (and very good beer, too!), aguardiente (distilled from sugar cane), mescal and *tequila* (distilled from a variety of agave somewhat smaller than the pulque plant). These are drunk in all parts of the country, but probably in relatively greater quantities in those sections where the cheaper pulque is not available. In 1932 the per capita consumption in liters of the most important alcoholic beverages for the whole Republic was: pulque 8.2; beer 2.5; mescal 0.05; *tequila* 0.05; and aguardiente 0.03. These figures based on tax returns and an estimated total population of 17.2 million are undoubtedly understatements of the actual consumption. Large quantities of the liquors mentioned are manufactured for home consumption and do not figure in the tax returns.

According to the 1930 census the total area planted in *maguey de pulque* was 70,607 hectares. The total farm value of the 166.8 million liters of pulque produced in the agricultural year 1929-1930 was 8.4 million pesos. In the 7 principal producing and consuming states (Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, México, Puebla, San Luis Potosí, Querétaro and the Federal District) the production of pulque was 161.1 million liters. This would mean an apparent per capita consumption (including men, women and children) of 31.8 liters per year! The value of the pulque produced in the 7 states just mentioned was 5.3 million pesos, an amount equal to almost 7 per cent of the total farm value of the 18 principal crops harvested in these states in 1929-1930.

Although there is no doubt that pulque contains yeasts and perhaps other substances[33] which help to fill out the meager diet of the country folk of central Mexico and although it is possible that it acts as a counter-irritant to the ubiquitous chile,[34] the price which must be paid for these benefits is out of all proportion to their value. It is the old story of burning down the house in order to get a little roast pig. The alcoholic content of pulque is about the same as that of a light beer,[35] but even light beers are not to be recommended *in place of* other and more nourishing food. Because of excessive indulgence and because by partially satisfying the need for richer and more varied foods it conceals the fundamental inadequacy and lack of balance in the Mexican diet, the drinking of pulque would be a social problem of the first rank even if it were unobjectionable on other scores.[36] But the fact is that in addition to its vicious character, due to the unhygienic methods by which it is manufactured and sold, pulque represents a direct health hazard of a very real nature because of its peculiar effects upon the digestive system.[37] Of all the

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[33] Izquierdo, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-83.

[34] The *raison d'être* of pulque, according to Molina Enríquez, is as follows: "It is absolutely indisputable that the national cusine is designed for the eating of corn. . . . Frijoles . . . accompany corn; and, in order to eat both, chile is necessary. . . . Without chile the digestion of corn and beans would offer serious difficulties to the organism. Since chile is extraordinarily irritating, it provokes the use of pulque." *Los grandes problemas nacionales*, p. 198.

[35] Figures cited by Izquierdo show 45.5 per cent of alcohol to every 1,000 grams (*op. cit.*, p. 182). By volume the alcoholic content of pulque varies between 5 and 7 per cent. Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 538.

[36] Compare Labra, "El problema del pulque es de nutrición," *El Excelsior*, April 3, 1933.

[37] Apparently speaking in his role as a person trained in medicine, Ernest Gruening states:

"Though its [pulque's] alcoholic content is not high . . . the beverage continues its fermentation within the gastro-intestinal tract of the consumer causing the putrefaction of its contents, impeding digestion, and creating a toxemia diagnosable through a symp-

various and sundry evils which follow in the train of ignorance and poverty in rural Mexico pulque is second to none as a destroyer of health, an underminer of character and a sapper of initiative and energy.[38]

The inadequacy of rural Mexico's diet is an index of a standard of living which is often perilously near the bare subsistence level; it also helps to explain much that is reputed to be characteristic of the behavior of the Mexican peasant. Who can doubt, for example, that there is more of a causal than a casual relationship between an insufficient and poorly balanced food regime and the "slow to moderate pace," the unresponsiveness, idling and apparent laziness of the Mexican artisan and field worker?[39] Can there be any question but that the excessive consumption of alcohol is directly related to the lack of ambition and initiative and the general soddenness and besottedness so often found in Mexican agricultural communities?[40]

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tomatic stupor. *Pulque* is in varying degrees a *bacterial culture.* It may transmit almost almost every microbic disease known to man." *Mexico and Its Heritage*, 538. Reprinted by permission of the Century Company.

[38] "The greatest problem in this zone is the distribution of rights to the maguey plants which the ejidatarios seek to obtain at any and every cost in order to satisfy the vice of pulque [drinking] so deep rooted in them that they neglect the building of schools and other public works they so badly need." Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 4-1, Hidalgo (47 ejidos).

"The outstanding fact about the ejidos in this zone is the backwardness of the life of the people due to the lack of instruction, innate indolence . . . intrique and dishonesty . . . which obliges the ejidatarios to live a life of pariahs. Drunkenness is the habit of the people, for due to the lack of water pulque has been substituted as a drink. . . . In the region of Zacapoaxtla, the natives even sop their bread in pulque." Zone 8-11, Puebla (36 ejidos).

[39] "Malnutrition and disease are common throughout the [West] Coast region . . . and this is also true of the greater part of the country in general. It is a common occurrence to have to feed a gang of new men, engaged for heavy labor, for a few days before they can stand hard work in the sun, and Americans engaged in tomato growing have found great difficulty in securing the proper cultivation and care of the plants, proper selection, etc., in picking and packing, on account of the universal unresponsiveness of the people engaged in this work." Bell and MacKenzie, *Mexican West Coast and Lower California*, p. 27.

[40] "The scourge of the region [the Sierra de Puebla] is aguardiente. The sole industry of the sierra is the manufacture of alcohol. . . . In the region over which I have traveled there are thirty-seven alcohol factories. . . . The sugar cane is grown in a degenerate form by the natives on their little plots of ground. . . . The Indian with his primitive mill and boiling vat makes the brown sugar which he sells to the neighboring factory, or, better still, exchanges it directly for aguardiente. A large bottle of aguardiente, of about fifty per cent strength, costs twenty-one centavos.

"The effect of the manufacture of alcohol in the region is clear: the people are more indolent and apathetic, dirtier and less interested in their schools. . . . One sees fre-

Closely related to the problem of the excessive consumption of alcohol in rural Mexico is the question of water supply for domestic purposes. A very little firsthand experience with the kind of drinking water which it is possible to obtain in most communities in rural Mexico, and wonder at the amount of pulque, aguardiente and what-not drunk by the Mexican peasants is quickly changed to understanding. Pulque, whatever may be its ingredients, is purity twice purified compared to the drinking water available in the average village. In a three-weeks' horseback trip made in 1931 through the region known as the Mixteca Alta in the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca (covering 21 villages), the present writer was unable to discover a single community with an adequate water supply. From the journal kept on this trip there appear over and over notes such as these:

Sanitary conditions in this village [Silacayoapan] are a little worse than usual because of its relatively large population. The only water supply for some 5,000 people is a single fountain in the public plaza and a muddy little stream that runs near the edge of town. All day long there is a constant procession of individuals of all ages and sorts dipping water from the fountain and carrying it away in large earthenware pots or in five-gallon oil cans balanced on the two ends of a pole.

It appears that the water situation here [Huajuapan de León] is even worse than in the smaller towns through which we have passed. With the exception of the priest's house, the city hall, our hotel, and about a half-dozen other houses a fountain in the center of the town supplies water for the population of around 6,000 souls. The water is so bad that our hotel obtains drinking water for its guests (so the proprietor claims) by sending burros laden with large earthen jars to a spring in the mountains a whole

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quently wherever one goes groups of natives seated by the road in front of some little shop, passing the bottle in silence, or ceremoniously offering a glass. When the drinking is over they start on their disheartened march to the next stop. Some of them, men and women, who have taken too much fall senseless by the road offering the saddest spectacle one can imagine." (Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla*, pp. 89-90.)

"The ejidatarios in this zone are . . . much given to the habit of drinking intoxicating liquors, often abandoning their work and thus losing their harvests and the little credit they have been able to obtain from private individuals." (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 5-5, Jalisco (27 ejidos).

"I was very interested to visit this village for I had been told that I should not come here because the people were dangerous, drunkards and enemies of the school. When I arrived I saw that the school was empty. . . . I asked for the [Municipal] Secretary and the prominent citizens and, with the exception of the first mentioned, all of them appeared in a state of complete intoxication. I was able to confirm that all of these people are very much given to the vice of drinking aguardiente which they make with brown sugar and corn. It is impossible to engage in any kind of relations with these people for they live in a stupor and moreover are deceitful and aggressive." (Report of the Chief of the Cultural Mission in Cacahuatepec, Oaxaca, in *Las misiones culturales, 1932-1933*, p. 177.)

day's pack away. In response to my request for a bath when we arrived this afternoon after seven hours in the saddle I was given to understand that the hotel had no facilities for such exotic indulgence, but that there was one shower in town, arrangements for the use of which could probably be made. Knowing from experience that such arrangements usually take several hours, I reluctantly gave up the idea and took a "bath" in the washstand basin.

A recent survey of the water supply situation in 140 communities located in 16 states made by a representative of the Department of Public Health revealed only 10 places which, even by stretching a point here and there, could be judged to have a satisfactory water supply. All the communities in question were in the population class 10,000 and over. Of the 100 communities of 5,000 population or less only 1 was described as having pure drinking water! And even this exceptional village had no drainage or sewage system. As for the other 99 communities, with monotonous regularity the reports repeat the language of the following samples selected at random:

Villa Arteaga, Coahuila. Approximately 2,000 inhabitants. The water here comes from a spring located eight kilometers from the town. From this place it runs in an open ditch and serves for motor power before it is used as drinking water. It is not purified. . . . There are no septic pits or toilets of any class. The backyards and corrals serve as places of defecation.

Bácum, Sonora. Population 2,300. Water is supplied only from wells. The water is not purified. There is no drainage system. There are some pits for human excrement.

Colón, Querétaro. The inhabitants (3,200) utilize the water of a spring which has been piped to three centrally located public fountains. The water has never been analyzed and it is not purified. . . . There are no toilets and no drainage system.

Palezada, Campeche. Population 1,200. The water supply is drawn from a river which passes near the town, and is transported in tin cans. The water has never been analyzed and it is not purified. There are no toilets and no drainage system.[41]

Bathing and bodily cleanliness under conditions such as those just illustrated are obviously next to impossible. In most inland rural communities the inhabitants are content to let the matter go at that. Even in those places where water is to be had there is a superstitious dread on the part of many country folk of bathing in cold water. Since there is no other kind of water even in the warmest months in the greater part of the country (except in a few places

[41] Varela, "El agua que se toma en algunas poblaciones de la República," *Salubridad*, IV (January-December, 1933), 19 ff.

where the ancient custom of the *temazcal* or steam-bath survives), baths are likely to be few and far between.[42]

Generally speaking, housing in rural Mexico is on a par with the quantity and quality of the food supply—inadequate and unhealthy. In the tropics the walls of the houses are a loose framework of sticks, bamboo or reeds to which sometimes a light clay or mud plaster is added; the roofs are made of palm leaves, *zacate*, or, in some places, clay tiles. In the Mesa Central region the most common type of house is one with adobe or rock walls and a roof of clay tiles. Occasionally houses will be roofed with crude wooden shingles, *zacate*, or (as in the state of Hidalgo) maguey leaves. In the northern states—Coahuila, Chihuahua, Sonora and parts of Durango and Zacatecas—the adobe walls of the houses are usually reinforced with rocks or tree trunks and the flat roofs are supported by wooden beams and covered with earth. Along the border with the United States it is not uncommon to find clap-board wooden houses roofed with tar paper or sheet iron.

But whether in the north or the south, in the tropics or the highlands:

> . . . There are certain characteristics which unfortunately are found in almost all rural habitations, and these are principally the lack of space and of elemental hygienic conditions.
>
> The rural habitation is narrow; it almost always consists of one windowless room which serves as [living room], bedroom and frequently also as a kitchen—although generally a small adjoining shed is used for the last mentioned purpose. These houses because of their defective construction do not fulfill even the minimum requisites of a shelter, which is to offer protection against the natural elements outside.[43]

To the foregoing statement made by a Mexican doctor it should be added that the majority of rural dwellings have dirt floors; that the "great open spaces" (often no further removed than the adjoining corral) take the place of sanitary conveniences; that pigs, chickens and dogs, if not encouraged, are at least permitted to wander in and out of the house at will; and that furnishings are limited to a few

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[42] And yet, curiously enough, some of the cleanest people to be found anywhere in the world live in a part of Mexico where surface water is nonexistent and water of any kind is hard to come by. The Mayas in the peninsula of Yucatán are like the people in Rupert Brooke's poem:

"They bathe by day and they bathe by night. . . ."

[43] Mazzotti, "Habitación rural," *Salubridad*, IV (January-December, 1933), 42.

straw mats for beds,[44] an unstable pine table, and an occasional rustic bench or chair.[45]

Perhaps as much as anything else the thing which most reveals the poverty, the dead level monotony and spiritual insolvency of the life of large sections of rural Mexico is the almost complete lack of diversion. If anyone has the idea that Mexico is entirely, or even mainly, a land of merry villagers dancing on the green and happy craftsmen creating art without machines then let him contemplate the following sample extracts from the reports of the field representatives of the National Agrarian Commission made in 1933:

The customs of the inhabitants of this zone are . . . austere, simple and temperate. They have little individual initiative; they are inclined to work and are resigned to their poverty and misery. . . . The only holidays they have are the religious fiestas and only in the principal towns . . . (Ixmiquilpan and Actopan) do they have an occasional theatrical performance, moving picture show or circus. These, however, are not attended by the peasants because they are not accustomed to such things, because of their poverty and because of the distance from their homes to the towns mentioned. Zone 4-5, Hidalgo (45 ejidos).

Diversions [in this region] are in general unknown. There are cinemas in Chilapa and Tixtla. There are also religious fairs where the peasants spend a good deal of money—especially in the gifts which they make to the cults. . . . Zone 18-3, Guerrero (110 ejidos).

. . . In general the inhabitants of this region are hard working, courteous in their manner and little inclined to intoxicating drinks. Their distractions are: the care of their animals and the singing of religious exercises, for . . . they are a fanatical people and try to conserve the beliefs and customs of their forefathers. . . . Zone 3-9, Guanajuato (10 ejidos).

The population here is for the most part very Catholic and as a result their diversions are almost exclusively of a pagan-religious variety. Pulque is the exclusive drink of young and old. Zone 8-8, Puebla (64 ejidos).

Notwithstanding the great efforts which the Supreme Government has

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[44] In the tropical regions hammocks take the place of the mats (*petates*).

[45] "In the native house independent of whether the economic situation is good or bad, comforts are completely unknown. Furniture is either lacking altogether, or, if present . . . it is more for appearance than for the satisfaction of real necessities. Chairs, tables and even beds are more to honor the guest than for the use of the family. We must combat in this inheritance of the stoic customs of pre-Hispanic times which scorns comforts and effeminacy all that which contributes to and increases the wretched hygienic conditions in which the natives live. Above all we must struggle for the introduction of the use of the bed . . . so that they will not sleep in contact, scarcely mitigated at times by the straw mat, with the earth floors of their houses." Mendizábal, "La universidad y los campesinos," *El Nacional*, May 12, 1934.

made to give [the communities in this region] land it has not been possible to achieve the end sought of redeeming the social class which forms the majority of our nation. . . . Almost all of the ejidatarios in this zone live in a most miserable manner; they eat poorly and also dress poorly; very few wear shoes or pants; they are not concerned in the slightest degree to receive instruction or to improve their situation in any way; they sleep on straw mats in houses with earth floors, unhealthy and without ventilation; they have no medicine to cure themselves with and never go to a doctor—instead they use herbs and household remedies; they are very devoted to alcohol and the little money remaining to them after they have paid the cost of their miserable food, they employ in drunken orgies, especially on Sundays; they are also devoted to gambling with cards.

They have no diversions except dances which usually end up in quarrels. They have little interest in the education of their children and prefer to see them working in the fields in the primitive manner to which the majority are accustomed rather than to see them in school. In short, almost nothing worries them and when the representatives of the Agrarian Commission try to make them understand the good that will come to them from the government program . . . they pay no attention and do not believe what they are told. Zone 6-5, México (30 ejidos).

Poor and insufficient food, bad and inadequate housing, even contaminated water at a premium, labor without rest and life without diversion which diverts or recreation which re-creates can only have one result—disease—and one end—untimely death. The final witness in this brief review of the economic insufficiency of rural Mexico and the corroboration and summary of all that has been said up to this point are the cold facts revealed in the statistics of mortality. Those who visit Mexico and give it as their judgment that the "Mexican peasant certainly looks healthy enough" are, to say the least, misled.[46] For the facts are that the Mexican people are a sick people; their span of life is short and their footsteps are dogged by disease from the cradle to the grave; they die young, and if one may say so, often.

The crude mortality rate in Mexico is approached by few coun-

[46] Probably for two somewhat contradictory reasons:

(a) They are mistaken in what they think they see—i.e., in the dark all cats are gray and those who are accustomed to making casual judgments of ill health on the basis of such signs as flushed cheeks, pale skin, thin bodies, etc., are likely to be confused when they find themselves in the presence of a people whose skins are uniformly dark and who are almost all small and slight in stature. (One recalls the story of the doctor in a North American hospital who was accustomed to flunk the students in his class in diagnosis by suddenly switching them to negro patients.)

(b) In those cases in which they are correct in their observations they perhaps do not hold in mind the fact that anyone in rural Mexico who survives to adulthood is made of very tough material indeed.

tries in the western world and surpassed by almost none.[47] On the average, during the five year period 1926-1930, the number of deaths registered per year in Mexico totaled slightly more than 409,000. The average annual mortality rate during the period mentioned varied between 17.5 persons per 1,000 population in the state of Tabasco to 34.4 in Colima. For the whole Republic the average rate was 25.5. This means a coefficient of mortality in Mexico 38.6 per cent higher than that of Spain during approximately the same period; 53.7 per cent higher than that of France; 116.3 per cent higher than the United States; and 141.5 per cent higher than Uruguay—to mention only a few representative nations.[48]

Hardly less startling is the rate of infant mortality in Mexico. In 1930[49] the number of children dying per 1,000 births was 131.6 for the whole Republic.[50] In order to appreciate the significance of this figure it may be observed that it represents an infant mortality rate 12.4 per cent higher than that of Spain, 66.5 per cent higher than that of France and 102.4 per cent higher than that of the United States for the same year.[51] To find infant mortality rates in Europe

[47] Of the 36 countries in America and Europe (excluding U.S.S.R.) for which data is given in the *Statistical Year-Book of the League of Nations, 1930-31*, in the year 1929, for example, only two countries (Chile and Porto Rico) had a higher death rate than Mexico; of the remaining countries only one (Roumania) came within five points of equalling Mexico's rate.

[48] Appendix A, Table 49.

[49] Calculation of infant mortality rates in Mexico have been in general unsatisfactory because of the fact that, whereas registrations of deaths are fairly complete, registrations of births have been almost always considerably less than the actual number of births. It is only in recent years, thanks to a strenuous campaign on the part of the authorities, that registrations have equalled or surpassed the estimated "normal" number of births. According to the best statistical thought on the matter the normal birth rate in Mexico should be approximately 43 per 1,000 population, or, in round numbers 700,000 births per year (*México en cifras*, p. 21a). If this estimate is correct then the year 1930 selected for comment here with total births registered of almost 820,000, if anything, shows a more favorable infant mortality rate for the Republic as a whole (figures for individual states are probably undependable in some instances) than would be the case if sufficient accurate data were available to present an average mortality rate for a period of years. In other words, an infant mortality rate calculated on the known average number of deaths under one year of age for the period, say, 1926-1930 (101,654) and the unknown but assumed normal number of births cited above (700,000) would give a figure of approximately 145—a rate considerably higher than that of 131.6 which is the rate for the year 1930. See Appendix A, Table 50.

[50] As between the several states the rate varied from a low of 91.8 in Tamaulipas to a high of 187.7 in the state of Morelos. In 12 states the rate was 150 or more. Appendix A, Table 50.

[51] For Spain the infant mortality rate in 1930 was 117 and for France 79 according to the *Statistical Year-Book of the League of Nations, 1930-1931;* for the United States the rate was 65 according to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1932.*

equal to or higher than that of Mexico it is necessary to go to such countries as Bulgaria, Roumania, and Lithuania. In 1929 of the 33 countries in Europe and America for which more or less reliable figures are given in the *Statistical Year-Book of the League of Nations*, Mexico's 1930 infant mortality rate is equalled or surpassed by only six countries. Almost one-fourth of all the deaths each year in Mexico are children of less than one year as compared with: France 9.1 per cent; the United States 10.7 per cent; Uruguay 20.9 per cent and Spain 19.6 per cent.[52] The United States—if one more ungracious comparison be permissible—with 2.6 times the number of births in Mexico in 1930 had only 34,492 or 31.9 per cent more infant deaths than Mexico in the same year.

Turning now to the question of the causes of death in Mexico we find very much what might be expected in view of the data presented in the foregoing pages on diet, sanitation, and housing. At the top of the list stands diarrhea and enteritis. Over 16 per cent of all the deaths in Mexico each year and almost one-fifth of all the deaths under one year of age[53] are attributable to these diseases. With a death rate from diarrhea and enteritis of 409.4 persons per 100,000 population Mexico surpasses the death rate in the United States from the same causes 14.7 times over; that of Uruguay 5.1 times and that of Spain 1.4 times. Closely allied to diarrhea and enteritis is dysentery. From this cause Mexico loses by death 71.5 persons per 100,000 population each year as compared with a rate of 4.4 in Spain, 0.4 in France and 0.2 in Uruguay. All three of the diseases mentioned are mainly due to polluted water and improper or contaminated food.[54]

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[52] All figures based on data for 1930 except those for Uruguay which are based on 1929 statistics.

[53] Diarrhea and enteritis, as is well known, are "the great killers of infants":

"Of the thousands of children who die every year among us . . . it may be said that many, perhaps the majority die solely as a consequence of stupid 'methods' of feeding. . . . Almost all of these deaths are nothing less than homicides . . . to be charged up to the ignorance of our poor people, to their extreme misery and to the results of hereditary defects." Statement of the Department of Public Health, *El Universal*, June 26, 1931.

[54] The high toll taken in Mexico by gastro-intestinal infections and disorders is partly to be explained by the fact that these diseases are notoriously difficult to handle in tropical countries (roughly one-third of Mexico is tropical):

"The amount of sickness and the number of deaths from such diseases [gastro-intestinal infections] in Yucatan are astounding. . . .

"So many kinds of organisms are found that immunological prophylaxis does not seem to offer a remedy for the situation, and it is believed that nothing short of the most vigorous sanitary measures would be effective. Intestinal infections are so common that the fatalistically minded people have little fear of them. . . .

"With such a variety of intestinal infectants, in addition to protozoa, the number of

Next in order of importance are diseases of the respiratory system—acute and chronic bronchitis, bronchopneumonia and pneumonia. Once again Mexico heads the list of the representative countries selected here for comparison. The annual death rate (384.7) from diseases of the respiratory system in Mexico as compared with that of Spain is 133.2 per cent higher; with Uruguay 226.5 per cent higher; and with the United States 770.4 per cent higher. Over 15 per cent of all deaths in Mexico each year and 21 per cent of the deaths under one year of age are due to the diseases here in question.[55]

Of the fevers, malaria alone accounts for 5.1 per cent of the deaths per annum in Mexico. The death rate from this cause is 45.2 times that of the United States, 42.3 times that of Spain and 262.2 times that of France. Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers, which in many parts of the world are on the point of being relegated to medical museums, still causes an average of 3,746 deaths a year in Mexico and probably the only reason that the mortality rate of 23.4 per 100,000 population is not higher is the small amount of milk consumed.[56] Even typhus, so rare in the United States and in France that the death rate in recent years has been less than 0.1 per 100,000 still is responsible for the loss of 659 lives a year in Mexico or a mortality rate of 4.1.

And so the sorry tale of disease and death goes—smallpox, in most countries of the western world almost completely stamped out, still claims in Mexico 61.3 victims for every 100,000 inhabitants or an average of 9,904 persons a year; measles with a death rate 14.1 times that of the United States and 11 times that of France; whooping cough with a mortality rate 43.6 times that of Uruguay and

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cases and of deaths due to gastro-intestinal disturbances in Yucatan is not a cause for wonder. The astonishing thing is that under such conditions anyone survives his childhood. Perhaps this very fact accounts for the sturdy physique of the Maya and of many of the racially related Yucatecans. Kenneth Goodner, "Bacteriological and Serological Studies in Yucatan in 1929," in *The Peninsula of Yucatan*, p. 207, published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

[55] Siliceo Pauer attributes the high incidence of diseases of the respiratory system in Mexico—at least in the rural sections of the Mesa Central region—to the scanty and inadequate clothing of the natives. See "Datos sobre las conclusiones higiénicas de la población," in *La población del Valle de Teotihuacán*, II, 186-87, and 195.

[56] As it is the death rate in Mexico from typhoid and paratyphoid fevers is 22.5 per cent higher than that of Spain and 350.0 per cent higher than in the United States and France.

In the states of Chihuahua and Coahuila the average mortality rate from typhoid and paratyphoid for the period 1922-1929 reached the almost unbelievable figures of 152.0 and 146.5 respectively—rates which triple those of places showing the highest mortality rates known anywhere in the world! Bustamante, "Distribución geográfica de las fiebres tifoidea y paratifoideas en la República Mexicana," *Boletín de la Oficina Sanitaria Panamericana*, May 1933, pp. 468 and 479.

17.2 times that of Spain; 60 per cent of the population infected with syphilis[57] and a mortality rate directly traceable to syphilis of 10.1, and so forth. The only important diseases for which Mexico shows mortality rates appreciably lower than those in the countries used here for comparison are diseases of the heart, cancer, and tuberculosis of the respiratory system. With reference to the first two, part of the explanation for Mexico's showing seems to lie in the fact that most Mexicans do not live long enough to get them. The case of tuberculosis is a little more complicated.[58] The large percentage of rural population and the relatively mild climate making it possible to live most of the time out of doors undoubtedly have something to do with the comparatively low mortality rate from tuberculosis in Mexico. In other words, even granting imperfections in Mexican vital statistics, it would appear that taking the country as a whole the population is less subject to tuberculosis infection than in many other nations. Nevertheless, in certain parts of the country the mortality rate is much higher than the national average. Indeed, figures cited by Dr. Donato G. Alarcón indicate that the cities of Tampico and Veracruz with average mortality rates in recent years of 475 and 456 respectively show a higher death rate from tuberculosis than any other known cities in the world! For the urban population in Mexico Dr. Alarcón estimates that the true mortality rate for tuberculosis is probably three times that (61.1) cited here for the whole country.[59]

[57] "In Mexico we can be sure that sixty per cent of the population suffers from the specific infection [of syphilis]; in the Capital more than fifty per cent of the inhabitants are syphilitic. Of the women engaged in prostitution—almost twenty thousand—eighteen thousand are . . . infected; of the population between fifteen and twenty-five years of age, thirty per cent suffers from this disease. . . . Despite . . . [the imperfections of our statistics] the increase in the mortality from . . . [syphilis] since 1916 is marked." Gastélum, "La persecución de la sífilis desde la punta de vista de la garantía social," *Boletín del Departamento de Salubridad Pública*, Núm. 4 (1926), p. 6.

[58] "The mortality rate for tuberculosis of the respiratory system in recent years has been: in Mexico, 61.1; in France, 145.2; United States, 71.1; Uruguay, 119.2; and Spain 111.1. See Appendix A, Table 49.

[59] Alarcón, *La tuberculosis en la República Mexicana*, pp. 3-8.

CHAPTER XVI

EDUCATION—PROGRAM AND PROGRESS

A VERY large part of the population of rural Mexico is still in the stage of solving the elementary problem of how to fulfill its basic creature or nature wants. That this problem has not yet been worked out in anyway near a satisfactory fashion, that the majority of the people still do not possess the techniques for providing themselves in adequate manner with even the simplest necessities, that food, water, clothing and shelter in quantity and quality suitable for the maintenance of life in reasonable health and comfort are for large sections of the population neither sought nor obtained—it has been the purpose of the foregoing chapter to demonstrate. When to this we add the facts of Mexico's cultural heterogeneity, choked channels of communication and the barriers which lie athwart the path of national integration presented in Chapter XIV, we have before us a statement of the problem of education in Mexico in the widest sense of the term.

THE PROGRAM

The revolutionary program of rural education was somewhat slower in getting under way than the program of land distribution. The Díaz regime was not distinguished for achievements in education. And matters were helped very little by the belated effort of Díaz on the very eve of his departure to recognize the pressing need of rural schools by the promulgation of a decree on June 1, 1911, providing for the "establishing throughout the Republic of Schools of Elementary Instruction" designed "to teach, principally to the members of the indigenous races, the speaking, reading and writing of Spanish and the four fundamental and most common operations in arithmetic." Even had this narrowly conceived law not been enacted when the wave of revolution was already breaking over the country, the fact that only the ridiculous sum of 300,000 pesos (later reduced to 160,000) was to be dedicated to the undertaking, foredoomed it to failure.[1] During the next decade various efforts were made to rescue the school from the chaos of revolutionary disorder, but with little practical result.[2] It was not

[1] Bonfil, "La escuela que esperan los campesinos," *El Nacional*, July 22, 1934.

[2] Madero made a few timid gestures toward carrying out the Díaz decree of June 1, 1911 and Alberto J. Pani as the result of a sounding out of opinion in an "Inquiry on

until 1921 and the constitutional reform of September 28 of that year which transformed the old Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts into the Ministry of Public Education and in the process greatly enlarged its powers and responsibilities that the revolutionary educational program was really initiated. From that year dates the beginning of a movement which, launched on the flood tide of the mystical faith of José Vasconcelos, Obregón's Minister of Education, and later developed and given practical direction and expression by Manuel Gamio, Moisés Sáenz, Rafael Ramírez and their associates and successors, has claimed the interest and often the enthusiastic approbation of educators throughout the world. Indeed, so much has been written and said about Mexico's elementary rural schools[3] that perhaps only a very brief summary of their principal features need be given here.

In the first place, a very conscious attempt has been made to adapt the program of the elementary schools to the real needs of the rural communities. These schools have been conceived not so much in the traditional terms of reading and writing and the "four fundamental and most common operations in arithmetic" mentioned in the Díaz law of 1911, but rather in terms of instruments of socialization and agencies for raising the standard of living. For this reason, theoretically at least, the schools have been just as much concerned with reaching parents as children and the evening and early morning classes and other activities for adults occupy almost as much of the teacher's time and attention as the regular day classes for the younger generation. For this reason, also, the four-year program seeks to give quite as much, if not more, emphasis to courses in hygiene and health, diet, farming, gardening, the care of chickens and livestock, and to teaching weaving and tanning, the cooking and canning of fruits and vegetables, and carpentry as to the activities traditionally associated with the three R's.

Popular Education" recommended the establishment of agricultural and industria schools as well as elementary rural schools having for their purpose instruction of a type which would improve the economic condition of the students. Although Pani's suggestions represented an advance in educational theory, at the time nothing came of them in the way of concrete achievements.

[3] Public education in Mexico is carried on by the federal, state, and municipal governments. Each state is autonomous with regard to its educational system and may develop its program from the kindergarten to the university. The federal government has charge of the schools in the Federal District, in the several territories (Baja California and Quintana Roo) and also (since 1921) has the right to establish schools in any state. In view of the fact that it is the national government which is responsible for whatever revolutionary innovations have been introduced in Mexican education in recent years, it is with the federal schools that we shall be mainly concerned in this chapter.

A VILLAGE "SCHOOL BOARD"

Again, it is an important part of the philosophy of the rural schools that the educational process shall, wherever possible, be carried on by actual demonstration and participant activity on the part of the students. Each school is supposed to have as part of its equipment for carrying out this principle in the field of agricultural education a plot of land and an assortment of simple but modern implements, and the rural school teacher is supposed to be especially trained for instruction in farming. The shadow of John Dewey looms large on the Mexican educational horizon and the principle of *acción*, of learning by doing rather than relying, as in the past, upon books and the "sacred words of the teacher," is fundamental in the new pedagogy.[4]

Finally, an outstanding feature of the elementary rural school has been the emphasis upon its function as an integrator of national life and an incorporator of the Indian into civilization.[5] The educational authorities have not always been entirely clear on just what part and how much of the Indian and his culture would have to be sacrificed in the process of incorporation or just exactly what it was that the Indian was to be inducted into. But this does not gainsay the fact of the definite and unmistakable recognition of the Indian neither as a child to be protected and sheltered nor a beast of burden to be exploited—both favorite theories of days gone past—but rather as an adult human being with a right to full participation in the national life and with a valuable contribution to make to the national culture. That the Indian—and the term was used as much in its cultural as in its racial connotation—was neither ward nor pariah but a potential citizen was a new note in Mexico and one

[4] "John Dewey has gone to Mexico. He was first carried there by his pupils at Columbia; he went later in his books—*School and Society* is a book we know and love in Mexico. And now he is going there personally. When John Dewey gets to Mexico, he will find his ideas at work in our schools. Motivation, respect for personality, self-expression, vitalization of school work, project method, learning by doing, democracy in education—all of Dewey is there. Not, indeed, as an accomplished fact, but certainly as a poignant tendency." Moisés Sáenz, "Integrating Mexico Through Education," in *Some Mexican Problems*, p. 78. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

[5] "The problem of cultural integration—the problem of education in every country—in Mexico, because of the urgency of its solution and because of the nature of the social forces we must integrate, presents certain special aspects. We are trying to accomplish in one generation what other nations have taken centuries to achieve. . . . The time is short and our culture is being menaced by outside forces. There are in Mexico cultural traditions which the school neither can nor ought to disregard. . . . It would be foolish to disregard them and more foolish not to make use of them. To conserve the valuable elements in the indigenous cultures and to combine them with the new concepts and the new customs of modern civilization, is the most important task confronting the Mexican educator." Statement by Moisés Sáenz, *El Excelsior*, September 14, 1928.

which the rural school was among the first to sound.

Associated with the elementary rural schools there have been two types of teacher-training agencies. In addition to establishing a series of regional normal schools in which graduates from the elementary rural schools could be prepared as instructors, the government devised, in 1923, a most ingenious system of movable teachers' institutes. These institutes were placed in charge of what were known as Cultural Missions—that is, a kind of flying squadron of a half-dozen specially prepared instructors in pedagogy, agriculture, social work, small industries (weaving, carpentry, and so forth) and physical culture. Typically a Cultural Mission remained in a community for a period of from three to four weeks. During this time the rural school teachers from all the schools in the district were called together for an intensive course in the theory and practice of rural education. As a subsidiary but important part of its work the Mission also undertook to visit as many of the surrounding communities as possible for the purpose of giving health and farming demonstrations, classes in cooking, physical culture, and so forth, directly to the inhabitants.

In order to provide a more specialized and advanced type of agricultural education the federal government established and maintained in various parts of the country *Escuelas Centrales Agrícolas.* The Central Agricultural Schools, as originally conceived in 1925 when the first school of this type was inaugurated, were primarily for the purpose of educating the sons of ejidatarios and of small independent farmers. Additional qualifications for entrance in these schools were an age limit of from fifteen to twenty years and the previous completion of the work of the elementary rural schools. The courses offered during the three- or four-year term were, as planned, eminently practical in nature and the student was required to spend at least half of his time actually working in the fields, orchards, barns, carpentry shops, and dairies with which each school was equipped.

Another specialized institution established as a part of the revolutionary system of rural education was the *Casa del Estudiante Indígena.* The School for the Indigenous Student, or, for short, The Indian School, inaugurated in Mexico City in the latter part of 1925, was originally designed to "annul the evolutionary distance which separates the Indians from the present epoch and to transform their mentality, tendencies and customs by submitting them to modern civilized life and incorporating them as an integral part of the Mexican social community." As a subsidiary purpose the school aimed to demonstrate that "the Indian is just as capable as

. . . any other race of acquiring the culture and civilization of the creoles and mestizos." The principal requirements for entrance in the school were that the students should be "racially pure Indians" between the ages of 14 and 18 years coming from representative indigenous communities. Boys (no girls were admitted) who had completed at least two years of the elementary rural school were to be preferred, but this was not indispensable. Students were expected, depending on their previous preparation, to spend anywhere from four to seven years in the school. At the completion of their course the graduates were to return to their native villages and there leaven the lump, or, in more elegant terms, "raise the intellectual level of their brothers."[6]

The final unit in the Mexican official system of agricultural education is the National School of Agriculture. This school, located on a large hacienda not far from Mexico City, offers a seven-year course beginning in the preparatory school stage and ending at the college level. Except that no engineering courses are offered, its equipment and program are not unlike those of some of the smaller land-grant agricultural and mechanical colleges in the United States.

PROGRESS

In the decade between 1922 and 1932 Mexico grappled long and mightily with the forces of ignorance and darkness. Men, money and energy were marshalled for the fray. At the end of the ten years, the battle had been joined on many a front; the territory of the enemy had been invaded and here and there the first ramparts had fallen. All of which, translated into statistics, means that in 1932 the educational authorities could point to the following achievements:[7]

Federal expenditures on education totaling in round numbers 27.4 million pesos or 12.9 per cent of the total federal budget as compared with 9.0 million pesos representing only 4.0 per cent of the total budget in 1921.

Federal expenditures on rural education [illegible] 9.1 million pesos or 33.2 per cent of the total of all expenditures for education as compared with 6.9 million pesos or 26.6 per cent of the budget in 1928 (the first year for which separate figures for rural education expenditures are available).[8]

[6] Mesa A., "La Casa del Estudiante Indígena," in *Memoria . . . de Educación Pública*, 1932, I, pp. 25-30.

[7] Statistics on education are those of the *Oficina de Estadística Escolar* of the *Secretaría de Educación Pública* unless otherwise indicated.

[8] Appendix A, Table 51.

These figures are for the Ministry of Education only and, accordingly, do not include

A total of 6,796 elementary federal rural schools manned by 8,442 teachers and with a total inscription of 593,183 students (446,263 children in day classes and 146,920 adults in night classes).

Seventeen federal Rural Normal Schools with an enrollment of 1,067 students.

Thirteen Cultural Missions which in the year 1932 held institutes attended by 1,431 rural school teachers in 26 communities and carried on extension work in 461 villages.

And 8 Central Agricultural Schools with a registration of 570 students.

When it is recalled that in 1921 the number of public rural schools in existence in the country was so small as to be completely negligible, when it is remembered that the educational movement initiated by the Obregón government had to begin from "scratch," it is difficult to restrain one's enthusiasm in the face of the facts of Mexico's achievement in the field of rural education in the short space of ten years. And yet if a judgment of Mexican educational progress is to be made, enthusiasm must be seasoned with statistics and constrained with criticism. Fortunately for the present writer, the Mexicans themselves have been their own best critics and the first to point to the weaknesses in their school system. During the years 1932 and 1933 and more particularly on the occasion of the transfer of the Central Agricultural Schools from the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture to that of the Ministry of Education on October 1, 1932, there was initiated a period of stock-taking and soul-searching on the part of the educational authorities which produced not only a commendable amount of clear thinking and plain speaking, but, eventually, some rather drastic changes in both the structure and aims of Mexican rural education.[9]

CRITICISM OF THE RURAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Despite the very considerable progress made during the first decade of what John Dewey has called "Mexico's educational renaissance,"

expenditures made for the account of the Central Agricultural Schools which up to the end of 1932 were under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture. Exact figures for the expenditures on the Central Schools in 1932 cannot be obtained, but such data as are available indicate that the amount did not exceed 700,000 pesos.

[9] This "house-cleaning" was largely due to the seriousness of purpose and energy of Narciso Bassols, Minister of Education from October, 1931 to May, 1934. The movement for educational reform, however, was not without its elements of politics and personal rivalry (see especially the articles of "*Un Maestro Rural*" (Moisés Sáenz), *El Universal*, January 1, 1933, *et. seq.*, and the letters exchanged between Bassols and Sáenz on the occasion of the latter's resignation from the Technical Consultative Commission of the Ministry of Education, *El Universal*, February 2, 5 and 6, 1933). Some of the criticisms of past educational achievements are, therefore, to be taken with a grain of salt.

it was obvious to everyone concerned that even measured in the barest quantitative terms the achievement fell far short of the need. The federal government in 1932, as we have seen, was supporting 6,796 rural schools. If to this number there be added the 4,889 rural schools maintained by the states, the 91 schools paid for by communities and the 1,943 privately supported "Articulo 123"[10] rural schools, we have a total of 13,719. But this represented only 1 elementary school for every 5.3 rural communities listed in the 1930 census. In other words, 58,445 or 81.0 per cent of the 72,164 communities of less than 4,000 population were without primary schools of any sort.[11] Similarly, if to the 442,426 children of school age (that is, between 6 and 14 years of age) enrolled in federal rural schools in 1932 there be added the 301,501 children of school age reported in state, community, and private rural schools, the total of 743,927 means that only around 30 per cent of the estimated total children of school age living in rural communities[12] were even on the books of rural schools. In 1932 the combined expenditures of the federal, state, and municipal governments on public education of all types from primary schools to universities was approximately 45.8 million pesos. This sum, representing as it did 12.9 per cent of the federal budget and on the average 20.0 per cent of the state budgets and 6.6 per cent of the municipal budgets, although somewhat less than the total expenditures in 1930 and 1931, was, considering all things, a matter to point to with pride. However, an annual outlay of 45.8 million pesos on public education figures out to be a per capita expenditure of 2.77 pesos or at a nominal rate of exchange of 2 for 1, $1.39—a modest sum indeed when one recalls, for example, that the per capita expenditure for elementary and secondary public schools alone in the United States in the same year was $18.87 and that the total outlay for public education in Mexico in 1930 was considerably less, for instance, than that spent by the state of Nebraska on its elementary and secondary schools, albeit Nebraska is hardly a rich

[10] So called because their maintenance is required by Article 123 of the constitution—see p. 295.

[11] As a matter of fact the number of rural communities without schools was even greater than here indicated for 12 of the federal rural schools in 1932 were located in communities of more than 4,000. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the overwhelming majority—93.8 per cent—of the federal rural schools were in the smaller (1,000 inhabitants or less) rather than in the larger rural communities.

[12] The total population in the Republic in 1930 between the ages of 6 and 14 years was in round numbers 3.5 million. If it be assumed that the population of school age in rural communities was in the same relation to the total population of school age as all rural population was to the total population (72 per cent) then the rural population of school age in 1932 (not taking population increase into account) was approximately 2.5 million.

state and has a population less than one twentieth that of Mexico.[13]

Not only does Mexico have too few rural schools—said the educational reformers in 1932—but the schools which she does have are uncoördinated one with another and with the rest of the revolutionary program, are inadequately equipped, poorly staffed and lacking in realistic emphasis.[14]

Specifically the elementary rural schools, the backbone of the system of rural education, were notoriously lacking in equipment. Over 82 per cent of the schools in 1932 were housed in a single room. Despite the emphasis the schools were supposed to give to agricultural instruction, small industries, hygiene, and so forth, 28.1 per cent of the schools had no agricultural lands; 54.1 per cent had no libraries; 32.3 per cent had no playgrounds; 59.2 per cent had no outhouses; 77.2 per cent had no baths; and 81.4 per cent had no shops (carpenter, blacksmith, and so forth).[15] The number of schools with an adequate supply of benches, desks, blackboards, textbooks, and other such equipment, is not recorded, but if the writer may judge from his observations of dozens of rural schools in different parts of the country, it is extremely unlikely that half of them were even passably well equipped with the articles mentioned.

Teachers in the federal rural schools were too few in number, inadequately trained, and poorly paid. The average number of pupils

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[13] *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1932.*

[14] What might be called the "theme-song" of the reform movement was set forth in a monograph published by the Ministry of Education in February, 1933:

"It is an elemental fact that . . . the peasant mass constitutes the economic nerve and the vital reserve of the nation and that if this mass scarcely survives, impoverished by spoilation, ignorant from neglect and weakened by privation and disease, then the nation is condemned to economic and biological misery and, sooner or later, to ruin. Whatever the appearance may be, there can be no enduring culture and all progress will be illusory if it does not reach the masses of rural workers.

"With this conviction we have undertaken a work of civilization and of economic betterment designed to stimulate the development of a rural culture. On the one hand, this has consisted, by means of the ejido program, of giving land to the rural workers, of constructing roads and works of irrigation and of founding agricultural banks; and, on the other hand, of creating institutions of agricultural and industrial propaganda and instruction. . . .

"Unfortunately this double undertaking of rural development and education has not followed a unified plan, has frequently suffered disorientation and a lack of coöperation; it has not achieved . . . a definite rhythm of constant and accelerated activity, but, on the contrary, has been marked by breakdowns and stoppages with the outcome that at the present time the net results of the work fall considerably short of the goal indicated by revolutionary enthusiasm." *Estudio sobre la organización de las Escuelas Regionales. . . ,* p. 3.

[15] Appendix A, Table 52.

registered per teacher was 70.3 and 81 per cent of the schools had only one teacher. Almost 90 per cent of the teachers had no diplomas from normal schools or "titles" from other sources. Over half (54 per cent) of the teachers were women—a matter of considerable importance in schools which are supposed to teach agriculture, carpentry, arts and crafts to adults as well as children in a country where the traditional position of woman has hardly been one of leadership. Of the 8,442 teachers in the service of the federal rural schools in 1932, 3,502 or 41.5 per cent received wages of between 27.36 pesos and 41.06 pesos a month—and this for work which, theoretically at any rate, included both day and night classes and Sundays (community programs of various sorts) thrown in for good measure. Small wonder that the head of the Department of Rural Education wrote the following words in his 1933 report:

> With considerable frequency and from various sources complaints have been received that these salaries were insufficient to cover even the most pressing necessities of the teachers and that moreover it was indecorous [sic!] for the government to pay in such fashion those who had been selected as diffusers of culture and education. In some regions, such as Sonora, it was impossible to fill all of the places carrying with them these salaries because the manual laborers in the fields could make more money.[16]

With poorly paid, overworked and untrained teachers it was inevitable that the quality of instruction should in many cases be bad and that the whole program of rural education should suffer. Faith, enthusiasm, good-will—these and other admirable qualities many of the rural teachers had in abundance. But there was no blinking the fact that faith is poor preparation for teaching ignorant and often stubborn peasants how to grow better corn and that good-will cannot go very far in taking the place of a trained mind and organized knowledge.[17] The truth of these considerations, in no way novel, for from the very beginning Mexican educators realized that they must take their choice between schools with "improvised teachers" or no schools, was apparent in the statistics on the activities of the schools compiled for the year 1932. Eleven per cent of the rural schools offered a one-year course; 33.5 per cent offered two years; 33.8 per cent three years; and only 21.8 per cent the full official course of four years. There was much talk of the *pequeñas industrias* (small industries), the inculcation of habits of thrift, agricultural instruction, and the rest of the features of the *escuela de acción*,

[16] *Memoria . . . de Educación Pública, 1933*, I, 16.

[17] *Estudio sobre la organización de las Escuelas Regionales . . .*, p. 5.

but in the end most of the time most of the teachers must have been devoting their energies to the well-known three R's, for, after ten years of the new deal in Mexican rural education, 54.8 per cent of the federal schools had no classes in arts and crafts; 70.2 per cent had no savings banks; less than half (40.4 per cent) cultivated vegetable gardens or raised chickens (45.1 per cent); only 12.0 per cent kept bees, 13.7 per cent rabbits and 31.8 doves, and so forth.[18] To be sure, 87.6 per cent of the schools were reported as having organized antialcohol campaigns, and 92.2 per cent cleanliness campaigns. Also, a few schools had encouraged road building, established post offices and improved the community water supply. There would appear to be little reason, however, for differing with the judgment of Moisés Sáenz who wrote in July, 1932 that "it is only in exceptional cases that one finds a [rural school] carrying out the whole program which our theory implies."[19]

Still another evidence of the "failure" of the federal rural schools is to be found in the figures on school attendance. In 1932, as has been noted, there were registered in the federal rural schools 593,183 students of which 446,263 were children in day classes and 146,920 were adults in night classes. The average attendance of all students in 1932, however, was only 409,901 or 69.1 per cent of the total enrollment. (In day classes the average attendance was 70.4 per cent of the enrollment, and in night classes 65.1 per cent.) Moreover, although statistical proof is not possible, it is a well-known fact that even in those places where the rural schools offered a four-year course, a relatively small proportion of the students remained in school for the full term of work.[20]

Finally, although not a matter greatly emphasized by the educational reformers, it may be observed that neither in intention nor in result was there any particular effort up to 1932 to adapt the rural school to the special needs of the ejido communities. Perhaps the only evidence in support of this statement that need be offered is that in 1932 only 1,109 of the 6,000 or more (provisional and defin-

[18] Appendix A, Table 52.

[19] "La nueva escuela rural y el nacionalismo mexicano," *El Nacional*, July 23, 1932.

[20] ". . . Because of the economic conditions of the peasants [in Puebla] which force them to put their children to work when they are scarcely of an age to stand the fatigue of agricultural labor, there is no continuity in the attendance of the children in the rural schools. . . . It may be said that practically all of the students . . . attend school only for one or, at the most, two years.

"The teacher is thus faced year after year with a new school population which cannot advance . . . and which reduces to a minimum the cultural results of his work." Statement of Narciso Bassols, *El Excelsior*, March 29, 1932.

itive) ejido communities then in existence had federal rural schools.[21] Slow as the program of land distribution was, the school program, so far as the ejido communities were concerned, was even slower.

That the number of Cultural Missions at work in 1932 when thirteen such groups—a larger number than in any of the previous years—were employed was wholly inadequate to carry out even their primary function of teacher training was admitted by all concerned and not least by the "missionaries" themselves. In 1932 the institutes held by the Missions were attended by 1,431 rural school teachers and extension work was carried on in 461 villages. Working at this rate, a little simple calculation shows that on the average any one of the 16,114 elementary rural school teachers employed in 1932[22] might expect to attend one of the Mission's institutes about once in every 11.3 years. Rural social service work, even of the relatively superficial variety practiced in 1932, at the rate of 461 villages a year meant that 156 years would have been required before all of the 72,164 rural communities in Mexico would have been visited even once by a Cultural Mission.

As in the case of the elementary rural schools, the criticism of the work of the Cultural Missions was not only from the quantitative point of view but from the qualitative as well. The case against the Cultural Missions was summarized in an official publication of the Ministry of Education as follows:

> . . . The lack of understanding and even, in some cases, the hostility of the peasants for the work of the school; the absolute misery of the people and the lack of every kind of element with which to resolve their complex economic and social problems; the characteristics of some of the educational problems such as those related to the teaching of Spanish to the indigenous population. . . ; [the difficulties] of changing the routinized system of industrial and agricultural exploitation; and the existence of vices and prejudices which waste away the rural population—are the determining factors which prevent the achievement in four months of enduring results.
>
> Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the failure [of the Missions] to study beforehand the environment, the lack of a preconceived plan of action . . . and, finally, in certain cases, the inappropriateness of their equipment . . . has meant that the efforts of the Ministry [of Education] have practically been wasted. . . .

[21] There are no figures on the number of ejidos with state, community, or privately supported schools, but the number was probably not more than a few hundred at the very most.

[22] The Cultural Missions were attended by state and privately supported rural school teachers as well as by the teachers of the federal rural schools.

Rural school teachers who have no other academic preparation, if it may be called that, and with no other antecedents than their personal experience in the "worse than nothing" schools of other epochs (and such is the case of a large number of the rural teachers) cannot during a month and a half of courses receive the instruction which they need for their improvement. . . . It is impossible for communities . . . tightly chained to the Colonial era, without any contact with the civilization we are seeking to impose on them and . . . trying in many cases to repel outside influences, often living a life of limitations and oppression and unarmed for any kind of action or struggle (and such is the situation of the majority of the rural communities), in the two and a half months during which they are subjected to the influence of a mission to be prepared to continue to receive with profit the influence of the rural school. It is true that in some cases unusual successes have been obtained, that pressing needs have been satisfied for the first time and that enthusiasm and coöperation have been aroused for the educational work of the Ministry, but undoubtedly . . . "this will pass and the effect will disappear."[23]

The sum and substance of the matter is that the Cultural Missions in theory were and are a good idea. But, as so often is the case, the word was taken for the deed. Enthusiasm was allowed to outrun capacity and grasp to exceed reach. For this there were good reasons rooted in the necessity for training a new generation of teachers in the shortest time possible and founded on the contention that even a short visit from a Cultural Mission was better than complete abandonment of schools and communities. But this did not alter the fact that the Missions were up against a stone wall of ignorance and poverty—a wall which they were charged to tear down with their bare hands. They were expected to perform miracles and this, despite the religious connotations of their name and, in many cases, high faith and hard work in abundance, they simply could not do with the time and equipment at their disposal.

Of all the units in the postrevolutionary system of rural education relatively more money was spent on and greater things were hoped for from the Central Agricultural Schools than from almost any other type of school. The average value of the buildings and equipment of the eight Central Agricultural Schools constructed by 1932 was over 700,000 pesos and the average annual budget per school was around 87,000 pesos. But, once again, hopes were defrauded and pesos were spent without satisfactory returns.

In selecting students the original plan of admitting only the sons of ejidatarios or small farmers from the region in which the school

[23] *Las Misiones Culturales, 1932-1933*, pp. 314-15. The time limits referred to were those in effect in 1933. Before that year the period allowed each Cultural Mission in a given region was from two to three weeks (1923-1927) and from four to six weeks (1928-1932).

was located, was quickly abandoned and many students were enrolled from diverse regions and from social classes having no relation to agriculture. Thus in October, 1932, it was found that in the school located in Guanajuato, for example, only 29 of the total of 60 students came from the state of Guanajuato, while 31 students were from 8 other states scattered all over the Republic and including regions as different as Veracruz and Aguascalientes. Moreover, in all the schools only a little more than half of the students came from families whose habitual occupation was agriculture, the remaining students being sons of merchants, professionals, public employees, miners, sailors, teachers, and so on. Especially notable is the fact that only 21 or 3.7 per cent of the total of 570 students in all schools were listed as sons of ejidatarios.[24]

From the point of view of developing agriculture in the many different regions of the nation and of solving the diverse problems presented by the varied natural areas, the schools were badly located. In placing all but one of the schools on the Central Plateau not only were the tropical and semitropical regions neglected, but the sites selected on the plateau were chosen without due regard to the homogeneity of the agricultural regions. The school in the state of Puebla, for example, was located exactly on the dividing line between two agricultural zones—one appropriate for wheat and the other for sugar cane.

The kind of instruction they were offered in the schools and the standard of living to which they became accustomed were of so advanced a type as to alienate the students from the simple life of the countryside and "divorce them from their social class." As one professor put it:

> It would appear that from the beginning these schools were made to dazzle foreign tourists and not to serve as modest institutions for country boys of humble condition. . . . These schools are bad not only because they are costly, but also because . . . they are an insult to the poverty and misery of the barefoot boys who must attend them. . . . The schools of the "palace type" are complete failures. . . .[25]

To all their other shortcomings was added the fact that the greatest difficulty was encountered in finding adequately prepared teachers with which to staff the Central Schools. Graduates from the National School of Agriculture and from the Rural Normal Schools were found to be lacking in experience and understanding of their functions. Efforts to train teachers by sending them to the United

[24] *Estudio sobre la organización de las Escuelas Regionales* . . . , p. 24.

[25] Statement of Anatolio G. Bautista, *El Universal*, October 27, 1932.

States failed.[26] Politics, as usual, entered into the situation and the directors of the schools were picked without any special reference to their ability for the job in hand and were changed with every veering of the political weathercock—on occasion as often as three times in one year.[27] At least four of the directors of Central Schools were prosecuted for maladministration of funds and other irregularities.[28]

The National Agricultural School was not the subject of particular attention on the part of the educational housecleaners in 1932. This may have been because they felt that the job was hopeless—that a school which in more than three-quarters of a century of existence had not been able to exercise any discernible influence on the rural life of the country had best be left to stew in its own peculiar bureaucratic juice. Certainly such a position with reference to the National School would not have been entirely unjustified.[29] In recent years the annual budget of the National Agricultural School has been around 500,000 pesos and the registration has averaged some 200 students—many of them on government scholarships.[30] For the most part this money is being spent for purposes having little relation to the practice of modern agronomy and still less to the new type of agriculture being introduced by the agrarian reform.[31] The majority of the grad-

[26] Out of the more than a dozen agronomists sent by the government to the United States for training not a single one was employed (in 1928) in the Central Schools.

[27] Bautista, *op. cit.*

[28] *El Universal*, January 1, 1932.

[29] A careful survey of the history of the National Agricultural School made recently by the Mexican agronomist, Bernardo Arrieta, reaches the following conclusion:

". . . During the 80 years in which it has functioned as an institution of agricultural instruction experimenting with a large number of plans of study and subjected to many diverse organizations, the National School has not achieved a definition of its character . . . or determined the functions which its graduates are competent to perform in the country.

"It may be affirmed that the influence of the National School . . . has been imperceptible in the agricultural transformation of Mexico. . . ." "La educación agrícola como fundamento de reorganización de nuestra economía rural," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, I, p. 250.

[30] Hence the popularity of the school with bureaucrats and hence the *raisón d'être* of comments such as the following in a magazine published by alumni of the National School:

"In the National School of Agriculture students are admitted on the basis of recommendations with a carnival disguise of entrance examinations. The nephew of a Congressman, even though he be a Kentucky burro (and these are the biggest burros there are), can enter the school with greater ease than a candidate without patronage even though his preparation be good. May God give you letters of recommendation, my son!—the rest does not matter." *Germinal*, February 15, 1934.

[31] See the report on the National School of Agriculture published in *El Nacional*, December 19, 1934.

uates gravitate toward political jobs of one sort or another, jobs, which, even when they are in such government departments as the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, and so forth, more often than not could be performed quite as well if their holders had never heard of the National School much less spent seven years within its portals.[32]

Even though it be held that it is not the purpose of the National School to train farmers but rather experts in the various sciences related to the industry of agriculture, and that its success should be judged by the kind of professional agronomists it turns out rather than by the number of practicing agriculturists, the record of the school is difficult to defend. On this point the following paragraph from a study made by one of the graduates of the school may be cited for what it is worth :

> Concerning [Mexican] agronomists in general, it must be confessed that they are not professional men of the type that might be desired. . . . Their professional deficiencies come from two sources : first, a failure to specialize in their studies, due in part to the lack of any security that they will be able to obtain work in the field selected for specialization. . . ; and, second, the absence of stimulus. Subjected to the inconstancy of politics and bureaucratic whims, without any security of tenure. . . , the [agronomist] is easily contaminated with the lack of devotion to his work which characterizes the average public employee. He sickens with disenchantment . . . and becomes a mere job holder, working for a salary without any real concern with what he is doing.[33]

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[32] An analysis made in 1932 of the occupations of the 299 living graduates of the National School of Agriculture gave the following results :

	Number of Graduates	*Per Cent of Total*
Department of Agriculture	32	11
National Irrigation Commission	10	3
National Agrarian Commission	59	20
Other offices of the Ministry of Agriculture	43	14
Other federal offices	32	11
Agricultural agencies of state governments	18	6
National Bank of Agricultural Credit	11	4
In activities not associated with agriculture	24	8
Private work	41	14
Without work	19	6
Unknown	10	3
	299	100

Fernández y Fernández, *Los agrónomos*, p. 5.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

In connection with the subject of the lack of outlet and security of tenure for Mexican agronomists it may be noted that the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture to carry on educational work outside of the school system have been, in the opinion of many Mexican

The criticism of the two remaining elements in the Mexican postrevolutionary system of rural education—the Normal Schools and the Indian School—parallels that already reviewed. When the searchlight was turned on the Rural Normal Schools it was found that in many cases they were neither rural, normal, nor schools. About a third of these schools were located not in the country but in, or very near, urban centers of considerable importance; the "majority of the schools lacked the most indispensable elements for agricultural instruction"; many of the students were drawn not from the "poorer country districts and indigenous communities" as the official rules required, but rather from the towns and even in some cases from Mexico City—and this for the simple reason that few students outside of the larger centers could obtain the four (or preferably six) years' primary schooling required for entrance; the graduates of the normal schools quite often refused to accept jobs in the rural schools, preferring to remain in reach of town comforts and city conveniences; and, finally, the teaching staffs in the normal schools were ill-adapted to the special type of instruction (especially in agriculture) required by students who were being prepared for work in the elementary rural schools.[34]

The story of the Indian School is a short and not very happy one. The first snag which the enterprise struck once it had opened for business in 1925 in its nice new building—the latter, incidentally, costing the tidy sum of over 700,000 pesos—was encountered in the process of finding some Indians to put into the school. Someone made the mistake of leaving it to the governors, congressmen, and senators of the several states to select the students. The result was that out of the first batch of some 200 students to arrive, over 100

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students, largely a waste of time and money. On several occasions in recent years it has been announced that the government was on the point of establishing a series of agricultural experiment stations. In 1920, indeed, a considerable amount of money was spent for this purpose. But these projects have never materialized. During the last few years the government has employed anywhere from a dozen to a score of regional agronomists and veterinarians. There is no evidence, however, that this ridiculously inadequate staff of poorly paid men (in 1934, for example, regional veterinarians were paid 2.80 pesos a day and given 5.00 pesos a month for traveling expenses) has had any far-reaching effect on Mexican agricultural practice. The Department of Extension of the Ministry of Agriculture has also for several years past offered correspondence courses on various agricultural subjects. The difficulty of making very much progress by this method can be gauged by recalling the fact that illiteracy in most parts of rural Mexico probably averages 75 per cent. See Fernández y Fernández, "Aspectos de nuestro economía agrícola," *El Economista*, July 6, 1933, p. 647.

[34] *Estudio sobre la organización de las Escuelas Regionales* . . . , pp. 6-9. For a detailed study and criticism of the Rural Normal Schools in 1932, see *Memoria* . . . *de Educación Pública, 1932*, pp. 161-99.

turned out to be not *indios puros*, but "mestizos, many of them nephews, sons, and godchildren of politicians."[35] After this unfortunate experience the selection of students was entrusted with somewhat better results to the Federal School Inspectors[36] and for several years the school apparently functioned without untoward incident. When it came time for the first class to graduate, however, somewhat to their surprise the educational authorities found that they had been too successful—that is, almost none of the "incorporated" Indians wanted to return to their native villages! It was this fact which led to a change of emphasis in the work. Beginning February 1, 1928, the *Casa* became to all intents and purposes a Rural Normal School, differing from the other schools of this type mainly in that it was located in the center of the nation's capital and that an effort was still made to select the students on a racial basis.

The location of the institution in Mexico City had many drawbacks, not the least of which was that there was no possibility of training the students in agriculture. Indeed, the whole program of instruction in the school was badly orientated and badly administered. In the last years of its existence both the plant and the morale underwent a progressive deterioration.[37] Apparently this was not chargeable to a lack of money, for during the six years from 1926 to 1932 the annual budget varied in round numbers from 236,000 pesos in

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[35] Mesa, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[36] The problem of getting the proper kind of students for the school continued to be difficult of solution. Many of the Indians refused to send their sons, claiming that they needed them to help in the fields at home. The number of racially pure Indians who were also from small indigenous centers probably never exceeded two-thirds of the total enrollment at any given time.

[37] The following appears in a report of the Ministry of Education made in 1932:

"With regard to the living conditions of the students [in the Indian School] it may be said that, in general, they are abominable. . . .

"The majority of the walls [of the building] are cracked; in some of the classrooms as well as in the dormitories, the wooden floors are damaged and in a bad state. . . , the windows are broken; the doors, windows and wooden partitions have not been painted for a long time. . . .

"All of the divisions of the building—classrooms, dormitories, dining rooms, the kitchen, the infirmary, gardens and patios—are very dirty and the furnishings are damaged and in disorder. The classrooms lack seats and desks. In the dormitories the majority of the beds are broken; the blankets, pillows and mattresses threadbare and dirty; the wardrobes and lockers broken down and without paint. . . .

"The personal cleanliness and appearance of the students leaves much to be desired and it may be observed that those who take a daily bath are very few. According to the professor of physical education, it is impossible to force the students to bathe daily because the swimming tank and a number of the showers are out of commission. Moreover, many students do not have any soap because only rarely is it provided for them and they do not have any money to buy it. . . ." etc., etc. Mesa, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

1926 to 110,000 pesos in 1932 or an average of something over 181,000 pesos. Given an enrollment of approximately 200 students a year this figures out an average cost for the seven-year period of almost 900 pesos per student, per year—as things go in Mexico a very high figure indeed. But, whatever the reason may have been, the fact is that the results obtained by the school, in so far as such matters are subject to statistical measurement, were far from satisfactory. Out of a total of 524 students enrolled in the period 1926-1932, only 114 finished the rural school teacher's course. This meant a cost of approximately 10,000 pesos[38] for every student graduated. In 1932 there were employed as rural school teachers 107 former students of the *Casa*. Reports on the quality of the work of 89 of these teachers made in 1932 indicated that about 5 per cent were doing really valuable work, the majority work of an ordinary grade, and approximately one-fourth were considered to be definitely unsatisfactory as rural teachers.

One thing the Indian School did accomplish as anyone may see who cares to read the reports of the various psychological tests given on several occasions to the students, or, for that matter, as anyone could prove to his own satisfaction (as the present writer did) by observing the students when they first arrived at the *Casa*, and then seeing them again a few months later: country Indians can be educated to look, act, and think like city-bred mestizos. One wonders, however, if this fact could not have been demonstrated in a somewhat more direct and less expensive fashion. It seems a shame to spend almost 2 million pesos to prove something for the benefit of the reactionary classes (not be convinced in any case) which can be found neatly docketed and classified in almost any standard textbook on anthropology.

REFORM OF THE RURAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

The concrete results of the balancing of books on Mexico's system of rural education in 1932 was a series of reforms begun in 1933 and still in process. On the side of pedagogical theory emphasis was shifted from the social to the economic. Little was said in the new

[38] This figure, used by Mesa in the previously cited report and derived by dividing the total expenditures from 1926 to 1931 inclusive by 114, is admittedly a very rough calculation. However, it is not without significance especially if it be compared with similarly derived figures for some of the Rural Normal Schools. To wit: the cost of each graduate in the Normal School in Oaxtepec, Morelos has averaged around 1,165 pesos; in Tlatlauqui, Puebla, 1,931 pesos. In other words, to turn out a rural school teacher in the *Casa del Estudiante Indígena* has cost about 8.6 times as much as it has in the Normal School in Oaxtepec and 5.2 times as much as in Tlatlauqui. See Mesa, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.

declarations of purpose which issued from the Ministry of Education about the "incorporation of the Indian into civilization," or the role of the rural school in national integration; but there was much talk about training the people in improved methods of production. Socialization and integration were not to be neglected but the rural school system was to be "by preference orientated with the idea of satisfying the economic necessities of the rural classes" and its objective was to be the transformation of "the systems of the production and the distribution of wealth along frankly collectivistic lines."[39]

One of the first moves toward the realization of the objects implied in the new statement of aims was the raising of the salaries of the federal rural school teachers. In the early part of 1933 the "wages of misery" of from 27.36 to 41.06 pesos a month, previously the lot of most of the rural teachers, were abolished and in their place a minimum monthly wage of 54.74 pesos was established. With higher wages the way was opened for weeding out some of the more unsatisfactory teachers and in 1933 alone over 700 were replaced.

A second important undertaking, part of a general drive to increase the number of rural schools, was a determined effort to tighten up and enforce the law requiring all employers of labor: "To establish and maintain elementary schools for the benefit of the children of the workers in the case of [workers living in] rural centers more than three kilometers from a town, provided the number of children of school age is greater than 20."[40]

The original law placed these company schools under the jurisdiction of the state authorities, and left it to the Department of Labor to see that the law was enforced. By a reform in the law the latter part of 1933, jurisdiction over the schools in question as well as the right and duty to enforce the law in those sections with which it was concerned was vested in the Ministry of Education. This meant that the Ministry of Education, on pain of fine, could force employers to establish and support schools of the type here indicated and afterwards had the right to designate the teachers and dictate the programs to be followed.[41] At the end of 1932 only 1,943 of these so-called "Article 123 schools" were reported as being in existence out of an estimated total of over 4,000 places in which under the law they should have been established. It was in an effort to take up the slack between these two figures that the Ministry of Education, after the above indicated reform was made in the Labor Law, undertook

[39] *Memoria . . . de Educación Pública, 1933*, I, 52.

[40] Fr. VIII, Art. 111 of the Federal Labor Law, August 18, 1931, based on Art. 123 of the constitution.

[41] See *Memoria . . . de Educación Pública 1933*, I, 27-28.

to bring every pressure possible to bear on the recalcitrant employers. At the end of 1934 a total of 2,069 of these employer-supported schools were listed—an increase of 126 over the year 1932.

A similar undertaking to that just mentioned was the plan to bring the state-supported rural schools under the jurisdiction of the federal government through agreements with the state governments by which they place their rural schools under the supervision of the federal school inspectors. In July, 1934 contracts to this effect had been signed by two states and others were pending final action in five states.

As a third step in the reform program the *Casa del Estudiante Indígena* in Mexico City was closed and in its place there were opened a number of institutions (11 by the end of 1934) known as *Centros de Educación Indígena*. These Centers of Indigenous Education are partially self-supporting, primary rural boarding schools located in Indian communities. The schools are still in the experimental stage, but their general objective is to bring about the economic and cultural rehabilitation of the native peoples by working on the ground within the group. The *Centros* are, indeed, as the name suggests, intended to operate more as community centers than as schools, ordinarily conceived. Unlike the old *Casa* the new *Centros* are coeducational.

More important than any of the above mentioned innovations are certain new types of institutions called Regional Peasant Schools (*Escuelas Regionales Campesinas*). The purpose of these new institutions is fourfold—that is, they are: (a) to train rural school teachers; (b) to offer courses in agriculture and crafts; (c) to make regional social and economic investigations and studies; and (d) to operate as rural social service centers. In other words these schools are to combine the functions of the old Rural Normal Schools, the Central Agricultural Schools and the Cultural Missions. The Regional Peasant Schools are coeducational and the students before entering must have completed the four-year course of the elementary rural schools, have attained at least 14 years of age (12 in the case of girls), and be children of ejidatarios, small farmers, share-croppers, peons, and so forth, living in the region in which the schools are located. The agricultural and crafts course is three years (including one year of preparatory work) and the normal course the same. Under the new arrangement the old traveling Cultural Missions are attached to the Regional Schools and devote their entire time to working with the rural schools and communities in the area. The regional social and economic studies are carried on by a group of investigators, also attached to the

Schools, known as Institutes of Investigation and Social Action (*Institutos de Investigación y Acción Social*).[42]

As rapidly as possible the old Normal Schools, Central Agricultural Schools and Cultural Missions are being reorganized and combined into the new Regional Peasant Schools. By the end of 1934 six such reorganizations had been effected and Regional Peasant Schools were functioning in as many different states.

It is perhaps still too early to assess the value of the reforms introduced in, or the progress made by the system of rural education in Mexico since 1932. The latest figures obtainable are given in the table on page 298 and show the situation in the middle of 1934 as compared with the end of 1932.

To the foregoing may be added the fact that the thirteen Cultural Missions attached to the new Regional Peasant Schools (or to the old Normal Schools in the process of reorganization) in the period from September, 1933 to August, 1934 held teachers' institutes attended by 1,739 teachers and carried on extension work in 353 villages. Also it may be noted that the total federal budget for rural education in 1934 was 12.4 million pesos as compared with 9.1 million pesos in 1932 or an increase from 33.2 per cent of the total federal budget for all types of education to 39.6 per cent.[43]

What the reform has meant in the way of improved teaching personnel, better equipment and closer adherence to the theoretical pedagogical program cannot be stated. Some progress along all the lines indicated has undoubtedly been made during the last few years, but there seems little reason for believing that most of the conditions complained of by the educational reformers in 1932 have been changed in very many of the federal rural schools.[44]

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[42] The theoretical distinction between the functions of the Cultural Missions and the Institutes of Investigation has been expressed as follows:

"The Cultural Missions will continue to be the agencies which take to the rural communities the perfected knowledge of the schools. As the arterial system of the educational organism they will carry to each cell of the social body the rich blood of cultural elements. The Institutes of Investigation, on the other hand, . . . will constitute the venous system which will bring to the [Regional] Schools the observations and statistics, the elements to be studied and the problems to be solved, and the indispensable knowledge for the proper orientation of the work of the Schools." *Memoria . . . de Educación Pública, 1933*, I, 110-11.

[43] Appendix A, Table 51.

[44] As late as July, 1934 the following statement was made in a radio broadcast sponsored by the National Revolutionary Party:

"Up to the present time the federal rural school has lived precariously sustained in part by the efforts of the inhabitants of the rural communities. . . ; directed by teachers miserably paid and subjected to undesirable living conditions; and lacking elements without number of every kind necessary for true rural schools. The Central Agricultural

RURAL SCHOOLS IN DECEMBER, 1932, COMPARED WITH RURAL SCHOOLS IN DECEMBER, 1934*

	No. of Schools		No. of Teachers		No. of Pupils Enrolled	
Rural Schools	1932	1934	1932	1934	1932	1934
Federal						
Regular Primary	6,796	8,155	8,442	10,010	593,183§	711,932‡
Indigenous Centers	1†	11	15	90	210	500‡
Regional Peasant		6		80		901
Normal	17	11	170	117	1,067	812
Central Agricultural	8	5	80	57	570	496
Other Primary						
"Article 123"	1,943	2,069	2,322	2,370	109,502	116,692‡
Community	91	10	91	10	4,140	455‡
State	4,889	5,500‡	5,259	6,050‡	210,678	237,050‡
Total	13,745	15,767	16,379	18,784	919,350	1,068,838

* Data of the *Secretaría de Educación Pública*. All figures for 1934 are subject to rectification.

† *Casa del Estudiante Indígena.*

‡ Estimated.

§ Children in day classes 446,263; adults in night classes 146,920.

The ejido and the ejidatario, our especial concern in the present connection, are still on the periphery of the rural educational system instead of being a matter of paramount interest to the school authorities. It is true that out of the 901 students enrolled in the new Regional Peasant Schools, 260 or 28.9 per cent are children of ejidatarios—a percentage considerably higher than were enrolled in the old Central Agricultural Schools. But it is also true that in a count taken in 1933, only 1,061 ejido communities, or 16.7 per cent of the total of 6,366 provisional and definitive ejido communities then in existence had federal rural schools. In 4 states there were no federal schools at all in ejidos; in 16 states less than one-fourth of the ejidos had federal schools; and in only 1 state were more than half of the ejidos reported as having federal schools.[45] All of which is only a way of saying that the ejido program is in still another important respect lopsided and out of focus. Land without schools in Mexico is almost as useless as land without water or agricultural credit. If the agrarian reform is to succeed, *tierra y libros* must stand on an equal footing with *tierra y libertad*, for the two aspirations are inseparable parts of the same undertaking—the redemption of rural Mexico.

INDICES OF SOCIAL PROGRESS

The results achieved by educational institutions and programs cannot be measured by an enumeration of schools, teachers and pupils, by figures on the physical plant and equipment, or even by data on scholastic programs and activities. The analysis of such materials is helpful and to a certain extent revealing, but the final test of any educational system is its effect on the ways of life of persons and groups. The school is, or should be, an instrument of social change and social progress. Has the revolutionary system of rural education produced changes of a progressive nature in the way of life of the Mexican folk?

Any attempt to answer this question in general terms runs the danger of entanglement in the logical fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc;*

Schools originally established with considerable resources now have, as Regional Peasant Schools, insufficient budgets to carry out . . . their educational program. The Cultural Missions . . . have never been given enough material elements to carry on effective work. . . . In a word, the Ministry of Public Education has not come to be, as it should, the dependency of the government which has the greatest resources for performing its educational and cultural functions." Arrieta, *op. cit.*, pp. 261-62.

[45] Appendix A, Table 52a.

Once again it must be noted, however, that some of these communities may have had state or privately supported schools.

for obviously, the rural school is only one of a number of factors which have been operating in postrevolutionary Mexico. Although difficult because of the lack of adequate statistical material, it is not impossible to indicate certain changes in Mexican society during the last decade as compared, for example, with the decade immediately preceding the revolution of 1910. How many of these changes, or to what extent any given change may be directly attributed to the agency of the school, however, can only be guessed.

One of the most significant indices of social change and one with which at the same time it may be presumed the school is most directly related is the percentage of illiteracy. In 1910, 69.7 per cent of the population ten years of age and over could not read or write. In 1930, the percentage was 59.3 per cent—a clear gain of 10.4 points at the end of the post as compared with the prerevolutionary decade. There are still a number of states in Mexico—nine to be exact—where two-thirds or more of the people ten years of age or over are classed as illiterates.[46] Moreover, the liquidation of illiteracy at the rate of 0.5 per cent a year means that it will take something over a hundred years for Mexico to achieve illiteracy percentages equal, say, to those of the states of Arkansas and Texas (6.8 per cent) in the United States in 1930. Nevertheless, the progress Mexico has made in this field is real and cannot be regarded otherwise than as an indication that the schools are functioning at least on the level of reading and writing.

The decrease in the rate of illiteracy is significant, not only because it means relatively more people are able to read and write, but also, since what they are able to read and write is the Spanish language, it is an evidence of increasing cultural homogeneity. Nor are other indications of this fact lacking. The very growth of the ejido movement itself is one of the best cases in point. The fact that over 14,000 villages had by the end of 1933 made petitions for lands (in many cases stimulated by the rural school teachers and other educational authorities) is in itself an evidence of a unity of purpose and a community of aim which is a new note in Mexican history.[47]

Closely related to the foregoing are the evidences of increasing geographical and social mobility. Thus, attention may be called to

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[46] Appendix A, Table 48.

[47] However, there is, as yet, apparently little "ejidatarial class-consciousness." Out of more than 500,000 individuals in possession of ejido lands in 1930 only a little more than 20,000 declared to the census takers that they were ejidatarios; about 100,000 said they were farm laborers; and the remainder simply identified themselves as agriculturists. Alanís Patiño, "Síntesis del ciclo de conferencias. . . ," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, II, 718.

the fact of increased urbanization. Between 1910 and 1930 the percentage of the population living in communities of less than 4,001 inhabitants as compared with the total population decreased from 77.7 to 72.0 per cent—a gain in urban population of 5.7 per cent.[48] In 1930, to make another comparison, the number of communities with 4,001 inhabitants or more was 311 and the aggregate population of these communities was 4.6 million. This represented an increase in the number of urban communities over 1921 of 16.0 per cent and an increase in aggregate urban population over 1921 of 28.1 per cent. The increase of total population in the same period was only 16.1 per cent.[49]

Perhaps even more significant as an index of increasing mobility is the number of new rural communities which apparently have been established in recent years in Mexico. According to the 1921 census the total communities numbering 4,000 inhabitants or less was 61,284; in 1930 72,164 communities were listed in this class—a gain of 10,880 or 17.8 per cent.[50]

Again, in connection with the topic of mobility, it is pertinent to recall the really amazing movement of Mexicans between their native country and the United States in the years following the revolution. During a large part of the Colonial period and the whole of the nineteenth century migrations of any importance whether of an internal or an external variety were practically unknown in Mexico.[51] With the coming of the twentieth century, however, there began an appreciable movement of Mexicans to the United States which grew in volume until in the period from January 1, 1920, to June 30, 1929, it reached a number probably in excess of 500,000 persons.[52] Since 1929 the current has set in the other way and repatriation has taken place to the extent of approximately 270,000 (up to the end of 1933).[53]

These evidences of geographical and social mobility are presented

[48] Appendix A, Table 2.

[49] Appendix A, Table 1.

[50] This increase, so large as to be almost incredible, is probably to be accounted for in part on the assumption that (because of the unsettled situation of the country at the time) many of the smaller communities were not censused in 1921.

[51] Gamio, "Nuestra dinámica social en México y en los Estados Unidos," *Eurindia* (June, 1930), p. 77.

[52] A good deal of this movement was of a cyclical variety. Nevertheless, at the end of the period the excess of emigrants from Mexico was considerably more than 400,000. The total population of Mexican birth in the United States in 1929 has been estimated at close to a million. Taylor, "Critique of the Official Statistics of Mexican Migration To and From the United States," *International Migrations*, II, 590.

[53] Taylor, "Mexican Labor in the United States—Migration Statistics, IV," *University of California Publications in Economics*, XII, 23-26.

here, let it be repeated, not on the assumption that Mexico's rural schools are in any very great degree directly responsible for the movements in question, but rather as indications of the general unbinding and loosening up of the Mexican mass. The freedom to move about in space is basic to most other types of freedom. Stone walls do a prison make when they are the walls of a stagnant feudalistic regime often indistinguishable from slavery.

Conclusive proof of a tendency toward a rising standard of living in rural Mexico, whether such a tendency is to be attributed to the effects of the schools or to other factors, is difficult to obtain. However, there are indications that some progress has been made since 1921. Real wages for agricultural laborers (including, be it remembered, many ejidatarios) have undoubtedly risen. A careful study recently made by Ramón Fernández y Fernández indicates that nominal wages for the whole Republic for farm labor which averaged around 40 centavos a day in the years immediately preceding the revolution of 1910, in the decade between 1923 and 1933 varied from an average high of 103 centavos in 1928 to a low of 68 centavos in 1933. At the same time the cost of living has been on the whole in recent years not greatly higher than it was in the period just before the revolution. In other words, an index figure for real wages which in the period from 1903 (the base year) to 1910 was steadily dropping from 100 to 68, in the postrevolutionary period, 1921 to 1933, was always above the 100 mark and except for a slump in 1925 was definitely on the up-grade until 1927. From a high of 188 in 1927 the index for real wages dropped to a low of 118 in 1930. Since that year real wages have started to climb again. In 1933 the index stood at 159.[54]

As the figures just cited show, real wages for agricultural laborers by and large are higher than they were before the revolution. The advance, though, has been only a relative one. How far even the higher real wages of recent years in rural Mexico are from making possible a desirable and healthy standard of living may be judged by the fact that average nominal wages in recent years at their very highest (103 centavos in 1928) have scarcely been equal to one-half the amount necessary for a minimum of comfort standard of living even in those sections of the country where living costs are the cheapest.[55] Moreover, it must not be forgotten that in many

[54] Appendix A, Table 90.

[55] Silva Herzog estimated in 1931 that at least 2 pesos a day were necessary "in the cheapest zones of the nation" in order that a worker's family be able to satisfy the normal necessities of life ("El salario mínimo y los obreros agrícolas," *El Economista*, March 16, 1931, p. 10). More recent official figures set daily wages for a minimum standard of living

sections of the country, wages far below the average for the whole Republic still prevail—and this despite labor laws, minimum wage laws and the constitution itself. Wages as low as 20 centavos a day either with or without a little corn thrown in are by no means unknown; *tiendas de raya* and payments in tokens are still to be found in scores of municipalities; and even debt slavery and forced labor are more common than is generally admitted.[56]

Other and more direct evidence of improvement in the standard of living of the rural masses in recent years is too meager and fragmentary to warrant the drawing of any conclusions. Claims have been made that the Mexican folk are eating more and dressing better now than in the days before the revolution. This may be true although no statistical proof of the fact is possible. More definite are the advances which have apparently been made in improved health and well-being. Statistics of the Department of Public Health show a slight decline in the general mortality rate for the whole Republic (excluding the Federal District) and the mortality curve for certain diseases such as tuberculosis, smallpox and whooping-cough are clearly on the down-grade.[57]

When all is said and done, when the last drop of information has been squeezed out of the last figure and statistics have been pressed dry of all they hold, there is still one contribution which the rural school has made to Mexican life—a contribution, it may be, more important in the long run than books and benches and model schoolhouses, and more significant perhaps than improved techniques of production and standards of living. Mexico's rural schools as they stand at the present time leave much to be desired. As we have seen and as the Mexicans themselves have been the first to admit, these little schools scattered here and there over the face of the land are for the most part lacking in trained teachers, adequate equipment, a coördinated program—practically everything that is needed for the tremendous task with which they are confronted. And yet no one can visit these schools without being convinced of one thing: however poor they may be, whatever they may lack in physical equipment and pedagogy, with few exceptions they are

at anywhere from 2.77 pesos in the state of Aguascalientes to 6.08 pesos in the northern part of Baja California. Calderon, "Estudio sobre el salario minimo legal," *El Economista*, No. 17, 1932, p. 231.

[56] For concrete illustrations see articles in *El Universal*, November 4 and 17, 1930; June 27, 1935; and *El Nacional*, February 24 and May 16, 1934.

[57] It is significant in this connection that expenditures of the Department of Public Health increased from 2.4 million pesos (1.1 per cent of the total federal budget) in 1921 to 6.5 million pesos (3.0 per cent of the total federal budget) in 1933. The last figure mentioned was approximately 11.6 times the federal budget for public health in 1910.

characterized by high hopes and resurgent enthusiasm. And, what is more, they have somehow managed to communicate this hope and enthusiasm to scores and hundreds of communities.

Samuel Ramos has written that:

> At first glance the most striking feature of the Mexican character is lack of confidence. . . . The Mexican not only lacks confidence in this or that man or this or that woman, he distrusts all men and all women. His distrust is not limited to the human race; it extends universally to whatever exists or happens. . . . Mexican life, on the whole, gives the impression of irreflective activity without any plan. Every man in Mexico is interested solely in immediate ends. He works for today and tomorrow but never for a time more remote. The future is a preoccupation which he has abolished from consciousness. . . . He has suppressed from life one of its most important dimensions: the future.[58]

These generalizations, subject to the exceptions of all statements of the sort, undoubtedly describe an attitude of mind which has been characteristic of a very large section of Mexican society. But the past tense here is used advisedly, for, in hundreds of folk communities in Mexico the shoe no longer fits, the generalizations no longer cover the facts as neatly as they did in the days when the peon, bound tight to the wheel of the hacienda system and relentlessly and ceaselessly revolving for another's gain, knew no difference between yesterday, today, or tomorrow. If the revolution has accomplished nothing else, it at least has one great achievement to its credit: it has revived hope; it has strengthened faith; it has given men something to work for and towards—in a word, it has reintroduced the future into Mexican existence. If the rural school, the agent of the revolution, has failed in all other respects, it can point with pride to the fact that in many and many a little community it has been a stimulator of expectations, a fomenter of desires and a creator of dreams.[59]

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[58] "Psicoanálisis del mexicano," *El Examen*, August, 1932, p. 10.

[59] A full length "portrait" of the new spirit in Mexico will be found in the case-study given in the following chapter. In this connection, however, the writer cannot resist quoting the following apposite paragraphs from Redfield's study of the village of Chan Kom in Yucatán:

"But in Chan Kom today, the striking fact in connection with the temporal viewpoint of the native mind is the disposition for it to be prospective rather than retrospective. The older men still know and tell these stories of the lost paradise [of pre-Conquest days], but the progressive influences of recent years have aroused in many of them the feeling that a future of dignity, importance and wealth lies before them, not behind them.

"The village leader has pictured a Chan Kom millennium, when everyone will live in a masonry house and own cattle and a phonograph; when a village cooperative will market fruit and corn by means of a collectively owned automobile truck, when all

Do these words, in view of the many unpleasant facts marshalled in these chapters on education, sound like an attempt to sweeten the pill? Such is not their purpose. Rather they are designed to round out an otherwise incomplete picture, to take into account certain imponderables which, if the race be not too long and if hope be not too often deferred, may come to weigh more in Mexico's struggle against the powers of ignorance and darkness than many a factor subject to neat tabulation in a statistical table.

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necessary domestic industries will be performed in Chan Kom itself so that specialized labor will not have to be brought in from outside, when Chan Kom will be the head of its own *municipio*, and when the Americans will drive to Chan Kom by automobile to admire and further dignify the paramount community of Yucatan. 'We are going to make a pueblo like a pueblo of the famous Americans; all will be workers, even the women, just like ants; and if more land will be needed, the government will give it to us.' This image he has conveyed, in varying degrees of brilliance, to others of the village, and it is the stimulus for the industry and persistence which in some degree is bringing the ideal to realization." Robert Redfield and Alfonso Villa, *Chan Kom—A Maya Village*, pp. 12-13, published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

CHAPTER XVII

CASE III: "TIERRA Y LIBROS"—AND ALSO PULQUE

¿Sabe que es pulque?
¡Licor divin-o!
Lo beben los angeles
En el sereno-o.

(Know ye what pulque is?
Liquor divine!
Angels in heaven
Prefer it to wine.)
—Pulque drinking song popular in 1848.

Land to the Landless

Before the Revolution the hacienda of Tres Vientos embraced an area of 10,360 hectares. At various times during the ten years following the Carranza agrarian decree of 1915, five villages applied for and were successful in obtaining portions of Tres Vientos land in amounts totaling almost 8,000 hectares. Apparently this experience convinced the owners of Tres Vientos that the government was serious about its land distribution program; or, it may be, they were of that exceedingly small group of landlords in Mexico who have felt that it was only just and right that the villages should have some land. At any rate the record shows that when the little settlement of Octlan petitioned the government for ejidos on October 10, 1925, and named as corespondents the owners of the hacienda of Tres Vientos, "they made no objection . . . asking only that certain terraces which have been constructed at great cost not be included in the definitive grant."

After the usual investigation the engineers of the State Agrarian Commission reported that Octlan had a total population of 665, of which 201 persons were heads of families with rights under the law to receive land. To supply the needs of the 201 families in question it was estimated that 1,276 hectares should be expropriated as follows: 36 hectares of irrigated land; 40 of first class nonirrigated; 246 of second and third class nonirrigated; 123 of mountain land planted in maguey; and 831 hectares of mountain pasture.

Four years passed—even when the landlords do not put up a fight the mills of the agrarian laws more often than not take the mills of the gods as their standard in matters of speed—before Octlan received provisional possession of its ejido lands essentially as described above.

Eight months later the ejidatarios of Octlan wrote a letter to the owners of the hacienda Tres Vientos which said in part: "We should be very happy if you would honor us by your presence on May 16, 1930, on which day we are to be given definitive possession of our ejido lands as ordered in the Presidential Decree of recent date."

It is not reported whether the *hacendados* to whom this invitation was addressed accepted or not, but it is recorded that on the day in question Octlan entered into final and definitive possession of 1,276 hectares formerly belonging to the hacienda Tres Vientos.

As these words are being written (February 1934), then, Octlan has had final title to its ejido less than four years, and provisional title only about eight months longer. Four and a half years is a very short time in rural Mexico; but not too short for land, leadership, hard work, good will, and a little money to work a wonder. And a wonder is precisely what has come to pass in the little village of Octlan. As one of the officials of the National Agrarian Commission has put it: "Here there has flourished one of the most progressive ejidos in the Republic—one of those ejidos which comforts the spirit of the true revolutionist; which justifies the giving of land; which gives the lie to the reactionary critics; and which reveals horizons of optimism in our social movement. An oasis of realities in the desert of our doubts and waverings: such is the ejido of 'Octlan'."

"Before and After Taking"

The best way to appreciate what has happened in Octlan is to make one of those "before and after taking" comparisons so dear to the hearts of patent medicine advertisers. Fortunately a rather detailed comparison is possible for this community because of the fact that the present writer made two field trips to the region in 1927 and 1929 and also because in 1928 the Ministry of Education gathered a number of social and economic data covering about a dozen villages in the vicinity of and including Octlan. In the following pages these various materials will be summarized in a somewhat schematic fashion and arranged under headings for convenient contrast and comparison with data revealing the present or "after taking" situation of the village.

LAND, EQUIPMENT, AND ORGANIZATION

Before. Neither Octlan in its corporate capacity nor the citizens thereof possessed any land whatsoever before 1929. The houses of the villagers were located on the property of the hacienda of Tres Vientos and the Octlanecans derived their living mainly by working as peons at the rate of 75 centavos (at par approximately 37 cents) a day.

> We do not have any lands of our own to satisfy our needs and we are thus obliged to sell our labor at a low price to the hacienda in which we find ourselves enclosed (*enclavado*); some of us have to go to the mines in search of work to the prejudice of the education of our children.[1]

After. As has already been noted, Octlan was given provisional possession of 1,276 hectares of land in July, 1929, and final possession of the same area in May, 1930. At the time of the final grant, approximately 3 per cent of the total area was classified as irrigated land; a little more than 3 per cent as first class nonirrigated; 19 per cent as second and third class nonirrigated; 10 per cent as mountain land planted in maguey; and 65 per cent as mountain pasture. At the present time, not only is all the land in use but over 500 hectares classified in the grant as mountain pasture have been cleared and put under crops with the result that the original amount of irrigated land has been increased threefold and the amount of nonirrigated crop land has been a little more than doubled. The village is even renting a few hectares from the hacienda from which they received their ejido!

Although as yet the Law of Ejido Patrimony[2] has not been applied to the village, the Ejido Administrative Committee has divided the cultivable land into parcels of four hectares each and these have been distributed "in the most equitable manner possible" among the some 200 ejidatarios. Each ejidatario works his own land personally and not a single parcel is rented or worked on shares.[3] The principal crops raised are corn, frijoles, and barley.

Practically all the ejidatarios now use steel plows. The village has recently purchased a modern reaper and is at present saving its money to buy a tractor. Although the Octlanecans are "avid for knowledge," as yet they have not reached the point of rotating their crops or using fertilizers other than small amounts of manure.

[1] Letter to the State Agrarian Commission, October 10, 1925.

[2] See Chapter XVIII.

[3] The renting and share-cropping of ejido parcels, although forbidden by law, is a common practice in many villages. See Chapter XVIII.

A census taken in 1933 showed that the village possessed 32 teams of oxen, 5 mule teams "all in good condition," 10 mares, 14 burros, 15 cows, 55 goats, 35 sheep, and 30 hogs.

With reference to progress made in the organization of the ejido, the following excerpts from a recent regular report by the Regional Organizer tell the story as concisely and briefly as possible:

—Complaints of ejidatarios against the Administrative Committee?
None.
—Complaints of the Committee against the ejidatarios?
None. The latter obey all the orders of the former.
—Complaints about the distribution of ejido parcels?
None. All are in agreement.
—Difficulties between ejidatarios?
None.
—Change of Administrative Committee?
Although the ejidatarios are satisfied with the present Committee, nevertheless, since the Committee has just completed its legal period of one year in office and since it is the policy of this village to give as many of the ejidatarios as possible the opportunity to serve on the Committee and thus develop their intelligence and capacities, elections have been called for next month.
—General?
The procedure of the local agrarian authorities has been good in every sense; the ejido is completely unified with everyone collaborating for the progress of the village. Taxes are paid up to date. There is no official business pending. . . . In general, the ejido is complying with all of the orders and dispositions of the National Agrarian Authorities.

Not the least significant fact about Octlan is that for some time past the ejido (by special permission from the National Agrarian Commission) has had complete control of its own financial affairs. The Administrative Committee determines what quotas the ejidatario shall pay into the common fund from time to time for the purpose of public improvements, rents the maguey lands, and collects money for taxes. And yet: "Up to the present time there have been no embezzlements or shortages . . . of any sort. Each Committee has met its responsibilities with absolute honesty."

HOUSING AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Before. In the old days the houses of the Octlanecans were scattered here and there over the hacienda of Tres Vientos. Hidden away in the barrancas and the folds of the hills, with walls of stones and mud, roofs of cactus and palm leaves and floors of earth, they barely

afforded protection against wind and weather. Typically, each house contained one room and a small lean-to which served as a kitchen. Windows were practically unknown and in a single dark and badly ventilated room the whole family slept, ate, and had its being. Furnishings consisted of one or two straw mats (*petates*) for beds, a rustic bench or so, and occasionally a table. In the kitchen a few clay cooking implements and in place of the ubiquitous *brasero* (charcoal stove) the even more primitive *tlecuil* fueled with maguey leaves. Domestic animals were sheltered in corrals adjoining the house. Toilets were conspicuous by their absence and garbage was usually disposed of simply by throwing it out the door.

After. When Octlan received its ejido lands the first thing the village leaders did was to lay out a town site. High up on the top of a little plateau overlooking the valley was located the village plaza; curving down the hill and through the ejido lands there was built the principal and only street. Already a dozen houses are arrayed along the street and others are under construction. But such houses! Houses with strong stone walls; good cement roofs and cement floors; two, three, and even four rooms; windows with glass panes. Houses with fences around them and little vegetable gardens. Some houses, even, with bathrooms, running water, electric lights, brass beds and sewing machines. And, most surprising of all, houses which, departing from the traditional flat square cube style of Mexican rural architecture, resemble (alas and alack) nothing so much as miniature Hollywood bungalows!

To be sure these are the houses of the leading citizens and most of the ejidatarios still live up in the hills in their old mud-thatched *jacales.* But the example has been set and every pressure is being brought to bear to bring the rest of the village into line. Any ejidatario who wants to build a new house can rely upon the help of his neighbors, and young men who get married are even given financial assistance by the Administrative Committee.

At the top of the hill and in the center of the little plaza stands the new *Casa del Pueblo* or town hall, built entirely with the money and labor of the village. Here are housed the offices of the Administrative Committee and the Municipal President. Here also is the village jail. Behind the building is a large cement swimming tank and back of this an open air theatre, cut out of the side of the hill, where meetings are held to discuss the affairs of the ejido. Carved over the door of the town hall are the following words: "May Our Children Follow This Example Which We Bequeath To Them—1932."

EDUCATION

Before. Until recently the nearest school to Octlan was some seven kilometers away in the neighboring town of León. In the old days the hacienda of Tres Vientos maintained a primary school for a few months each year, but this had long since ceased to function. The children of school age in the settlement spent their time either helping their parents in the fields or acting as herdsmen for the sheep, goats, and other animals of the hacienda. For this work they received about 15 centavos a day. In 1928, it was estimated that only about 10 per cent of the population in the region in which Octlan is located could read and write. The "culture" of the whole area was described as "primitive and very low." The women in particular were reported as "completely ignorant and unfit to function as mothers and wives. Like the men, the women work to get together a little money—either in the fields by the side of their husbands or in the manufacture and sale of pottery and hand woven cloth."

After. Even before Octlan received final possession of its ejido lands it had started in to build a school. Everyone in the village gave time and labor and the Administrative Committee contributed over 2,500 pesos. After two years the result was a school which is the envy of every village in the state. Solidly constructed, with plenty of window space for air and sunshine, the single big schoolroom is well equipped with desks, benches and blackboards. In one corner, carefully shrouded in a thick cloth to protect it from dust and sunshine, stands the latest model combination phonograph and radio.[4] Adjoining the school proper are three clean and comfortable rooms which serve as living quarters for the federal teacher. Special features of the school are a well stocked chicken run and a playground with gymnastic apparatus. At the present time some 60 boys and 40 girls attend the day classes and varying numbers of adults attend the night classes. Octlan seems to go in for improving sentiments; across the front of the school is painted its name—"The Future"—and underneath these words: "Here is the Realization of Our Dreams 1928-1930."

Not content with having what is undoubtedly a model school, Octlan has decided to go on to bigger and better things in the way of education. "If," said one of the village elders to the writer, "it

[4] The most recent addition to the musical equipment of the school is a player piano purchased on May 10, 1934, after the writer's visit. The occasion of the purchase was Mother's Day!

is a good thing to have children under the influence of the teacher part of the time, why wouldn't it be a better thing to have them in the care of the teacher all of the time?" So the Octlanecans are now busily engaged in constructing an annex to their school where at least the poorer children in the village are to be put to board. "That way they will learn manners much faster than they could if they continued to live in their poor and backward homes."

HEALTH

Before. Reports made in 1928 to the Ministry of Education describe health and hygienic conditions in Octlan and surrounding villages as follows:

> Only in one or two communities in this region is potable drinking water to be found. All the rest depend on rain water kept for long periods of time in various kinds of depositories, and used without any effort to purify it. . . . This almost complete lack of a healthy water supply has had the result that practically everyone drinks pulque instead. Alcoholism is to be found in all ages and classes beginning with the children. In some places children as young as three years may be seen in a state of complete drunkenness and practically all of them show visible signs of alcoholic degeneration. . . .
>
> In this whole region (including some thirty communities), there are only three fairly competent doctors. There are a half dozen or so witch-doctors and quacks without any real medical skill. The majority of the people believe that the sorcerers and witches can cause diseases which they alone can cure. . . .
>
> There are no toilets and the communities are in general dirty and abandoned. . . . The majority of the people are infested with lice and cases of typhoid are common.

After. One of the first things that is pointed out to you as you approach Octlan is a neat little building near the edge of the village. This, you are informed with considerable pride, is the new hospital. There is no doctor but there is an excellent first-aid kit and four beds, all made up and waiting for occupants. (So far as the writer knows, this is the only village of its size in the whole Republic with a hospital.)

An interesting illustration of the extent to which "mutualism" is practiced by the ejido is found in the fact that the expense of funerals and burials is borne by the village as a whole out of the common fund.

No data is available on the extent to which pulque drinking has been reduced in Octlan. However, one of the many public improvements made by the Ejido Administrative Committee has been to

pipe pure water to the village from a spring three or four kilometers away in the hills. Anyone who wants to drink water can do so without fear of coming down with a case of dysentery or typhoid fever.

Under the heading of health and hygiene mention should be made of the fact that during the last few years practically all of the children and many of the adults in Octlan have been vaccinated against smallpox.

SUMMARY AND COMMENT

Schools, modern dwellings, steel plows, water works—these are things easy to see and easy to record as evidence of the progress Octlan has made during the last four and a half years. What is not so easy to describe is the change in the spirit of the people. There is, for example, the matter of recreation. In the days before the coming of the ejido the church was the center of the social life. The celebration of the local Saint's day, the ceremonies attending birth, death and marriage, these, with plenty of pulque, or just plenty of pulque by itself, were practically the only breaks in the eternal round of work from sunup to sundown.

But now the axis of the social life has shifted. Now it is the school and the town hall around which the social life revolves. The people of Octlan still have music, but not church music—at least not in a church in the village, because there is no church! The people sing (a very good men's chorus has been organized by the schoolmaster) but they sing more agrarian songs to the glory of their ejido and more anthems to the glory of their school—and fewer hymns to the glory of God.[5] The people still get together for social occasions but fewer

[5] The following is a rough translation of a song composed in honor of the completion of the federal rural school in Octlan:

"This is the new song;
Come and I will sing.
Your attention I seek
To tell you a tale:
It is July 26, the year, 1930,
And very content we were
To see begun the triumph
Of the workers and the peasants
In the federal rural school. . . .
Lovely little school, thou hast
The character of beauty;
Thy name will go down in history. . . .

Being men of work, for our future
We cultivate our lands—God bless them!
At nine o'clock in the morning arrived the Engineer Román,
And he mounted the ladder ready to go to work.
There in the schoolroom he drew two little curves,

of these occasions are to mourn the death of their children or to celebrate a local Saint's day. Now when the people gather in social reunions it is to discuss the affairs of their ejido, to plan or work on some village improvement, to celebrate a national holiday, or, perhaps, simply to listen gravely to the village radio.

The land given to Octlan is no better than that possessed by many other villages in the same region. The racial composition of the population (basically Otomí Indian with perhaps a 20 per cent admixture of mestizos) is typical of the area. The cultural equipment of the village differed in no important respect from that of its neighbors. Why is it, then, that Octlan has made such great progress in so short a time? Why has Octlan become one of the outstanding ejidos of the Mesa Central region?

Of the many factors which have contributed to the success achieved by Octlan, three may be singled out for special comment. First, this community has enjoyed the very great advantage of superior leadership. Every village in Mexico has its *líderes*,[6] but those in Octlan have been distinguished by their relative lack of personal ambition. The principal *líder* is a young man (about 35) by the name of Luis González. Why this man, a simple peasant with less than two years' primary education, should be so entirely devoted and, by and large, so successful in his activities on behalf of his native village is one of those questions to which there is no satisfactory answer. But that he *has* been successful and that he enjoys the complete confidence of his fellow townsmen, there seems to be no doubt.

A second factor whose influence cannot be measured but which nevertheless, has its effect on every aspect of the village life is that Octlan is fortunate enough to be located only a few kilometers away from the new Mexico City-Laredo highway. One of the first undertakings of the Octlanecans was to build in coöperation with the

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And they were little doves of the first class;
And then on the north side he painted a soldier;
And then on the south side two cocks together.
Bright little school, how luxurious thou wilt be
With your little garden in front, most beautiful to see.
With your open air theater, thou wilt be resplendent
And with thy playground, magnificient thou wilt be—
With a little eagle on the front, over the central door
Devouring a serpent, indicating liberty.
This song is beautiful; virtue lies in its verses;
To those who are gathered here, I sing your health.
And with that I bid you good-bye. Señores, forgive me;
Even if I have sung badly, I know you will forgive me."

[6] This is the Spanish spelling of the English word "leader" in common use in Mexico. Apparently there is no satisfactory equivalent for "leader" in the Spanish language.

government a first-class gravel road connecting their village with the paved highway. In fifteen minutes the ejidatarios can reach the neighboring town of León; in less than an hour they can go by bus to the capital of the state; and in two hours they can reach the capital of the nation. Otomí Indians who only a few years ago had to depend upon their *huarache*-clad feet or, at best, a burro to reach the outside world are now "Ford-conscious." Already plans are being made to buy a truck to carry the products of the ejido to market.[7] Roads and schools, Fords and books—these are the trumpet blasts which fell the walls of ignorance and isolation.

A third and extremely important factor in the progress of Octlan is pulque. It will be recalled that in the lands given to the village there were included "123 hectares of mountain land planted in maguey." One of the first acts of the Administrative Committee was to decide that this maguey land should be reserved for the benefit of the whole group. Any ejidatario who wants to may rent from the Administrative Committee a certain number of maguey plants with a view to making pulque and selling it either locally or in the neighboring villages. Since there is a ready market for all the pulque that can be produced, this means that the community has a steady source of surplus income, a money crop over and above the subsistence crops grown on the regular ejido parcels. It is mainly pulque which has made it possible for Octlan during the last three years to spend some 30,000 pesos in public improvements. And it is pulque which has built a school to teach the Octlanecans that they shouldn't drink pulque!

[7] Since the above words were written the writer has been informed that the truck has been bought and paid for!

CHAPTER XVIII

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL CONTROL—COLLECTIVISM vs. INDIVIDUALISM

FROM ONE point of view, all the problems of the ejido villages may be thought of as basically educational. As a matter of convenience in presentation, however, it is necessary to break the term education up into several component parts. In Chapters XIV and XV an effort was made to present the problem of education in the ordinary acceptance of the word—that is, in terms of illiteracy, cultural equipment, standard of living, and of the school as the major social force and instrumentality of change. In the present chapter the matter will be attacked mainly from the point of view of political organization and social control and attention will be centered on the National Agrarian Commission and related governmental departments as the principal operative agencies in the situation. The bank as medium and economic organization as problem will be reserved for discussion in succeeding chapters. The writer is not unaware of the fact that the foregoing division of labor involves a rather arbitrary use of terms and distribution of material; but this seemed to be preferable to the almost endless amount of repetition necessary under any other procedure.

THE PROBLEM

The problem of the political organization and social control of the ejido as it has been revealed in the experience of the last eighteen years has been twofold. First, it has involved finding an answer in theory and in law to such questions as: What kind of institutional structure shall the ejido have? Is the ejido to be self-governing or dependent, or a little of both? What is to be the nature of property rights in the ejido? Is there to be individual ownership of land or is all property to be held collectively, or is there to be a combination of various concepts of property? Through what agencies is organization to be produced and control to be exercised? Who is to be "responsible" for the ejido? What is to be the relation of the ejido to the political institutions already in existence—the municipality? the state? the federal government? In the second place, the problem has been one of practice: the development of the

machinery of social control, the allocation of functions, rights and duties, and, finally, the real exercise of control in the field—that is, the actual business of imposing on the individual ejido villages the institutional matrices and forms established by law and the combating of the forces of disruption and dissolution.

The Program

The basic legislation of the agrarian reform was singularly vague and unsatisfactory on the subject of the institutional structure of the ejido and of its relation to constituted authority. The original agrarian decree of January 6, 1915, established "for the purpose of carrying out this and other agrarian laws which may be enacted" a hierarchy of threetypes of agency: a National Agrarian Commission presided over by the Minister of Agriculture (or *Fomento* as he was then called); State Agrarian Commissions for each state and territory of the Republic; and Ejido Executive Committees for each of the villages petitioning for land. The only specific powers granted to these agencies, however, were those relating to the *distribution* of land. In the decree itself the problem of the political organization and governance of the ejido villages was recognized but not solved by the statement that: "a regulatory law shall determine the condition in which the lands restored or adjudged in behalf of pueblos shall remain and the manner and time in which they shall be distributed among the inhabitants who, in the meantime, shall enjoy their possession in common." (Art. 11.) In the preamble, however, the fathers of the reform were very explicit in stating that it was not their intention "to revive the traditional landholding villages" or to vest "proprietorship to the land . . . in the pueblo in its corporate capacity." Rather the land was to be "parcelled out in dominion" to the inhabitants of the villages "with only the limitations necessary to prevent avid speculators . . . from monopolizing such property."

Article 27 of the 1917 constitution added nothing to the decree of 1915 with reference to the agencies, if any, which were to exercise authority over villages once they had received their lands. Article 27 was equally unsatisfactory concerning the matter of property rights. Like the decree of 1915 it postponed this question for settlement at some future date by stating that all villages of whatever type already in possession of, or yet to receive ejido lands, should have the right to enjoy them in common until such time as the manner of making the division of the lands should be determined.

Despite the fact that the early agrarian legislation did not specifically vest the National Agrarian Commission with powers to regulate

the organization and functioning of ejidos, it was not long before under the pressure of circumstances the Commission began to assume these powers. Ejidos were being created, problems of organization, of rights and duties and of relationships to municipal, state, and national political authorities were arising and someone had to deal with them. Since the highest government agency having to do with ejidos was the National Agrarian Commission, it was but natural that this agency should have felt itself called upon to continue its jurisdiction over the ejidos *after* the villages had received their lands. In any case, this was what happened in practice and, so to speak, by default the Commission very soon found itself in addition to functioning in its primary role as an instrument for the distribution of lands to villages, also taking on the duties of formulating and administering the rules governing the organization and operation of the ejido villages. As we shall see, in due time the Commission was largely relieved of its power to "legislate" with respect to ejidos. It continues, however, to this day to be the principal governmental agency responsible for the organization and administration of ejido communities.

CIRCULAR 51—SIMPLE COLLECTIVISM

For almost eight years after the promulgation of the basic agrarian decree of January 1915 no especial attention was given to the matter of ejido social and political organization. When specific questions arose the National Agrarian Commission dealt with them in circulars sent to the State Agrarian Commissions or to the municipal and state political authorities as the case demanded. It was not until October 11, 1922, however, that the Commission in its Circular No. 51 attempted to set forth a really comprehensive plan for the ordering of the political, social, and economic life of the ejidos.[1]

Circular 51 opens with a statement of what in the opinion of the National Agrarian Commission were basic principles: (a) The distribution of land to villages is only the first step in the work of the National Agrarian Commission. The Commission must also assume the responsibility for "regulating the development of the ejidos and directing their progress." It is its duty to work out a program of ejido exploitation "in accordance with the level of social development and the state of agricultural evolution" of the villages and to nominate the authorities who will be charged with putting this program into

[1] Of the first fifty circulars issued by the National Agrarian Commission only Nos. 7, 19, 22, 36, and 37 dealt with questions related to social and political matters. All the rest were concerned with establishing rules and regulations for the procedure in land distribution. A convenient reprint of the first fifty-six circulars dictated by the Commission (i.e., from April 14, 1916 to May 30, 1924) will be found in Bolaños, *C.A.*

action. (b) "Just as the development of the technical instruments of modern industry brought to an end small industry and produced capitalism, so also, the evolution of agricultural technology tends to abolish small scale agriculture, for there is an unsurmountable incompatibility between small scale agriculture and mechanization. . . ." (c) It follows, therefore, that if Mexican rural life is to derive the greatest possible benefit from modern methods of machine production, the ejido villages must be organized along strictly cooperative and communal lines. Moreover, "organization of the type in question . . . must not be left to the initiative of the peasants, impoverished by prolonged exploitation," but the National Agrarian Commission itself "must undertake to control the functioning and even to impose the installation" of coöperatives. By proceeding in this fashion the Commission will not only be adjusting its action to the "current of human progress . . . which dictates that social action shall take precedence over the egoism of personal convenience and that public rights shall be enriched each day at the expense of private rights," but will also be achieving the desideratum "of putting an end to the divorce existing between the . . . productive forces which tend to be collective and the totally antiquated regime of individual private property."

As the first step in the collectivization of the ejidos Circular 51 provides that each ejido shall elect a governing board of three individuals to be known as the Ejido Administrative Committee. This Committee is to receive the village lands from the Ejido Executive Committee[1] and thereafter is empowered "to dictate the regulations necessary for the best cultivation of the ejido lands and for the appropriate division of the various types of agricultural labor." The freedom of action of the Administrative Committee is restricted first by the requirement that it must "freely receive and present to the community any petitions or suggestions made by the members thereof" and that "no Committee is permitted to resolve questions of general interest unless the majority of the . . . [ejidatarios] manifest their conformity in a public assembly legally convoked and constituted." In the second place, the Circular provides that the Committees will be directly subject to the National Agrarian Commission; that they must agree to follow the suggestions made by the Commission's Agricultural Instructors; and, finally, that the Delegates and the Agricultural Inspectors appointed by the Commission are to be considered members of the Committees with the right of

[1] It will be recalled that it is the function of the Ejido Executive Committees to represent the communities during the period in which petitions for lands are pending before the State and National Agrarian Commissions.

suspending any action they may see fit until the case can be reviewed by the National Agrarian Commission. Still another safeguard against the concentration of too much power in the hands of the Committee is the provision that if at any time as many as 20 per cent of the ejidatarios in a given community are dissatisfied with the behavior of the Committee, they can petition the Delegate of the National Agrarian Commission to call a new election.

When a village receives its ejido lands either in provisional or definitive possession it becomes the duty of the Administrative Committee to divide the lands into the following classes: (a) an urban zone or *fundo legal;* (b) agricultural lands proper—actual and immediately potential (*de pronto cultivo*); (c) forest, pasture, and brush lands; and (d) a section of not less than five hectares of cultivable land for each school in the community. The agricultural lands are to be cultivated in common and for this purpose the Committee is to apportion the work and assign to each of the ejidatarios his particular task. The forest, brush, and pasture lands are to be reserved for the use of the whole community under the direction of the Committee. The products of all sorts derived from ejido lands exploited communally are to be distributed as follows: 85 per cent is to be divided among the ejidatarios in the manner which they themselves shall determine; 10 per cent is to be placed in a fund for coöperative development to be used to purchase agricultural machinery, work animals, and so forth; and 5 per cent is to be reserved for the payment of taxes and for urban and other improvements.

A most important section of the Circular states: "The cultivable lands . . . [as well as] the forest, brush and pasture lands in no case shall be subject to lease, mortgages, antichresis, embargo or sale."[3]

The last four articles of Circular 51 state the principles on the basis of which the National Agrarian Commission through its Department of Ejido Development is to organize the ejido coöperatives. These principles are: (a) "distribution of profits in proportion to work contributed"; (b) "equal rights for members . . . following the formula: 'one member one vote'"; and (c) the right of one-fifth of the members of the society to exercise at any time the privileges of initiative, referendum and recall.

Coöperatives are to be governed by the Ejido Administrative Committee enlarged by the addition of three members. The National Agrarian Commission through its Department of Ejido Develop-

[3] However, pasture rights could be leased to outsiders if in the judgment of the Committee the lands at any given time were not needed by the community. Also concessions for the exploitation of forest and brush lands could be granted to outsiders. In both cases the proceeds were to be placed in the fund for coöperative development.

EJIDO SCHOOL LANDS

ment is to assume responsibility for organizing coöperatives in each of the ejido villages and supervising their operations "until they are able to prosper without official aid," and for the establishing of regional unions of coöperatives which, in turn, are to be brought together in a single national association.

With the promulgation of Circular 51 the ejido villages were launched upon a career of what, for lack of a better term, may be called simple collectivism. Ejido lands were to be held and worked in common—all for one and one for all, and no questions raised concerning mine and thine. Ejido villages, like their prototypes of Colonial days, were to be the wards of the nation. State and municipal authorities might levy taxes, but there, for all practical purposes, their rights over the ejido lands ended.[4] Economic and social control of ejidos was to be vested immediately in Ejido Administrative Committees.[5] But the powers of these Committees were to be strictly limited by the guarantees of initiative, referendum and recall on the one hand, and the direct intervention and supervision of the National Agrarian Commission on the other.

Thus the program in theory. Thus the vision of simple collectivism. For three years the National Agrarian Commission struggled to translate theory into action; vision into reality. Then, in 1925, nine months after Calles took office as president, came the day of accounting. Circular 51 was tried, judged and sentenced to that large and overflowing ash can especially reserved in Mexico for *proyectos* of social reform. Why? What was the trouble? Was there something wrong with the program of the common chicken in the communal pot?

THE LAW OF EJIDO PATRIMONY—(FAIRLY) RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM

According to the sponsors of the law which took the place of Circular 51, there were wrongs aplenty and enough trouble to threaten the whole agrarian reform with wrack and ruin and the country with starvation to boot. In a speech before the Chamber of Deputies on September 12, 1925, the Minister of Agriculture, Luis L. León, summarized the charges against the program then in effect

[4] The relation of the ejido communities to the municipal and state governments, revealed only by implication in Circular 51, was the subject of specific treatment in Circulars 19, 36 and 37, which ruled that the ownership of ejido lands was vested directly in the individual villages and that the municipal governments had no right to intervene in the administration or control of these lands.

[5] This particular provision of Circular 51 was specifically confirmed in a decree of July 12, 1923. (Appendix B, II, 11.)

as follows:[6] (a) In point of fact, there was hardly an ejido in the country in which the lands were worked communally in the manner required by Circular 51. The regular procedure, as everyone knew, was for a village just as soon as it got its lands to allot them in severalty. Thus the regulations of the National Agrarian Commission were being openly flouted and the ejidatarios by this very action had clearly demonstrated their lack of faith in the communal method. (b) It was a generally acknowledged fact that production on the lands distributed under the agrarian laws had fallen below that which had been hoped for. (c) There was a prevading sense of insecurity among the ejidatarios. This was partly to be explained by the constant threats of the *hacendados* and the malicious rumors that the government was abandoning the agrarian reform, but the main reason for the peasants' uneasiness and discontent was to be found in the character of the control exercised over the ejidos by the local Administrative Committees. These Committees had come to be dominated by the most ambitious and, often, most unscrupulous individuals who did not hesitate to pursue their personal gain to the sacrifice of the collective welfare. In many communities no sooner did the ejidatarios get their crops planted on their little parcels than the local politicians would decide to have a reallotment. In a word, the peasants had been rescued from the tyranny of the *hacendados* only to become the victims of the *caciquismo* (bossism) of the Ejido Administrative Committees.

In view of the foregoing "facts," the Minister of Agriculture stated that the time had come, in the opinion of the president of the Republic and his advisors, to devise a program which would be an "integral resolution of the agrarian problem." A form of property or manner of possession of the land must be discovered which "has the advantages of small property but which does not have the disadvantages of leaving [its owners] helpless and defenseless in the presence of the powerful land grabbers and monopolizers," on the one hand, or at the mercy of the local village politicians, on the other hand. The ejidatarios should be guaranteed security of tenure; they should be protected against exploitation by the Administrative Committees; but at the same time, they should also be guarded against their own lack of foresight.

Finally, the Minister was at some pains to explain that in offering for the approval of Congress a law which (it was believed) would

[6] Speech reprinted in: *Recopilación de las principales leyes. . . . Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento . . . 1924 . . . 1927*, pp. 49-56.

save the agrarian reform from failure, the government was not "taking a step backward" or in any sense abandoning the principles of the revolution. On the contrary, the law was nothing more nor less than an effort to carry out the mandates of the decree of 1915 and Article 27 of the constitution which clearly stated that the holding of ejido lands in common was to subsist only until such time as a regulatory law should be passed determining the manner of their division.

There were a few brave spirits in Congress who denied the government's "facts" and questioned its motives. Notably, Senator Monzón[7] cited chapter and verse to prove that many ejidos *were* operating with the greatest success on purely communistic principles. He read at length protests from the peasants which held in no uncertain terms that the proposed Law of Ejido Patrimony was an attempt to "strangle the agrarian reform." He cited with approval an editorial in the "Voice of the Peasant," official organ of a number of ejido communities in the state of Veracruz, which stated:

> Never in the tragic history of our agrarianism has there been a premeditated attack more cunning or a maneuver more subtle than this one [the proposed law] which has for its purpose the destruction of the only truly revolutionary thing which remains of our small conquests—*the communal exploitation of the ejido*. . . . It is useless for the authors of this project to sweeten the pill with platitudinous sophisms. What they are trying to do with this law is wrench away from agrarianism every revolutionary tendency or manifestation; to dislodge the peasant from the communal system . . . ; and to turn him into a small proprietor, grubbing, conservative, castrated of his will and useless for action.

Finally, the Senator attacked the theory behind the law:

> . . . Luis León . . . has said: "This system of family [ejido] patrimony which we propose will be a bridge between the bourgeoise capitalistic system and the communal system of the future!" My good friends, there is no bridge possible because there are two separate things: either you cultivate land on the basis of private property or you cultivate it on the basis of communal exploitation. Don't talk to me about bridges; . . . I like my tamales either sweet or with chile. . . .

But in the end Senator Monzón and the rest of the "communists" were forced to eat their tamales half sweet and half with chile, for the proposed reform was passed by an overwhelming majority and on December 19, 1925, it became the law of the land.

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[7] Speech reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 244-49 and 173-86.

SUMMARY OF THE LAW OF EJIDO PATRIMONY

Since its enactment in 1925, the original Law of Ejido Patrimony[8] and its regulation of March 4, 1926,[9] have been reformed on five different occasions. In view of the fact that practically all these reforms[10] have been reforms in procedure and detail rather than in basic principles, it will be convenient in the following paragraphs to present the changes in ejido structure and function introduced in 1925 by summarizing the Law of Ejido Patrimony in its present form—that is, as it appears in the Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934.[11] This procedure will have the advantage of leaving the reader *au courant* and of avoiding the, for present purposes, unnecessary confusion attendant to tracing out the evolution of the law year by year.

1. *Village Agrarian Authorities.* Under the Law of Ejido Patrimony (Agrarian Code), the Ejido Administrative Committee is abolished and in its place are two new local agrarian authorities: the Ejido Commissariat (*Comisariado Ejidal*) and the Board of Vigilance (*Consejo de Vigilancia*). The Ejido Commissariat, the principal governing authority in the village, is composed of three members in good standing in the community duly elected by a majority vote. The term of service is for two years, unless (as the law ominously provides) the members are previously removed for due cause. The functions of the Commissariat are to represent the village before the administrative and judicial authorities; to administer and to seek to improve the ejido lands in general and to be directly responsible for the exploitation of the common properties (pastures, forests, and so forth, and the water rights which, as will be noted shortly, are not subject to division); to call meetings of the ejidatarios; and to carry out the instructions of the community and those dictated by the Agrarian Department[12] and the National Bank of Agricultural Credit[13] or their representatives.

[8] Appendix B, III, 2. The law of December 19, 1925, as a matter of fact was not the first law to provide for the parcelization of ejido lands. This provision (as well as certain other features of the "original" Law of Ejido Patrimony) was contained in a decree (III, 1.) promulgated on July 16, 1925. The decree in question, however, remained on the statute books for only a few months and was apparently in the nature of a "trial balloon."

[9] Appendix B, III, 3.

[10] *Ibid.*, III, 4, 5, 6, 7, and II, 35.

[11] A translation of the entire Code is given in Appendix D.

[12] The National Agrarian Commission by the decree of January 15, 1934 (Appendix B, II, 34), became the Agrarian Department.

[13] A government bank founded in 1926. See below Chapters XXI and XXII.

As its name suggests, the principal function of the Board of Vigilance is to see that the Ejido Commissariat behaves properly. To this end it is empowered to revise the accounts of the Commissariat, to order the calling of meetings of the Ejido Assembly when in its judgment this is necessary or when 20 per cent of the ejidatarios so request and to report to the Agrarian Department any irregularities in the financial or other operations of the Commissariat. The Board of Vigilance, like the Commissariat, is composed of three members elected to hold office for two years.

2. *National Agrarian Authorities.* Authority over and responsibility for the organization and supervision of ejido communities is vested in the first instance in the Agrarian Department. It is the duty of the Department to formulate a plan for the ejido villages which will include: "(a) the definition of the products and methods of cultivation which shall be prohibited on the grounds of being soil-exhausting or antieconomic; (b) the designation of the products and techniques best suited to obtain the maximum advantage from the natural and human resources; (c) the form of organization of the activities of the ejidatarios with reference to both production and marketing; (d) the most convenient utilization of the communal forest, pasture, maguey and other resources of whatever class in the possession of the village; [and] (e) any other social and economic matter of importance to the community." The plan must be approved by the Ejido Assembly and, once approved, its execution under the supervision of the Agrarian Department is obligatory.

In addition to the foregoing, the law empowers the Agrarian Department to intervene in all questions of dispute arising in connection with the election of village agrarian authorities; to remove these authorities in cases of malfeasance or disobedience of the dispositions of the Department or of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit; to approve or disapprove all changes in the membership of the Ejido Commissariat and the Board of Vigilance; to regulate (with the Ministry of Public Education) the use of land set aside for rural schools; to supervise the parcelization of crop lands and to grant legal titles to the individual parcels; and finally, to be the court of last appeal in all questions relating to the inheritance, use, and possession of ejido parcels.

However: "The National Bank of Agricultural Credit is charged with the social and economic organization of the ejidatarios in the zones where the Bank operates and, to this end, the Agrarian Department will transfer [to the Bank] the ejidos in the said zones and . . . the employees of the Bank will exercise the functions of the

organizers, agents . . . [and so forth], of the Agrarian Department and will take their places with all of the legal faculties which correspond to them."

3. *The Division of Ejido Lands.* At the time of the execution of the presidential decree granting or restoring ejido lands to a village, these lands must be immediately divided up in the manner prescribed by (the present) law.[14]

In dividing up the village lands the following areas are not subject to parcelization: (a) an "urban zone" including a special lot set aside for the rural school and its experimental fields; (b) pasture and timber lands; and (c) special areas (*cajas, bolsas y lotes bordeados*) which constitute "a natural, physically nondivisable unit and require for [proper] cultivation the collective intervention of all the ejidatarios."

All the rest of the land (that is, the crop land, actual and potential) granted to the village must be apportioned among the individual ejidatarios and the law sets forth in some detail the manner in which this is to be done with a view to insuring justice and fair dealing to all concerned. In no case may any individual be given a tract of land smaller than the area defined in the presidential resolution making the grant, or, in default of such definition, of the area stated in the agrarian laws in force at the time the grant is made.[15]

If any of the land subject to division is left over after each ejidatario receives his tract, a "reserve zone" is formed from which the sons of ejidatarios upon coming of age, or people from neighboring villages having insufficient lands, may receive parcels.

In those cases, on the other hand, where it is found that there is not enough land to give each head of a family his proper share, the law provides that an effort shall be made to work out a plan whereby with the financial help of the federal government, the states, the Bank of Agricultural Credit and of the ejidatarios themselves new lands shall be made available for cultivation by clearing some of the

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[14] The law also requires that a temporary distribution of the ejido lands must be made by the Ejido Commissariat after a village is granted provisional possession and while it is waiting for definitive possession.

[15] This would mean, for all grants made since the enactment of the Agrarian Code of March, 1934, parcels of 4 hectares of humid land or 8 hectares of seasonal land. Nevertheless, in some communities the ejidatarios *may* receive smaller parcels, for the law also provides: "There will be taken into account [in determining the area of the ejido parcels] the cases in which the beneficiaries may count on, in addition to the parcel of cultivable land, other sources of income within the same ejido (wood, charcoal, livestock products, ixtle, *lechuguilla*) or outside of it (day wages from neighboring haciendas [sic!], domestic work, mule driving, pottery, weaving, etc.)."

ejido pasture and timber lands, building irrigation works, and so forth. However, if this is not feasible, the Agrarian Department shall declare a "deficit of parcels" and shall institute proceedings for an additional expropriation and dotation from surrounding private properties.

4. *Definition of Property Rights.* In defining the nature of the property rights vested in the villages receiving lands under the ejido laws, the Law of Ejido Patrimony (Agrarian Code) restates and reaffirms the principles laid down in the decree of January 1915 and in Article 27 of the constitution in the following words: "The agrarian rights which shall be acquired by centers of population shall be imprescriptible and inalienable and therefore cannot in any case or in any form be ceded, conveyed, hypothecated or made the subject of lien in whole or in part."

Exceptions to the foregoing statement are: (a) the renting of pasture rights, the granting of concessions for the exploitation of timber lands and the sale of irrigation waters when these acts are approved by the Ejido Commissariat and the Agrarian Department as contributing to the best utilization of the pasture and timber lands and other products held in common by the villages; (b) the surrendering of properties of whatever kind when it is necessary to expropriate these properties for the purpose of creating urban zones, constructing means of communication, building irrigation works of public interest, or exploiting natural resources belonging to the nation. No such expropriation of the type in question may be made except by specific presidential resolution and after previous compensation for the economic value of the properties affected either in lands of equal quality or in cash, in the order named.

Property rights in the separate ejido parcels of crop land vested in the individual ejidatarios are also imprescriptible and hence cannot be alienated[16] or made the subject of lien. Neither may the beneficiaries of ejido parcels rent them or work them on shares or "make any other contract which implies the indirect exploitation of the land."

An ejidatario may be deprived of his ejido parcel either temporarily or permanently under certain conditions. Temporarily: if he leaves the community for more than six months without permission of the Commissariat, or if he cultivates his parcel in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the community. Permanently: if he attempts to sell, mortgage, lease, rent, or in any other form or fashion alienate his property; for failure to cultivate his land for a period of

[16] However, ejidatarios living in separate communities may make exchanges of their parcels upon receiving the approval of the ejido Assemblies and the Agrarian Department.

two consecutive agricultural years; if he does not contribute promptly to the funds for the payment of taxes or for any other purpose related to the ejido and approved by the Assembly; or, because of "mental derangement, alcoholic degeneration or imprisonment for a period greater than two years providing that there are no members of his household (*familiares*) to take charge of his parcel." Women who possess parcels by reason of being heads of families may be deprived of them if they change their civil status "providing that in their new situation the family [still] enjoys the use of a parcel."[17]

Each case of deprivation must be considered on its merits and no individual can be deprived of his land by the Ejido Assembly without fully justified cause and until the case has been reviewed and a definitive judgment handed down by the Agrarian Department. Parcels declared "free" in the manner just indicated automatically return to the community and their disposition is determined by the Assembly with the approval of the Agrarian Department.

Ejido parcels may be bequeathed and inherited, and for this purpose each proprietor of a parcel is required to register a list of succession indicating the person who shall become the head of the family in the event of his death.[18] The list of succession may not include individuals who already have parcels or those who reside in other ejido communities. If there be no one who fulfills the requirements for inheritance, the property reverts to the community and becomes subject to a new adjudication.

The undivided ejido lands—pasture, timber lands and the special areas referred to above—are reserved for the common use of all the ejidatarios. This use may take the form of privileges granted to individual ejidatarios (to cut timber, pasture cattle, and so forth); or of communal exploitation; or of commercial and industrial exploitation by concession to ejidatarios or outsiders. In the latter cases the proceeds in kind or in money must be placed in the ejido common fund (see below). Rights to irrigation waters are vested in the

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[17] Although they do not accurately describe the relationship of the ejidatario to his parcel, as a matter of convenience and to avoid awkward legal circumlocutions, the terms "proprietor," "possessor," "owner," etc., are used in this and other paragraphs in referring to ejido parcels. *Usufructuary* is probably a better indication of the real nature of the property rights involved.

[18] It is not without significance that the Law of Ejido Patrimony was originally called the Law of *Family* Patrimony. It was clearly the intention of those who framed the law to make the family unit the depository of ejido parcel property rights and not the individual ejidatario. Also, the law extends somewhat the ordinary concept of family and provides that in the case of the death of the beneficiary of an ejido parcel "the rights to the same shall pass to the person or persons whom he maintained, even though they were not his relatives (*parientes*) provided that they had lived with him as members of his family."

community in its corporate capacity and the use of these waters is subject to the regulation by the Commissariat in accordance with the rules of the Agrarian Department and the Ministry of Agriculture.

5. *Taxes.* The municipal, state, and federal governments are prohibited from imposing more than one predial tax on ejido properties. Taxes shall be imposed upon the fiscal value of the properties, but in no case may they exceed 5 per cent of the annual production of the ejido. Fiscal responsibility for the individual parcels rests on the individuals concerned but fiscal coaction can be brought to bear only upon the crops in cases of delinquency. For the corporate ejido lands the fiscal responsibility is joint and common.

6. *The Common Fund.* Each ejido community must establish a fund (*fondo común*) to be constituted from special quotas determined by the Assembly and paid by each ejidatario and from the products derived from the exploitation of the common lands. This fund is to be used for the purchase of machinery, work animals, and equipment for general improvements such as irrigation works, and for certain other purposes.[19]

In the paragraph introducing our summary of those sections of the new Agrarian Code concerned with the ejido patrimony and related matters, it was stated that in order to indicate the nature of the reform made in 1925 it would not be necessary to trace the history of the several laws in this field. And this is true, generally speaking. However, there is one important point which this procedure does not bring out: for the last dozen years the responsibility for the organization and supervision of the ejido villages has been a kind of football kicked around from one government department to another.

Under the new Agrarian Code the responsibility for organizing and supervising agrarian communities is at present divided between the Agrarian Department and the National Bank of Agricultural Credit and the implication of the law is that eventually the bank will take over the whole job. This arrangement, however, is only the last step in a long and complicated evolution. The laws are not always clear, but a rough outline of the way the game of "passing the ejido buck" has been played would appear to be as follows: (a) In Circular 51 (October 11, 1922) full responsibility

[19] A detailed discussion of the common fund and its history will be found in the chapters on agricultural credit. It should be noted here, however, that, although the law now in force makes no reference to the 15 per cent provision of Circular 51 (see above p. 320) in connection with the common fund, this provision was incorporated in all of the earlier Laws of Ejido Patrimony up to the end of 1932 (see the decree of December 27, 1932, Appendix B, III, 7).

for the organization and supervision of ejido villages was accepted by the National Agrarian Commission and for the purpose of carrying on this work there was established in the Commission a Department of Ejido Development (*Departamento de Aprovechamiento de Ejidos*). (b) Meantime, in June, 1922, there had been created in the Ministry of Agriculture a separate department known as the Direction of Agricultural Coöperation (*Dirección de Cooperación Agrícola*) which had for its purpose "the propagating of ideas of association among the beneficiaries of ejido [grants] and the providing of ejidos with the elements necessary for the cultivation of the lands."[20] (c) By executive order of June 28, 1923,[21] a new division within the National Agrarian Commission was created under the title of the Direction of Agricultural Coöperation and Ejido Development (*Dirección de Cooperación Agrícola y Aprovechamiento de Ejidos*) and with it was merged the Direction of Agricultural Coöperation, established the previous year as an independent department in the Ministry of Agriculture. (d) The responsibility of the National Agrarian Commission for the political control of the ejidos (that is, the right to intervene in the election and supervise the functioning of the village agrarian authorities and to regulate the distribution of ejido parcels) was confirmed in the decrees of July 16, 1925, December 19, 1925, and the regulation of March 4, 1926.[22] (e) On June 23, 1927, as part of the reorganization incident to the establishing of the Ejido Banks,[23] a decree[24] was promulgated whereby the "vigilance, control, organization and improvement of the agricultural exploitation of ejido lands" as well as the duty of organizing coöperatives in ejido communities was vested in the General Direction of Agriculture and Livestock (*Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería*), a department in the Ministry of Agriculture.[25] Thus for the second time the authority over ejido communities was split—the National Agrarian Commission remaining in control of political and social matters and the General Direction of Agriculture and Livestock assuming responsibility for questions (primarily) of economic interest. (f) This same division of responsibility was reaffirmed and clarified in the law of August 25, 1927.[26] (g) However, fourteen months later by a decree

[20] *Informes rendidos por el C. Gral. Alvaro Obregón . . . 1921-1924 . . .*, p. 45.

[21] Appendix B, II, 10.

[22] *Ibid.*, III, 1, 2 and 3.

[23] See below p. 384.

[24] Appendix B, VIII, 13.

[25] The Direction of Agricultural Coöperation and Ejido Development of the National Agrarian Commission had been previously abolished by the law of April 23, 1927. Appendix B, II, 22.

[26] Appendix B, III, 4.

of August 30, 1928,[27] once again, this time in what was known as the Department of Agrarian Organization (*Departamento de Organización Agraria*), the National Agrarian Commission was ordered to take over the duties of the economic organization, control, and so forth of ejido communities and the General Direction of Agriculture and Livestock was ordered to cease its activities in this field. (h) The enactment of a new law of agricultural credit in January, 1931,[28] was the occasion for annulling the just mentioned decree of August 30, 1928, which created the Department of Agrarian Organization, and for transferring to the National Bank of Agricultural Credit the obligation of "undertaking, with funds to be supplied by the Federal Government, the economic organization of the ejido and of the education of the ejidatario." (i) On December 27, 1932, it was decreed[29] that the responsibility for the "vigilance, control, organization and improvement of the agricultural exploitation of ejido lands as well as the coöperative organization and provision of credit for the development of such exploitations and the improvement of the peasant home" should be shared by the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Bank of Agricultural Credit. (j) Finally, we get back to where we started—the Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934, and the division of power between the Agrarian Department and the National Bank of Agricultural Credit.[30]

COMMENT ON THE LAWS OF EJIDO PATRIMONY

Before leaving this section on the history of the program with which the government has attempted to meet the problem of the political and social organization and control of ejido communities a few comments should be made concerning the basic change introduced in the conception of the ejido by the Law of Ejido Patrimony of 1925 and its successive reforms.

The criticisms made by the sponsors of the original Law of Ejido Patrimony of the way in which the ejido communities were functioning under the rules and regulations (Circular 51) then in effect were undoubtedly grounded in facts for a large part of the country. It cannot be denied that at the time many ejido lands were lying idle; that in a number of cases the ejido communities were dominated by self-seeking *caciques* and corrupt Administrative Com-

[27] *Ibid.*, VIII, 16.

[28] *Ibid.*, VIII, 17.

[29] *Ibid.*, III, 7.

[30] It would appear that the Agrarian Code represents the last word on the subject here under discussion. However, see: the Law of Agricultural Credit of January 24, 1934 (Appendix B, VIII, 22) Art. 3, fr. XIII, and the decree of January 15, 1934 (II, 34).

mittees; and that the attempts to organize the ejidatarios along coöperative lines had met with success in only a few places.

But what could the government expect? At the end of 1925 there had been created, counting both provisional grants pending final action and definitive grants, approximately 2,000 ejido communities with a total population of certainly not less than 400,000 ejidatarios.[31] The total budget of the National Agrarian Commission for all purposes for the three-year period (October 1922-December 1925) during which Circular 51 was in effect, averaged a little less than three million pesos a year.[32] Just how much of this budget was spent in organization work has not been revealed, but 400,000 pesos appears to be a most liberal estimate for the year 1925 and probably much less than this amount was spent during the first two years of the experiment. The total effective personnel of the National Agrarian Commission engaged in organization work in 1925 numbered: 8 Agricultural Inspectors and 50 Chiefs of Zone.[33] In other words, with a field staff averaging one man for every 34.4 ejido communities and an expenditure of approximately one peso a year per ejidatario the Agrarian Commission was expected to transform 400,000 peasants—the vast majority of them illiterate, poverty stricken, lacking in initiative and bowed down under the accumulated misery of generations of virtual serfdom—into self-governing, independent, coöperatively-minded, prosperous "communists." Of course the miracle did not take place. But one may be pardoned for raising the question whether it was entirely the fault of the plan. It may be that, as some of its opponents have held, the collectivism of Circular 51 is not possible of realization in Mexico where "our peasants [are] individualists by inheritance and education."[34] But the evidence which can be adduced in support of this position from the experience of the years 1922-1925 is hardly proof positive of this assertion. For the truth of the matter is that the plan was never really given a fair trial. The ship was scuttled and abandoned with the first shot across the bow. The Law of Ejido Patrimony is another example of an attempt to do by the magic of law what can only be accomplished by time, money, patience and, above all, leadership.

At bottom—curious as it may sound to those who have been fed on

[31] There are no exact year by year figures for provisional ejido grants. These are estimates based on the facts available. For *definitive grants only* at the end of 1925 the figures were: 1,218 ejidos and 267,308 ejidatarios. See Table 18, Appendix A.

[32] Appendix A, Table 56.

[33] Rodríguez Adame, "La organización del ejido," *El Nacional*, Aug. 20, 1934. There were also approximately 100 clerks, assistants, bookkeepers, etc., but these were mostly office workers.

[34] León, "El patrimonio ejidal," *El Nacional*, Dec. 6, 1932.

stories of "red Mexico"—the Law of Ejido Patrimony represented a flight from communism. In the eyes of the group which came into power with Calles, the conception of the ejido and the program for its organization contained in Circular 51 *was* communism and, moreover, communism imported directly from Moscow.[85] Now, in the judgment of these gentlemen, communism was not for Mexico. Or, at any rate, not agrarian communism. They had no idea (as had the authors of Circular 51) of "putting an end to the divorce existing between the productive forces which tend to be collective and the totally antiquated regime of individual private property." On the contrary, they believed that the ultimate goal of the reform was private property—private property more justly distributed, private property controlled in the interest of the public, but private property nonetheless. The ejido was not to be an end in itself and certainly not a communistic end. Rather the ejido was looked upon simply as one of several possible methods of redistributing land, a stepping-stone

[85] "The communist for doctrinal reasons wishes to prevent the parcelization of the ejido; he is obsessed . . . by dreams nourished on the things which he has read or which he has been told about Russia." . . . *Ibid.*

In passing it may be noted that there was some justification—although not nearly as much as some writers would have us believe—for the imputation that the collectivism of Circular 51 was by Marx out of Moscow. For example, in the preamble to Circular 51 in the statement of basic principles, the works of Karl Kautzky and Maxime Leroy are cited as authority. Also some weight must be attached to such facts as appear in the following statement by Valentín Gama:

"Another of the characteristics of agrarian policy in the years 1921 to 1924 was the resistance of the government to . . . [the idea] of dividing up the ejidos. . . . The Minister of Development, Villarreal, indicated on more than one occasion his opinion that the ejidos should be exploited in common and that they should not be divided up in individual parcels. This was one of many manifestations of communism at the time. . . . The [Communist] Minister Petsmoesky [Petskovsky] declared that he felt in Mexico as if he were in his own nation because our ideals were those of Russia; Chicherin stated that he considered Mexico as a very convenient base for the development of relations between the Soviet and the New World . . . in view of the fact that the struggle against Yankee imperialism and against the despotism of the landlords was especially adapted to Soviet strategy, the C.R.O.M. [Mexican labor organization] was represented in an International Congress of Red Syndicates . . ." *Op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.)

Nevertheless, it cannot be concluded that the collectivistic conception of the ejido was pure "communism," all wool, and a yard wide. The ideas and ideals of Bolshevism were known by a number of the revolutionary leaders in the period from 1921 to 1924, and undoubtedly exercised then, as they have since, some influence on the agrarian reform. But the same is true of many other social doctrines and theories, including those of the simple patriarchal type of communism which has existed in certain parts of Mexico from time immemorial. In the concept of the collectivistic ejido were packed the residues of many principles and practices from those associated with the Aztec *calpulli* to those of Raiffeisen and from those of the Spanish pueblo to those which gave birth to the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

to individualistic ownership and modified laissez-faire.[36] Holding these views it was but natural that the Calles group should have found good and sufficient reasons—in "human nature," in "economic realities," and in "common sense"—for discarding the program of Circular 51. The Law of Ejido Patrimony, from the point of view of its sponsors, was a reasonable and necessary step in the development of the agrarian reform. For its opponents, the law was a specious attempt to mix oil with water, a desertion and a betrayal of the ideals of the revolution.

The issue joined in 1925 on the occasion of the enactment of the Law of Ejido Patrimony was the first sign of a rift in the revolutionary lute. What has been referred to in these pages as the "present crisis of the agrarian reform" is but the end result, the crystallization of the basic opposition of doctrines and ideals first made manifest at the time of the enactment of the Law of Ejido Patrimony.

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[36] Luis León, Calles' Minister of Agriculture and one of the authors of the Law of Ejido Patrimony, denied that the law meant an abandonment of revolutionary principles and a shift of emphasis in the aims of the agrarian reform from collectivism to private property:

"The ejido patrimony is not . . . bourgeoise small property in which the individual element predominates over the social and, therefore, it is not, as its opponents hold, a regression to reactionary ideology. Neither is it communism. . . . The ejido patrimony is a balanced regime which responds to the present needs of the Mexican peasant in two ways: it guarantees his interests as an independent individual who has a right to the product of his labor . . . ; and it defends him against his own weakness . . . the lack of foresight which would result in the loss of his parcel . . . and his reduction once more to the misery of peonage." León, "El patrimonio ejidal," *El Nacional*, Dec. 6, 1932.

But compare the foregoing with the following statement made by León at the time of the enactment of the first Law of Ejido Patrimony:

"For us, the ejidos are being established for the benefit of the great rural mass of peons and former laborers of the haciendas . . . who need a bit of land to sustain the life of themselves and of their families; but we believe that there are peasants who, because of their energy, intelligence or character are superior to the others and have higher ambitions. In time, with the division of the large estates and, above all, with the construction of irrigation works, these individuals of higher ambition, more initiative and of greater capacity for struggle, will not be satisfied with the ejido parcel and will seek by [the purchase] of the larger farms [which will be made available through] the division of landed estates more suitable fields for their energies. Also many of the children of the present ejidatarios will have to leave the ejido and seek in the [purchase of] farms or in some other form of activity (commerce, industry, etc.) satisfaction for their just ambitions. The ejido parcel will be . . . a refuge to which they may return in case of disappointment or failure, but all of those of restless spirits or higher ambitions will leave the ejido and seek to better their condition outside of it. . . ." Letter reprinted in *Recopilación de las principales leyes . . . Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento*, pp. 361-62.

CHAPTER XIX

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL CONTROL—HAZARDS AND HURDLES

THE POLITICAL organization and social control of the ejido has been recognized as one of the most important problems of the agrarian reform for well over a decade. For three years the government tried to solve this problem by the route of simple collectivism; for the last eight years and more a formula of "restricted individualism" has been applied. In the preceding chapter we were occupied with a statement of the nature of the problem and a review of the development of the remedies for dealing with it. In the present chapter an attempt will be made to estimate the amount of success which has attended the efforts of the government to make the patient swallow the medicine.

PROGRESS

There are ejido communities in Mexico well organized, disciplined, law-abiding and in general a pride and a joy to government officials, ejidatarios and everyone concerned. How many, or what proportion of the some 7,000 ejidos in existence at the present time (June, 1934) are of the type just described no one knows. It may be that they are in the majority. On the other hand, such data as are available indicate that there are other ejido communities which are, in greater or less degree, unorganized or disorganized, outlaws or scofflaws, rebels against authority and in general the despair of all good agrarian reformers. Just how many communities there are of this type, once again, we do not know; but that the number is large enough to raise some question about the unqualified success of the government's present program and practice for dealing with ejido villages there seems to be little doubt. Consider, for example, the following reports, typical of dozens of similar ones made by the field representatives of the National Agrarian Commission during the course of 1933.[1]

1. *Elections and Political Intrigue.*

The greatest difficulties in the ejidos of this zone come from the political parties. . . . Each group tries at all costs to maintain control of the ejido

[1] The rough classification of the "sins" of the ejido communities is the writer's. The case materials unless otherwise indicated are taken from the same questionnaire cited on p. 211.

and of the ejidatarios in order to . . . place in office its own members. This has created a great gulf between the peasants and gives rise to constant complaints from all sides. (Zone 8-9, Puebla—42 ejidos.)

This zone was famous for being the most difficult in the state of Jalisco, and I am ready to believe it because in almost every one of the ejidos there were three or four agitators who were constantly stirring up the ejidatarios and, moreover, the Administrative Committees were accustomed to appropriate for their personal use all of the ejido parcels and thus the communities day by day approached their ruin. . . . Frankly speaking, I cannot say that I have yet completely realized my proposals for organization and moralization for every minute I am confronted with the obstacles placed in my path by the rogues and spongers who think they are going to go on eternally exploiting the ejidos without any stop or let. . . . Those who don't work, that is to say the barroom ejidatarios (*ejidatarios de cantina*), and the bricklayers, fishermen, etc., who are not engaged in agriculture, are continually provoking changes in the Administrative Committees (without any interest in whether the Committees are working well or not) . . . in an effort to get themselves elected. . . . This means unceasing labor on the part of this office to impose order and to answer the numerous letters usually signed with false names. . . . Because of this agitation the other ejidatarios, that is the real ones, do not put their whole souls into their work. They are afraid from one minute to the next of attacks by the Committees put in office by the bad elements. . . . The great majority [of the ejidatarios] are loyal, hard working and not dominated by the clergy. But they are very quarrelsome among themselves and have little respect for human life; practically all of them carry pistols and they will kill for any or no reason. (Zone 5-1, Jalisco—31 ejidos.)

2. *Juggling of Ejido Parcels.*

The principal problem in this zone is the maladministration of the Committees . . . which have constantly despoiled the ejidatarios of their parcels. . . . The ejidatario must be made to feel secure in the rights he acquires in his parcel, for he has great affection for his land, but the political atmosphere disturbs him so that at the present time he has no enthusiasm for his work. . . . (Zone 18-3, Guerrero—110 ejidos.)

There is a complete disorganization in the distribution of the parcels in this zone. . . . [The Committees] because of the antagonisms between the ejidatarios take away the parcels from some and give them to others. . . . With the exception of a few ejidos, it is not known exactly who the ejidatarios are . . . and there are a number of cases of individuals in possession of ejido parcels who do not appear in the agrarian census. (Zone 5-3, Jalisco—27 ejidos.)

In many cases those who were the leaders in obtaining a dotation . . . were already occupying the land before the grant was made and they have continued to occupy the same areas. . . . This means that at the present time there is an unequal distribution of parcels which amounts

in many cases to a monopoly. . . . It is not unusual in the ejidos along the Costa Grande to find ejidatarios with fifteen hectares . . . while others have hardly half a hectare. . . . Some ejidatarios have even petitioned the Ministry of Agriculture to change the ejido system to that of colonization because those who possess areas larger than the law allows, refuse to give up any of their land. . . . This problem will be very difficult to solve because even if this change could be made those who have no land or only a minimum amount are too poor to buy land from the others. . . .

On the other hand it will be difficult [to force a redistribution of parcels] because the ejidatarios know that if they try to occupy part of the land now belonging to another ejidatario they automatically place themselves in danger of their lives. (Zone 18-4, Guerrero.)

3. *Refusal to Pay Taxes and to Contribute to the Coöperative Fund.*

But undoubtedly my greatest difficulty is to collect the 10 per cent for the Coöperative Fund. . . . (Zone 8-8, Puebla—64 ejidos.)

In this area there exists the erroneous belief that since the government has given them their lands free of charge, therefore they don't have to pay a single cent in taxes. (Zone 4-1, Hidalgo—47 ejidos.)

Another problem of the greatest importance in this zone is that related to the payment of taxes. There are some ejidatarios who meet their obligations . . . but there are other chiselers and scoundrels who systematically refuse to make their payments—and these are in the majority. The result is that the communities cannot pay their taxes and this gives rise to fines and a thousand difficulties. . . . (Zone 6-15, México—30 ejidos.)

My principal problem is the refusal of the villages to deposit the ejido funds in the Ejido Bank and to pay the fifteen per cent. . . . They say that the Supreme Government has given them their lands and they do not have to pay anything. (Zone 6-6, México—27 ejidos.)

4. *Maladministration of Ejido Funds.*

The investments of the ejido funds, in the majority of the cases . . . are not well made. . . . In the digging of wells, for example, as much as three or four times what is reasonable has been spent. A typical case is that of Santa Cecilia Acatitlán where the cost of digging the well was, in round numbers, 750 pesos and the cost of the pump 800 pesos; but for "inaugurating the well and other expenses" a total of 5,000 pesos was expended. (Letter from the Regional Organizer for the State of México.)

It is the general custom of the peasants to accuse the Administrative Committee of all sorts of things, but one usually discovers that those who do the complaining are trying to get hold of the funds in the treasury of the Committee or of the grain stored in the warehouses, in the belief that when a new Committee takes office they will not be held responsible for their debts. (Zone 5-5, Jalisco—27 ejidos.)

When you go right down to the bottom of the matter I believe that the main reason for the difficulties between the ejidatarios in this zone is to be found in the lack of honesty and preparation for command on the part of the Committees which are composed of completely humble individuals, without education of any kind and with no clear understanding of their responsibilities. . . . When the ejidatarios see that some individuals in the community have money and that they have left their miserable estate and have raised themselves (often at the cost of the others) to a level which they never dreamed of . . . naturally they are envious and want to obtain the same things that these others have gotten so easily. . . . This is the reason why they use any excuse to make complaints to the authorities against those in power. Generally these complaints are made with some justice. . . . Almost all of the Committees when they leave office are found to be short in their accounts and rare indeed is the case when they turn over their books with the accounts up to date. (Zone 6-11, México—43 ejidos.)

5. *Plain and Fancy Politics and General "Cussedness."*

My chief problem is the lack of any discipline in the ejidatarios. . . . They have no respect for the Committees, and are always going about hatching up intrigues; they seldom come to the meetings of the Assembly and show very little enthusiasm for keeping their promises. If it were possible they would change the Committees every two months . . . for they are envious of those in power . . . and all of them want to profit at the expense of the community. (Zone 5-3, Jalisco—27 ejidos.)

In the majority of the ejidos in this zone there are folks who are little used to work and are given to vice; they love to have all sorts of troubles not only with the neighboring villages but also among themselves. All of them try to exercise authority. They are too suggestionable and when they discover that the promises made by some live-wire in order to obtain votes in the election of an Administrative Committee cannot be carried out, they begin to intrigue against the Committee and refuse to obey it. On the other hand, the Committees very seldom comply with their duties, for as soon as they obtain authority they think they can do anything they please. They commit innumerable abuses, misapply the ejido funds and refuse to see the *Jefe de Zona* when he visits the community. . . . They make all sorts of accusations against the *Jefe de Zona*, prevent his orders from being carried out, and try to keep the Ejido Assembly from holding its meetings. (Zone 6-15, México—30 ejidos.)

The agrarian politicians who unfortunately are to be found in every ejido are the ones who work the least and make the most trouble. They are always asking for loans . . . and advising the other ejidatarios not to pay the 15 per cent and to disobey the orders of the authorities. . . . These *líderes* deceive the ejidatarios and there is no way to get rid of them. . . . They are making fools out of us . . . and for this reason we must be given the power to run them out of the villages. (Zone 1-2, Chihuahua —18 ejidos.)

The irregularities which exist at the present time in practically every one of the ejidos [in this state] may be listed as follows: (a) the monopoly of large areas and an unjust distribution of ejido parcels with the result that most of the peasants have been converted into peons for the more enterprising ejidatarios; (b) the renting of ejido parcels; (c) the lack of adequate regulation of the pasture lands resulting in the destruction of these resources; (d) the illegal exploitation of the ejido forests; (e) the illegal election of agrarian authorities; and (f) the taking away of ejido parcels without just cause and without fulfilling the requirements of the law. . . . (Letter from the Regional Organizer for the State of Morelos.)

From this crosscut of the available evidence one must conclude that the efforts of the government during the last decade to organize and control the ejido communities leave something to be desired. In a lecture sponsored by the Mexican Peasants' Confederation in September, 1934, the whole matter was summarized in these words: "We have been very ambitious in the formation of programs for the organization of the ejido but very deficient in providing the economic means with which to carry them out. There has been no unification in our official agencies. . . . We have failed to consolidate a system and to organize the human element not only as a factor in production but as an integral part in society. . . . We have not clearly realized that success, more than on good programs, depends on those who are charged with the practical business of realizing these programs in the field having the necessary technical capacity and being imbued with revolutionary principles."[2]

If this statement be accepted as an approximately accurate judgment, one is very naturally led to ask the question: Why? That is, what factors and forces have entered into the situation to thwart and nullify the undoubted good intentions of the revolutionary governments in this field? For the present writer, the answer to this question lies mainly in the following considerations: (1) the indecision in theory and in law with reference to the institutional structure and function of the ejido; (2) the failure to put into practice such theories and laws as have been devised; (3) the disrupting and disorganizing effects of politics and politicians.

INDECISION IN THEORY AND IN LAW

The major case in point is that involved in the fundamental question of the collectivistic versus the individualistic conception of the ejido. A detailed discussion of this matter will be reserved for a later chapter. Here it may simply be noted that, although the Law of

[2] Rodríguez Adame, *op. cit.*

Ejido Patrimony has been on the books now for over eight years and although this law, as we have seen, definitely favors the individualistic conception, the question has not been finally settled either in theory or in practice. The law itself is a compromise and as it stands it is obviously neither fish nor fowl.

But quite aside from, or perhaps because of, the confusion which has marked the efforts to work out a satisfactory general logic of the ejido, the government has exhibited a singular inability to solve even fairly simple matters with reference to the relation of the ejido communities to the body politic. There is, for example, the question of fiscal responsibility. The first specific mention of the taxation of ejidos occurs in the National Agrarian Commission's Circular 36 (July 11, 1919) which states that "taxes . . . may be levied on ejidos in accordance with the fiscal legislation applicable in each case." Less than a month later, Circular 37 (August 8, 1919) ruled that villages which had had ejidos given or restored to them should assume the responsibility for paying the same predial taxes previously paid by the former owners of the lands. Thus matters stood until October 11, 1922, when the Agrarian Commission declared in Circular 51 that each ejido community was to set aside 15 per cent of its annual agricultural production, one-third of which was to be reserved for "taxes, material improvement, and municipal affairs." Hardly was the ink dry on Circular 51 when Circular 52 (October 24, 1922) appeared announcing that in the opinion of the National Agrarian Commission no predial taxes at all should be levied on ejido lands and directing the governors of the states to enact measures prohibiting the imposition of such taxes. Circular 52 remained on the books until November 16, 1923, when it was declared to be no longer in effect. Except for a decree promulgated on January 19, 1928,[3] authorizing the Ministry of Agriculture to establish money equivalents for the 15 per cent quota mentioned in Circular 51 and hence for the part thereof reserved for taxes, there was no new[4] legislation on the subject of ejido taxes until the end of 1932. At that time a decree[5] was promulgated stating that taxes on ejido lands should be levied on the basis of the fiscal values of the properties granted to villages or, in default of these, on new fiscal evaluations to be determined according to the local laws on the sub-

[3] Appendix B, III, 5.

[4] However, a number of laws and decrees confirmed the 15 per cent provision in essentially the same language as that employed in Circular 51. See footnote 28, p. 386.

[5] Appendix B, III, 7.

ject. The state governments were to be permitted to levy only one predial tax on ejido properties and in no case was this tax to exceed 5 per cent of the value of the gross production of any given ejido. In the case of those communities where the Law of Ejido Patrimony had been applied each individual was to be legally responsible for the taxes on his own parcel, and fiscal coaction was to be permitted only with reference to crops. Fiscal responsibility for lands held by the community in its corporate capacity (*all* lands where the Law of Ejido Patrimony had not been applied) was to be joint and common. Finally, it was provided that during the entire period of provisional possession ejidos should not be required to pay more than one-fourth of their assessed taxes.

The sum and substance of the matter is that for the first seventeen years of the agrarian reform the whole question of ejido taxes was either ignored or muddled by vague and conflicting legislation. The regulation enacted at the end of 1932 (and since embodied in the new Agrarian Code), although an improvement on the previous situation, can hardly be regarded as an adequate handling of the problem. For example, not to go any further into the question, just what the economic or social reason is for setting a blanket limit on ejido taxes of five per cent of the annual value of the gross agricultural production, it would be hard to state.

The end result of the failure to enact and enforce adequate tax legislation has meant in practice confusion in most cases and real injustice in others. Many ejidos have paid no taxes at all whereas other communities have had to pay considerably more than their fair share—in some cases as much as two or three times the amount paid by *hacendados* on neighboring properties of exactly the same class![6] In view of these facts one is not surprised to find students of

[6] "The local governments have contributed greatly to the ruin of the ejidatario by the imposition of high land taxes. While the *hacendados* pay from 80 centavos up to 2 pesos annually per hectare, the ejidatarios pay from 6 to 14 pesos. . . . Thus is the poor ejidatario denied his independence and . . . turned into a slave of the local governments in the majority of the states. Take, for example, the case of the ejidatarios of San Juan Teotihuacán. . . . [This community] was given 800 hectares on which it pays 8,000 pesos annually in taxes; the hacienda of Tlajinga which was left with 800 hectares of land of the same quality pays only 800 pesos. . . ." Letter from Alejandro Soriano V., Chief of Propaganda for the Central League of Agrarian Communities, *El Excelsior*, November 19, 1931.

"To all of these evils must be added the sufferings of the ejidatarios because of the high values assigned to the ejido lands by the tax authorities. . . . There are ejidos paying three and even five times the taxes which the owners of the same lands paid before they

the ejido tax problem, including officials of the Agrarian Department,[7] stating that the lack of regulation and coördination in this field is one of the most serious threats to the ejido communities.[8]

THE FAILURES IN PRACTICE

The majority of the ejidos which are unorganized or disorganized at the present time are in this unhappy state for the very good reason that they never have been organized. In many cases the laws have simply not been enforced at all and the ejidos have been abandoned to their own resources to work out their salvation as best they may; in other cases the laws have been applied but in such a hit and miss fashion and with such an inadequate outlay of funds for administrative and supervisory purposes as, more often than not, to create more problems than have been solved.

According to its sponsors, the Law of Ejido Patrimony was enacted to meet a situation of such grave import as to amount to little short of a national crisis. The ejido, the agrarian reform, the revolution itself—all were going to pot and the only hope for salvation lay in the proposed law. Or at least, so it was claimed in 1925 and these claims have been repeated at intervals since then. And yet when we examine the statistics, what do we find? Up to August, 1934, the Law of Ejido Patrimony had actually been applied in only 261 communities and titles to individual parcels had been granted to some 54,000 ejidatarios.[9] In other words, less than 7 per cent of the 4,069 definitive ejidos and less than 8 per cent of the some 754,000 ejidatarios in existence (December 1933) are even theoretically organized according to the law. This does not mean that 93 per cent of the ejidos are completely unorganized, but it does mean that whatever type or degree or organization they may enjoy is different from and presumably less perfect than that decreed by the Law of Ejido Patrimony. In point of fact, it is possible to find every variety and degree of organization and disorganization. Some ejidos are still running under the system set up by Circular 51, some have

were given to the ejido communities. . ." Report of the Regional Organizer for the State of Oaxaca, November 4, 1933.

[7] See *Memoria de la Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento . . . 1933*, p. 86.

[8] "The grave problem of ejido taxes has constituted and constitutes one of the most serious of the problems related to the economic development of the ejido. It appears that in the majority of cases the Governors have with one hand been signing resolutions giving land to ejido communities and with the other orders for economic coaction [for the collection of taxes]; and that the local tax offices are . . . the worst enemies of the ejidos. . . . It is time for the Governors of the States to define their ejido fiscal policy and at least to comply with the federal laws in this field." Rodríquez Adame, *op. cit.*

[9] Appendix A, Table 31.

adopted a few of the features required by the Law of Ejido Patrimony, still others have worked out their own individual systems.

It is only fair to state that the National Agrarian Commission has probably done the best it could under the circumstances. But the circumstances have been of such a nature as to discourage even the most devoted of agrarian reformers. In the first place, the authorities have experienced the greatest difficulty in making up their minds on the subject of who or what should be responsible for the organization and control of the agrarian communities. The ejidos have been kicked around from one government department to another until it is a wonder that anything at all has been accomplished in the way of organization. The Commission, never sure of exactly how much it was supposed to do, has wavered back and forth. Originally and primarily an agency for the distribution of land to villages, the Commission has found itself saddled with the duty of organizing, supervising, and exercising social, political, and economic control over the ejido communities. If in answer to the constant and increasing clamor for more and more land the Commission used its funds and personnel to distribute land, then it could not at the same time engage in the difficult work of developing the communities to which land had already been given. On the other hand, if it allowed organization problems to become its major preoccupation, then the land distribution program had to be slowed up.

If the question be raised why has the Commission not performed both of its functions, the answer is short: not enough money. The total amount spent by the Commission during the sixteen years (1918-1933) for which statistics are available was a little over 36 million pesos. Generally speaking from 1918 to 1930 there was a more or less clearly defined tendency to increase the budget in each succeeding year. Thus from a little more than a third of a million pesos in 1918, the budget grew to 3.8 million pesos in 1930. From the high point of 1930, there has been, despite the increased responsibilities of the Commission, a steady decline. In 1932, the amount allowed the Commission was actually less than all but two years of the preceding decade, and 1933 showed only slight improvement with total expenditures of around 2.8 million pesos.[10] As an indication of the relative importance the Commission has given to its two functions, it is interesting to note that in no year has as much as a third of the total funds been devoted to organization work. Since 1930 the amounts budgeted for this purpose have varied between 641,000 pesos and 845,000 pesos with the average for the

[10] Appendix A, Table 56. The announced budget for the year 1934 was 4.3 million pesos.

four years 1930-1933 standing at 726,000 pesos.[11] Taking the average figure, this would mean an expenditure of considerably less than one peso a year for each ejidatario.

During the last few years the Department of Agrarian Organization in the National Agrarian Commission has carried on its work through a system of agricultural areas and ejido zones. Theoretically, each agricultural area is presided over by a resident Regional Organizer (*Organizador Regional*) and the ejido zone, in turn, are in charge of individuals known as Chiefs of Zones (*Jefes de Zona*). The last mentioned are the actual field workers and the ones immediately responsible for organizing and supervising the ejido communities. The extent of the "coverage" of the Department of Agrarian Organization in the last year (1933) for which statistics are available is revealed in the following figures.[12] In 19 areas there were 17 Regional Organizers and 112 Chiefs of Zone. The number of ejidos assigned to each Chief of Zone varied between 15 and 93 with an average for the whole Republic of 41.6. However, these figures refer only to the 4,541 ejidos for which the Department recognized its responsibility. Some sections were apparently not covered at all, for the Department did not list 1,865 of the total of 6,406 definitive and provisional ejidos in existence. In other words, close to 30 per cent of the ejidos in the Republic at the end of 1933 were not even on the books of the Department of Agrarian Organization! Some of these "forgotten" ejidos were undoubtedly covered by the field workers employed by the National Bank of Agricultural Credit,[13] but even if the 157 employees of the National Bank be added to those of the Commission the resultant figure of one field worker for every 23.9 ejidos can hardly be regarded as impressive—especially when one remembers that there was considerable overlapping in the work of the Bank and the Department.

For anyone acquainted with the Mexican scene, little argument is necessary to prove that the field agents of the National Agrarian Commission, charged with the delicate and complicated task of supervising on the average 41.6 ejidos for each agent, are up against a hopeless task. The job would be difficult enough in any part of the world; in Mexico, for reasons which will appear shortly, it has been frankly impossible.

Once again let us turn for illustration and evidence to the reports of the men in the field, the men on whose shoulders the responsibility for making the ejido program work actually rests. What are their troubles? What are their complaints? What are their hopes and fears?

[11] Rodríguez Adame, *op. cit.*

[12] Appendix A, Table 55.

[13] See below p. 400.

In the first place the *Jefes de Zona* claim that it is humanly impossible for any man—given the number of ejidos they are expected to cover, the lack of means of communication, and the failure of the government to supply adequate funds for traveling and other expenses—to attend to his zone in even the most superficial manner.

With reference to the complaints made by the League of Agrarian Communities in this state [Chihuahua] that this office has not been attending to the requests made by the ejidatarios for changes in their Administrative Committees, permit me to state that in view of the enormous distances at which most of the ejidos are located and in view of the insignificant sum (12 pesos a month for one Regional Organizer and six Chiefs of Zone) allowed for expenses, it is practically impossible to comply with these requests.

In Zone 1-1, the only one which can be served by a single agent, since the 17 ejidos in it are located along the same road 100 kilometers in length, at present there is no Chief of Zone at all. In Zone 1-2 (15 ejidos) several of the communities are located at a distance of more than 100 kilometers from the Official Residence. Since there are no railroad or bus lines, to visit these ejidos automobiles must be hired at a cost for a single trip of more than the total amount allowed for expenses for a whole month. Zone 1-3 has 40 ejidos, half of which can be reached only on horseback. To get to some of the villages in this zone requires two weeks' time for transportation alone at a cost of 30 pesos. . . . In Zone 1-5 the 25 ejidos are distributed over an area which measures 300 kilometers from north to south. A few of the ejidos are near a railroad . . . on which the trains make one trip a week. Half of the 25 ejidos in Zone 1-7 are in the mountains over 100 kilometers from the Official Residence and cannot be reached at all during the rainy season. . . . Only 7 ejidos out of the 205 in the whole state are located on railroad lines. (Letter from the Regional Organizer for the State of Chihuahua, July 26, 1933.)

. . . Last month I visited 14 ejidos in my zone. . . . All of these communities can be reached only on horseback and if it had not been that the ejidatarios in a number of places provided horses for me it would have cost at least the value of a horse to make the trip of not less than 60 leagues necessary to visit these 14 ejidos. . . . In order to visit all of the 47 ejidos in this zone in the course of one month it would be necessary to travel by automobile which I cannot do since there are no roads. . . . In order to visit 14, 15 or 16 pueblos at the very most during one month it is necessary to spend solely for horses 2 pesos a day, or 54 pesos for the 27 working days of the month. . . . In view of the fact that I am allowed only 13 pesos a month for transportation expenses I can only visit 3 or 4 of the nearest ejidos. . . . (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 6-11, México.)[14]

[14] That these two cases do not exaggerate the situation in many parts of the country may be seen from the figures the writer has compiled from questionnaires sent out by

Many of the agents of the National Agrarian Commission claim that their work is greatly hampered by the endless reports they are required to make for no good purpose.

There should be some way to avoid the fruitless work of *papeleo* (report writing—"red tape"). As it is, when a Chief of Zone has made a report on what he has seen, etc., in a village, every time he repeats his visit he has to keep on "informing" and "informing" about a whole raft of things instead of going ahead with the development of the program which he has worked out and then simply reporting on the results obtained. (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 5-10, Colima.)

Again, a cause of frequent and sometimes bitter complaint on the part of the field workers is that they are not given sufficient authority. Everything must be taken to headquarters in Mexico City. Often the Commission refuses to back them up in their struggles with local politicians.

In most of the ejidos in this zone there are political divisions and the chief cause of this is dirty politics. The work of the little ward politicians has borne its fruit in the discord which they have achieved in the agrarian communities. As long as there is no unity of principle in the peasant masses it will never be possible to do anything truly beneficial for them. The labor of organization is of the very greatest difficulty for one must be constantly compromising with certain elements which oppose the agricultural and social organization of the ejidatarios. . . . Unified and energetic action is urgent to get rid of these destructive elements. Many times the undersigned has planned to proceed in this fashion but he has always had the fear that he would not be backed up by his superiors, for any action of this sort would affect adversely certain powerful political interests. The organization and administration of the ejidos will require a long time; the work is obstructed by . . . the terrible heritage which these dissensions, many of them sealed in blood and only to be resolved by death itself, have left among the ejidatarios. (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 4-8, Hidalgo.)

Since practically all of the ejidos in this area are controlled by politicians, on repeated occasions the Chief of Zone has found himself in difficult and dangerous situations—and all the more so because before he can take any action he must first write a report and receive the respective

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the Agrarian Commission in 1933. Answers received covering 1,164 ejidos revealed that 127 ejidos could be reached by train, 546 by automobile (but, for the most part, in the dry season only) and 491 only by horseback. One ejido, it was reported, however, could be reached by airplane!

In some cases the costs of "transportation" are of a rather unexpected sort. Thus the *Jefe de Zona* for Zone 5-9 in Jalisco writes:

"In visiting all of the ejidos in the northern part of this zone, it is necessary to spend 10 or 15 pesos for an armed escort because there are some small groups of bandits in the region led by a man named Gregorio Ponce."

authorization. . . . When matters are not settled to suit [these politicians] . . . they address themselves to the higher agrarian authorities . . . making accusations against the *Jefe de Zona*. . . . Because of this and in order to obtain prompt and effective organization the Chiefs of Zone, the only ones who can know what the real situation is, must be authorized to deal with [these problems] immediately. (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 12-2, San Luis Potosí.)

The general situation in the zone in my charge is bad . . . due to the lack of interest in work on the part of the ejidatarios, to the lack of equipment and to the activities carried on by the numerous amateur and professional politicians who are to be found in all of the ejidos. . . . Unfortunately it can be proved that many of these bad elements receive official support. . . . What can a Chief of Zone do in the face of these politicians . . . to maintain a good organization if he is not backed up by his superiors? (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 7-4, Michoacán.)

Finally—to conclude rather than exhaust the subject—the field agents hold that they are the victims of bureaucratic politics. They point out that in many cases the workers selected by the Commission are not equipped either by training or interest for the difficult task of organizing and supervising the ejido communities; that the field representatives are poorly paid and constantly shifted about and that, for these and other reasons, the *Jefes de Zona* are often inefficient and sometimes dishonest.

More than in rules and regulations, in the opinion of the undersigned, the solution of the agrarian problem will be found by putting an end to the favoritism which enters into the designation of the personnel; for the Chiefs of Zone, if their work is to be properly done, in addition to having the necessary agricultural knowledge, ought to be true apostles of agrarianism, . . . completely identified with this great and noble principle proclaimed on the field of battle and consecrated in our fundamental law. . . . (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 6-16, México.)

I believe that it is absolutely indispensable for the Commission to have representatives who are well prepared technically and well paid. Otherwise, any program for the economic improvement of the ejidos will remain a beautiful Utopia. (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 8-8, Puebla.)

. . . The few elements with which we have to work and the great difficulties which we have to overcome . . . [place us in a position] comparable to that of those missionaries who after the Conquest came to this poor country to inculcate our Indians with the Christian faith. I want to emphasize here the fact that the greater part of the employees of the government . . . lack that resolution and that spiritual strength of the missionaries to whom I have referred and are moved by pecuniary ambitions and the desire for personal comfort rather than by the pride which must have strengthened the souls of those friars, many of whom . . . perished at the hands of the Indians they tried to teach. This is the fun-

damental reason for the disorder in our work and I want to say that . . . until we have employees in the Ejido Administration who are well paid and given enough money for expenses so that they will not have to beg for services, we will not have efficient work and still less honest collaborators. . . .

This zone . . . has been unattended on some occasions and completely abandoned on others. . . . In the period of seven years between 1927 and 1933, there have been six agents in this zone not including the present writer. . . . Only one of these men stayed here as long as two years and all of the rest remained for periods of less than one year. . . . Of the six Chiefs of Zone just mentioned, two were prosecuted for maladministration of funds and of the other four, two were here hardly long enough to draw a deep breath which is probably the reason why they didn't leave behind them a record of bad conduct. . . . How is it possible to demand honest conduct of an overworked, hungry man who sees that by taking the money of others he can calm his hunger and dissipate his weariness? I can assure you that all of the men who have been sent to this zone have come with good will and a desire to work—some even with the ambition to lift the peasant masses out of their bewilderment and confusion. . . . But I can also assure you that when they found that they were badly paid; that in the majority of the cases, in order to subsist, they had to beg for alms from pueblo to pueblo, or, what is the same thing, from misery to misery; that those above them did not listen to them, and those below them did not understand them—it was then that they changed their minds and descended from the divine to the human . . . for in spite of everything it is the stomach which dominates the brain. (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 6-11, México.)

POLITICS AND POLITICIANS

The failure to work out a coördinated and comprehensive program for the ejidos, lack of funds, employees underpaid and overworked, officials often inefficient and sometimes dishonest, favoritism and back-stairs intrigue in the selection of administrative personnel—these have been the immediate factors and forces serving to disrupt and all but nullify the efforts of the government to organize and control the ejido communities. But above all, the rock which has blocked every path, the pervasive and omnipresent force which has debilitated almost every action and perverted practically every good intention has been and is politics.

The whole agrarian reform has been shot through with politics from the very beginning. In a previous chapter note has been taken of how politics has entered into the distribution of ejido lands, and in the present chapter we have crossed the trail of politics in the ejido villages and in the National Agrarian Commission. One would be content to let the subject rest with what has already been said did

not practically every report, every article, and every document bear witness to the fact that, as one writer has put it, "politics is the cancer eating out the heart of the agrarian reform." The ejido communities have been fair game and good hunting, in season and out of season, for politicians of every sort, looking for something for nothing, trying to defend ill-gotten gains, or simply bent on raising hell on general principles.

In many parts of the country it is the *hacendados* who are constantly stirring up trouble by inciting political quarrels and sometimes by suborning military and civil authorities to commit acts of outright violence.[15] But the *hacendados* are by no means the only villains in the show. If we are to accept the evidence of literally scores of apparently authoritative reports from the field, Municipal Presidents, Generals, Congressmen, Senators, and just plain politicians have all worn the black moustache and carried the whip of Simon Legree. The *hacendados* have had no monopoly on the business of troubling the waters of the ejidos in order to improve the fishing.[16] Indeed, so lucrative both in money and in power has the

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[15] "In view of the fact that this is a zone which contains a large number of haciendas and that about fifty per cent of the ejidos have been formed by communities made up in large part of peons from these same haciendas . . . the ejidatarios are constantly molested by the *hacendados* who almost always have the support of the civil and even sometimes of the military authorities. In some cases, with the help of the authorities, the haciendas have occupied part of the land belonging to the ejidos." (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 8-1, Puebla.)

"Another problem of capital importance in this zone is the frequent fights between the municipal authorities and the agrarians. . . . The municipal authorities nominate as their Delegates in the local communities individuals who are loyal to the haciendas and these Delegates are constantly stirring up trouble with the ejidatarios. . . ." (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 3-5, Guanajuato.)

[16] The intervention of soi-disant "leaders" in the affairs of the ejido communities is illustrated at some length in the case-study in Chapter XX. However, the writer cannot resist including, if only in a footnote, the following interesting side-lights on the same subject:

"The most serious problem presented to me in this zone is *liderismo*. The Congressmen, Municipal Presidents, and those at the head of the Regional Confederation of Labor interfere for political purposes creating divisions and inculcating in the ejidatarios sentiments of open rebellion against the agrarian authorities." (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 7-5, Michoacán.)

"The ejidatarios near Guadalajara, the majority in this zone, like to get themselves mixed up in petty politics. In this they are led by the politicians who for a long time have been exploiting the ejidatarios in this region. I have even noted cases of communism [*sic!*] in some of the ejidos." (Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 5-3, Jalisco.)

"The construction of the school buildings by the ejidatarios in this state has served to accentuate the struggle between the various political parties and the representatives of the National Agrarian Commission. The members of the parties invariably try to have it declared that their group was responsible for the construction of the school in order to

game of agrarian politics become that it has taken on some of the aspects of big business. There is hardly a state without an assortment of Agrarian Leagues, Peasants' Syndicates, and Ejido Parties, organized and led by astute politicians all too often with their eye on the main chance.[17] In the beginning some of these parties and their leaders were honestly and sincerely devoted to protecting the ejidatarios and improving their economic and social conditions. And this is doubtless still true of a few of these organizations. But most of the rest of them, if they have not been destroyed or absorbed by even more powerful political forces, are dominated by self-seeking individuals whose only interest in the peasant is his votes or his guns.[18]

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force the Ejido Committee to put their party emblem over the doorway and thus get the credit for this achievement . . . although as a matter of fact all they usually do is to contribute a few benches or desks and organize the fiesta of inauguration. . . .

"'Leaderism' is one of the most serious of our problems. . . . One of the reasons for this is the nearness to the Capital . . . and the individuals who have made this [politics] their *modus vivendi*. . . . On many occasions the negotiating of ejido business with the Commission and with the Ministry of Agriculture is a long-drawn-out affair and this gives rise to the intervention of these 'leaders' who help to speed up the matter.

"In general, relations with the civil authorities are good although some of them persecute the ejidatarios to such an extent that in certain places the situation is equal to or worse than before the revolution. Others, obeying the instructions of the political leaders of the parties which put them in office, simply back up the disorderly conduct of the village agrarian authorities. Thus, for example, in the Otumba zone, every attempt to punish the robbers and bosses of the ejidos has failed. In this zone . . . the village authorities distribute the ejido parcels to suit themselves, rent the pastures, sell the maguey plants and dispose of the ejido funds as they please without consulting or paying any attention to the orders of the Agrarian Commission. They can do this because the Municipal Presidents, the Judges and the agents of the federal government are all under the protection of a prominent member of a certain political party." (Report of the Regional Organizer for the State of México, April 14, 1933.)

[17] "The history of the peasant political organizations, however optimistic we may wish to be, has been a history of failure. . . . The peasants of Mexico, divided as they are in small groups . . . with various criteria and diverse conceptions of the social problem, have achieved only the stagnation of their aspirations. . . . The history of the peasant organizations reveals the same grave defects as that of the labor organizations: personalism and politicians and bosses with unlimited ambitions who have used the organizations for their own gain. . . ." Martino, "La organización campesina de México," *El Nacional*, Sept. 4, 1934.

[18] Commenting on a somewhat more optimistic view of the peasant political organizations given by Frank Tannenbaum in his recent book, *Peace by Revolution*, Carleton Beals states: "Tannenbaum gives no record of the smash-up of the Mexican labor and peasant movements by Portes Gil and his successors, or of the implications of the relations of the workers and peasants with the present semi-fascist, one-party ruling group, the National Revolutionary Party (P.N.R.). He leads us to believe that the peasant is expanding his organizations; actually they have been largely destroyed or converted into meaningless tails to the kite of the P.N.R. He lauds the peasant leagues of Veracruz and San Luis

Politics and politicians: here we have put our finger on probably the most difficult of all the many problems with which the ejido is confronted. Ignorance, poverty, technological backwardness, inadequate resources—those are matters which, given time and money, may perhaps be remedied, among other things, with schools, agricultural banks, and roads. But what can be done if the human material itself is basically unstable, undisciplined and essentially antisocial? What remedy can be found for a people whose "primordial sense of life," as one writer has expressed it, is an "irrational lack of confidence in whatever is or may be,"[19] a people to whom plotting, intrigue, treachery and even violence and murder are apparently second, if not first, nature? The answer to these questions is twofold.

In the first place, paradoxical as it may sound in view of the evidence which has been presented in these pages, the defendant is not guilty, or, at least not to the extent and in the manner charged. It is true that many Mexican villages are at the present time characterized by disorder amounting at times almost to a state of political and social anarchy. It is true that favoritism and neopotism, duplicity and double dealing, tyranny and despotism are often more apparent in the political processes of the Mexican rural community than fair play, law and order, and democratic procedure. And yet anyone who has come into close contact with the Mexican scene knows full well that there is another side to the picture. One has only to recall, for example, the "affectionate paternalism" characterizing the government of the little communities in the sierra of Puebla, so well described by Moisés Sáenz,[20] to realize that political

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Potosí, without warning us that they are adjuncts to the political ambitions of Governor Tejeda and General Cedillo. . . ." ("Peace by Default," *The Nation*, January 10, 1934). Whatever may be the justice or injustice of his criticism of Tannenbaum's book, there seems to be no doubt of the accuracy of Beals' interpretation of the recent history of the peasant political organizations.

[19] Ramos, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

[20] "One is impressed by the way in which these simple people respect the principles of authority and conserve the democratic formula. For many years they have been governed by *caciques* and patriarchs. . . . [The Municipal Presidents and the "Secretaries" are in fact appointed by the local "boss."] But the democratic formula is nevertheless maintained. There is no act of importance, no decision of any weight which is not sanctioned by the presence of the Municipal President or his representative. . . . These officials are the symbols of power, respect and order. If the Municipal President says it is so; then it is well said. The people know very well . . . who it is [i.e., the *cacique*] that gives orders to the Secretary. Nevertheless . . . they maintain a formula of government in which they themselves . . . appear as the ruling authority. One would say that they are children for whom the master has constituted a republic of little white lies. And, in truth, that is the way it appears. But with the difference that the 'children' are well aware of the simul-

order and social discipline, albeit sometimes without the more manifest trappings of democracy, are just as possible, just as "natural" in Mexico as they are in any other part of the world. Indeed, there are not a few rural communities which prouder and more powerful peoples might well imitate to their profit. One calls to mind in this connection the little village of Tepetlapa in the state of Oaxaca:

> In Tepetlapa . . . it is customary when there is a change of government at the end of the year for the incoming officials to "capture" those who are leaving office and send them to jail for one month in order to punish them for any abuses or shortcomings of which they *might have been* guilty during the year![21]

In the second place, although it is regrettable that the ejido communities apparently waste much time and energy in politics and internal dissensions, and, although it is to be deplored that so often the game of politics is played to the tune of popping pistols and violence and bloodshed of all sorts, yet, surely the present situation—pistols, politics and all—is to be preferred to the apathetic hopelessness of these same people only a few years ago. Violence, though death is sometimes its fruit, may be a sign of vitality, an indication of upsurging energies. Ejidatarios quarreling and intriguing among themselves, even ejidatarios "electing" their Administrative Committees with shotguns instead of ballots, are at least men with something to plan for, something to fight over, and not slaves and peons, landless, hopeless, and helpless. Out of competition and conflict there may come integration, unity and order; out of the sodden impotence of peons tied in debt slavery to the hacienda, the only issue possible was stagnation and death.

The giving of land to the rural communities of Mexico has released energies long latent and aroused hopes long dormant. These energies need to be directed and these hopes enchanneled. It is foolish to expect a people for generations chained in the thralldom of feudalism to convert themselves overnight into disciplined, democratic, and peaceful communities. The problem of the political organization and social control of the ejido villages needs to be reëxamined by the revolutionary governments. It cannot be solved by laws and paper programs, although both of these are necessary. It cannot be

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acrum and they accept it with a philosophical wisdom which leaves them satisfied. . . . In the end, one does not know, as in the dramas of Pirandello, who it is that is deceived—the mestizo who creates the simulacrum in order to govern, or the Indian who accepts it with his eyes open, knowing that only by means of this fiction can he maintain inviolate a measure of dignity for his race." Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla*, pp. 81-82.

[21] As reported by Jacobo Dalevuelta in *El Universal*. Italics inserted.

solved by shuttling the ejidos back and forth from one government department to another or by dividing responsibility as at present between the Agrarian Department, the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, and the Ministry of Agriculture. Above all, it cannot and will not be solved without a new vision and without a willingness on the part of the government to supply the funds and the leadership necessary to convert this vision into reality. For what is involved is nothing less than the transformation of a large part—in time practically all—of the rural life and institutional make-up of the nation.

CHAPTER XX

CASE IV: PISTOLS AND POLITICS

One cannot omit the personal equation, not an agrarian but essentially a Mexican question, the *bête noire* of land and all other Mexican problems, which hinders and delays when it does not make impossible their solution. Misuse of the power which the execution of the agrarian program gives to those entrusted with it has been flagrant. This applies less to the higher officials, in the ministry of agriculture, although not a few have been guilty, than to the state officials—governors and their appointees, the local agrarian commissions—and finally . . . to those in charge of the pueblos.

—ERNEST GRUENING, *Mexico and Its Heritage.*[1]

TAPILULA is one of the largest of a number of villages in a green and pleasant valley not more than three hours' drive from Mexico City. The greenness, if not the pleasantness, of this valley derives from the fact that, although the rainfall scarcely averages twelve inches a year, there is, nevertheless, an ample supply of exceedingly "rich" water; for through this region runs the drainage canal which carries off the sewage of Mexico City. By using this water for irrigation, Tapilula is able to overcome the disadvantages of poor soil, heavy frosts, and drying winds, and to raise a variety of crops most successfully and profitably. Indeed, the valley is famous for its high yield of alfalfa, corn, and barley; in some years the value of these crops produced by the village of Tapilula alone has been estimated at well over a million pesos. Moreover, thanks to its nearness to and its connection by rail and highway with Mexico City and other centers of consumption, Tapilula enjoys the further advantage of easy access to the largest markets the Republic affords.

For these various reasons one might expect the history of the some 1,500 farmers and their families living in Tapilula and enjoying the use of more than 7,800 hectares of ejido lands to be that of a prosperous and contented people. But such is not the case. On the contrary, Tapilula has during the last twelve years been the scene of more political intrigues, alarms, excursions, and assassinations by day and by night than perhaps any other ejido in the Republic.

[1] Reprinted by permission of the Century Company.

How Tapilula Got its Land

Although the main concern of this case study is with the relation and to some extent the explanation of the events in the turbulent political life of Tapilula since it received definitive possession of its ejido lands in 1921, it will be necessary before entering into that complex tale to say a few words about the previous agrarian history of the village.

According to the story as it is told by some of the present inhabitants of the village, Tapilula, beginning with its founding in 1546 about twenty-five years after Cortés completed the conquest of Mexico, has been engaged in one long, unceasing struggle to maintain possession of its lands. The first event in this 300-year battle took place in 1622 when a local official "unjustly confiscated the communal and other lands of Tapilula" and then "illegally and with notorious disregard for the laws of that time" sold them for delinquent taxes to a neighboring landlord by the name of José Cruz. Thus were first established the landed estates which later (in 1669) came to be known as the haciendas of San Pablo and Río Verde.

The citizens of Tapilula in the latter part of the seventeenth century started legal proceedings to recover their property. It was not, however, until 1744, some fifty-five years after suit was instigated, that the Royal Audience of the Spanish government handed down a judgment ordering the nullification of the arbitrary acts whereby the lands of Tapilula had passed into the hands of José Cruz. Five years later and after payment by the village of the 1,600 pesos of back taxes which José Cruz had originally put up in order to get the land, Tapilula was finally restored to the possession of its property.

Thus matters stood until Mexico gained her independence from Spain in 1821. In the unsettled period which followed, "the powerful owners of the haciendas of San Pablo and Río Verde profited from the complacency of the weak governments and undertook all manner of stratagems to persecute the representatives of Tapilula and to take from them the titles to the village lands." In 1850, with the aid of the governor of the state, the landlords, by the simple process of putting the legal representative of the village in jail and threatening to shoot him, succeeded in obtaining his signature to two letters admitting that title to the village lands was vested in the haciendas of San Pablo and Río Verde and that the village's right to the use of the lands was only that of conditional possession and enjoyment (emphyteusis).

Seven years later after Juárez had gained a measure of control in Mexico and had enacted the great Reform Laws, Tapilula again

started legal proceedings to recover complete and definite title to its lands and again was successful: in 1863 the Republican government handed down a decree declaring the letters signed by the village representative in 1850 to be without effect. This triumph, however, was short-lived. Once more the wheel of fortune turned and when Maximilian exercised his brief sway over the destinies of Mexico one of the acts of his government was to annul the Juárez decree of 1863 and reëstablish the *hacendados* in their possession of the disputed lands.

During the long dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, the fortunes of Tapilula were at a low ebb. The courts would give the village no satisfaction in the matter of its land titles and, if we are to believe the villagers, their houses were burnt, their officials shot and in general they were subjected to every manner and sort of persecution and oppression.

But now, as the movies put it, came the dawn. Or, at any rate, came the revolution of 1910. And with it the last chapter in the long struggle between Tapilula and the *hacendados*.

The first step in the process which finally eventuated in Tapilula receiving its lands at the hands of the revolutionary government was taken in 1914 when a native son who had risen to be a Colonel in Zapata's army gave the village temporary military possession of a large part of the San Pablo hacienda.

In order to legalize this procedure, a few months after Carranza had enacted his famous agrarian decree of January 6, 1915, a representative of the village, one Antonio Díaz, addressed a petition to the State Agrarian Commission. This petition, after reviewing the agrarian history of Tapilula, requested that the village be confirmed in the possession of the lands granted it in 1863 by Juárez and that it be restored to its rightful ownership of certain other lands.

Following the usual procedure, on March 6, 1916, the governor of the state handed down a decision declaring the petition of Tapilula to be right and just and on April 19, of the same year, the village was, accordingly, given provisional possession of some 8,700 hectares belonging to the hacienda of San Pablo.

The owner of San Pablo, "a distinguished Spanish lady," immediately entered a protest against the acts of the State Agrarian Commission claiming: (a) that in 1850 the then owner of the hacienda had made a settlement with the citizens of Tapilula in which they were given 150 *fanegas* (approximately 1,000 hectares) of land under emphyteutic contract; and (b) that all parties then agreed that Tapilula had no further cause for complaint; (c) that the titles to

the hacienda in question were absolutely clear and the boundaries were the same as they had been since 1850; and (d) that, therefore, the claims now put forward by the village for lands alleged to have been illegally invaded by the hacienda of San Pablo were unbased in fact and unjust in law.

But the distinguished Spanish lady did not allow the matter to rest with a simple protest. Her next act was to suggest to the National Agrarian Commission (in July, 1919) that if the government felt that the citizens of Tapilula needed her land, then the right and proper thing to do would be to buy the hacienda of San Pablo and give it to the village. This suggestion was backed up by a document signed by 397 Tapilulans stating that such an arrangement would be entirely satisfactory to them. Strangely enough, whether because of the pressure brought to bear on the Mexican government by the Spanish Minister or for some other reason, the government accepted the proposition. Negotiations, to be sure, almost broke down on the question of the purchase price—the owner of the hacienda claiming that it was worth 1,794,000 pesos while the government valued it at 1,098,000 pesos. Finally, however, after it was pointed out that for many years the hacienda had paid taxes on an evaluation of only 130,000 pesos, an agreement was reached in April, 1920, and initialed by President Carranza whereby the government was to pay 1,300,000 pesos gold for the land.

While these arrangements were being made, the Carranza government fell and on December 1, 1920, a new president, Alvaro Obregón, was installed in office. This was most unfortunate for the owner of the hacienda of San Pablo, for in less than a month after he had assumed office, Obregón signed a decree which stated: (a) that the owner of the hacienda of San Pablo was right in her contention that the claims of Tapilula for the *restitution* of land alleged to have been invaded by the hacienda were unfounded; (b) that, however, the people of Tapilula were urgently in need of lands and the government was therefore granting to the village under the process of *dotation* 7,853 hectares of land from the hacienda of San Pablo; and (c) finally, that, since under the agrarian laws the government had no power to purchase for cash lands judged to be necessary for the well-being of agricultural communities, the owner of the hacienda affected by the grant was free to exercise her rights to indemnification as provided by law (that is, could put in a claim for agrarian bonds).

Thus ended the struggle of almost three centuries' duration and thus did Tapilula on January 6, 1921, come into final and definitive possession of its ejido lands.

"Los Agraristas" Vs. "Los Ricos" and the Rise of Ricardo Rincón

The key to all that follows in this case history is to be found in the fact of the division of the village into two fundamentally antagonistic groups known locally as *Los Ricos* (the Rich Ones) and *Los Agraristas* (the Agrarians).[2] It is not clear just when Tapilula was split into these two groups. But certainly, by the time the village was given definitive possession of its ejido lands both groups were completely self-conscious. As the curtain goes up on the drama of the Ricos vs. the Agraristas, thanks to their success in representing the needs of the village before the State and National Agrarian Commissions, and later to their even greater success in monopolizing the ejido lands for themselves, it is the Ricos who are in the dominant position. They control the powerful Ejido Administrative Committee[3] and they also hold the key positions in the municipal government.

However, a year has passed since Tapilula received its ejido lands and the time has come, according to the laws in force, to elect a new Administrative Committee. The Ricos, led by Antonio Díaz and the Municipal President or Mayor, Carlos Acosta, are determined to

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[2] The following "cast of characters" may be helpful in keeping track of the ins and outs of the political drama of Tapilula as it is outlined in the succeeding pages.

Los Ricos	*Los Agraristas*
Carlos Acosta	Ricardo Rincón
Antonio Díaz	Octavio Barra
Antonio Fuentes	Fausto Barra
Adolfo García	Alberto Campos
Gabriel Herrera	Vidal Bonilla
	Máximo Luz
Supported by:	*Supported by:*
Governor Diego Zetina	Governor Mateo Huerta
Senator Mato del Campo	Congressman Rangel Prieto
General Emilio Morelos	N.A.C. Agent Armando Prado
Captain Pedro Ramírez	N.A.C. Agent Romero Arbol
Congressman Enrique Ortíz	
Congressman Julio Villa	
Carlos Rubín	

Although in the beginning the names of the two parties corresponded more or less to reality—i.e., Los Ricos were, generally speaking, the more prosperous citizens and Los Agraristas were mainly the poorer elements struggling to obtain their share of the village land—after a while this was not always the case, for, as will be seen, some of the Agraristas became rich and some of the Ricos became poor.

[3] The *Comité Administrativo*, it will be recalled, (except in those villages where the Law of Ejido Patrimony has been applied), is the legally constituted agrarian authority, Its powers include the right to distribute and redistribute the individual parcels of village and whenever in its judgment this is necessary for the good of all concerned.

maintain control of the Committee. The Agraristas, captained by Ricardo Rincón, Octavio Barra and Alberto Campos, are equally firm in their intention to oust the Ricos and have their day in court. The battle is on. . . .

January 7, 1922, the State Agrarian Commission (S.A.C.) notified the president of the Administrative Committee in Tapilula that it was time to call new elections. But for some not very clear reason it was the Mayor, Carlos Acosta, and not the president of the Committee who actually called and held the elections on January 29. Perhaps because the elections were secret and the Mayor himself counted the votes, a new group of Ricos, headed by one Marco Fernández, was elected to hold the various offices of the *Comité Administrativo*.

The very next day a letter signed by Ricardo Rincón and some two hundred other Agraristas was addressed to the S.A.C. reading in part as follows:

> The undersigned citizens of Tapilula, and the least considered in the distribution of ejido parcels—for many of us do not possess even a single bit of ejido lands—address you to protest in every way against the election of the new Committee which is very far from having satisfied our aspirations, for, against all established custom, no member of your Honorable Commission intervened in it [the election] who could take account of and avoid the vile tricks which were therein practiced. We, impotent against a well disciplined organization, and small in numbers, can do nothing to counteract its work . . . wherefore, we beg you to take into account the foregoing protest, to nullify the election . . . and to celebrate a new election.

The State Commission acceded to the request of the Agraristas and sent two of its representatives to supervise a new election. On February 12, these gentlemen reported back to the Commission that they had been unable to hold a new election because of the opposition of the Mayor and the group supporting him (that is, the Ricos). Whereupon the S.A.C. asked the National Agrarian Commission (N.A.C.) to support its nullification of the January 29 election and to give it authority to force the Ricos to hold a new election. In its letter to the N.A.C., the State Commission explained that there were two groups in Tapilula:

> . . . which struggle desperately to control the Administrative Committee; for since the grant of lands to this village was made during the violent period of the revolution without the [proper] intervention of the agrarian authorities, it transpired that the division of the ejido lands into individual parcels was made in so defective a manner that some ejidatarios possess

parcels illegally"; and, finally, that he was telling the N.A.C. of all this in order that "intrigues against the poor by their enemies should not prosper."

Rincón was right; the Ricos had no intention of taking their defeat lying down. First they solicited the aid of their friend Governor Zetina. The governor rallied to the cause and sent the following telegram to the N.A.C.:

I have the honor to inform you that an individual named Ricardo Rincón has declared himself President of the Administrative Committee in Tapilula and, refusing to recognize the President of the Committee legally constituted by this [State] Government, with 100 armed and arrogant men and without more authority than his own caprice is dividing arbitrarily the ejido land previously distributed in a constitutional manner. As this procedure is occasioning profound disturbances and is not sanctioned by any legal order, I trust that in the name of justice and equity you will immediately dictate proper preventative measures.

To this the N.A.C. replied with a copy of the opinion formulated by its Legal Department *in re* the legality of the sundry elections held in Tapilula and the Commission's reasons for supporting the Barra Committee. For the moment, at any rate, the governor was silenced.

The next step on the part of the Ricos was to get two members of their group, Antonio Fuentes and Adolfo García, to petition for an *amparo* (injunction) in the District Court against the acts of the Barra Committee. This led to a lengthy correspondence between the judge of the court in question and the N.A.C. which finally resulted in the judge's refusing to grant the injunction. Nothing daunted, the Ricos appealed the case to the Supreme Court of the Nation. (In this case as well as in another similar case started at about the same time and also taken to the Supreme Court, the final decision rendered some months later was against the Ricos.)

What with a perfect stream of protests, injunctions, and complaints continuing to pour in from the Ricos and their friends, the N.A.C., along toward the end of February, 1923, decided to send a special investigator, by name Armando Prado, to see what all the shooting was about in Tapilula. And it was precisely that which the special representative had to spend most of his time investigating; for, as Prado informed the N.A.C. in a telegram, before he could reach the village he received notice "of grave and bloody events in Tapilula, resulting in the death of one citizen and the mortal wounding of the President of the Administrative Committee."

After taking the precaution to get a military escort from a neigh-

boring town, Prado hastened to Tapilula. The details of the "grave and bloody events" he discovered to be as follows :

On the evening of March 2, a group of persons standing in front of a store and led by Gabriel Herrera (one of the Ricos) made an insulting gesture at Fausto Barra (the brother of the President of the Agrarista Committee) as he was passing by on his way home. Fausto Barra replied by pulling out his pistol. But when Gabriel Herrera and the group of Ricos with him also unlimbered their pistols, seeing the odds against him, Fausto ran to the house of his brother Octavio, crying for help. Octavio came out, pistol in hand, and started down the street with his brother. As they passed a brick wall, Herrera and his companions fell on them from behind and, after disarming Octavio Barra, shot him three times with his own pistol, killing him on the spot.

Meantime a number of citizens, attracted by the noise of the shots, got together and, knowing that Herrera had previously announced his intention of killing Octavio Barra, went to Herrera's house, where the latter and his friends had barricaded themselves, for the purpose of arresting the whole group. When they tried to enter the house, general shooting broke out and one of the citizens was killed. At this point, the Rico Mayor, Carlos Acosta, arrived and with the help of the soldiers from the local garrison disarmed and arrested a number of those who were trying to capture Herrera. Thus did Herrera, an intimate friend of the Mayor's, and his companions escape. (Later two of the citizens arrested by the Mayor were put in jail on the charges of housebreaking and robbery!)

The special investigator for the N.A.C. also reported that the Ricos had told him in so many words that they "were not going to accept the present situation which shut them out from the Administrative Committee nor were they going to abide by the rulings of the National Agrarian Commission ; the control of the Committee was theirs by right of their power and position in the community and they intended to have it." Moreover, according to Prado, the soldiers sent by the federal government for the express purpose of maintaining order and dealing impartially with all parties, had allied themselves with the Mayor and the Ricos and were used by the Mayor to serve his own purposes (such as preventing the capture of Gabriel Herrera).

Upon being informed of the foregoing facts by its special representative, the N.A.C. asked the Minister of Agriculture : (a) to charge Governor Zetina with the apprehension and punishment of the persons responsible for Octavio Barra's death ; and (b) to petition the Ministry of War to send a new military detachment to Tapilula

which would give proper guarantees to all the ejidatarios irrespective of their party affiliations.

The above recommendations were carried out. The governor promised to see that justice was done to all and the Ministry of War promised to make an investigation of the behavior of the troops stationed in Tapilula.

Despite these promises the affairs of the village continued in a most unsettled state. A special agent of the N.A.C. was warned not to enter Tapilula as the presence of any officials of the N.A.C. would not be tolerated by the Mayor. On April 30, Ricardo Rincón wrote a long complaint to the Minister of Agriculture in which he stated that the members of the Committee as well as many other agraristas were being subjected to systematic persecution by the Mayor and his supporters. Alberto Campos, the new President of the Agrarista Committee (whose election to take the place of the assassinated Barra had been confirmed by the N.A.C.), sent a letter to the N.A.C. stating that one of the Ricos was illegally harvesting the barley from land belonging to three Agraristas.

Once again the N. A. C. requested guarantees from Governor Zetina and a new detachment of soldiers from the Ministry of War. Once again the governor promised justice to all concerned and the Ministry of War promised to make an investigation. This time, although the governor still made no effort to restrain his friends, the Ricos, the Ministry of War did finally make an investigation and on May 23, 1923, the N.A.C. received a letter from the Secretary of War enclosing the following report from the state military authorities:

I have the honor to answer your superior order No. 1492, dated the 7th of the current month, dictated by the Second Table of the Chief of Military Operations in your meritorious charge in which there was enclosed to me a letter from the Ministry of War and Navy—letter No. 772014/86952 dated April 30, from Section 7a of Table 5a of the Department of the General Staff.

Allow me to inform you that I have made the investigations indicated and find that the whole situation is a mass of intrigues produced by the two parties which exist in Tapilula, both of which claim that the detachment there is at the disposition of each one of them, a thing which is impossible in view of the strict and definite orders given to the Chief of the Detachment in that place. Permit me to inform you [however] that I have ordered the detachment to be relieved, although I cherish the conviction that the intrigues will continue.

Never was a truer prophesy made. On the very same day that the above report was received by the N.A.C., the governor of the state

wired the Ministry of Government that with great regret he was forced to inform the Minister that the Mayor of Tapilula, Carlos Acosta, had been assassinated!

The governor's telegram was forwarded to the N.A.C. by the Ministry of Government. The N.A.C. in turn wired the People's Advocate to make an immediate investigation. On June 6, 1923, the People's Advocate sent in a report which, after relating how the Mayor and his cousin had been ambushed and shot down on a road near the town, went on to present the following interesting details about the general situation in Tapilula :

For a long time a group of well-fixed citizens in this community managed the ejido lands for their own profit. But there arrived a day on which the people took the power away from them. Whereupon, led by State Congressman Enrique Ortíz and with orders from the Governor, they [Los Ricos] in turn tried to wrest the control of the Administrative Committee from the Agraristas. The last mentioned are led by Ricardo Rincón and supported, it appears, by the National Agrarian Party and National Congressman Mateo Huerta. . . . The division between the two groups has been deepening and it is to be feared that the death of the Mayor was in retaliation for the killing last March of Octavio Barra, the President of the Administrative Committee elected by the Agraristas. . . .

The fear that reprisals will continue is widespread and there are rumors of the burning of a threshing machine, the firing of private homes and of anonymous lists of future victims. Since the village has no street lights, and the police, especially at night, are practically nonexistent, there is ample opportunity for one or the other of the contending bands to commit crimes. . . . Moreover, there is a newspaper reporter here who is . . . completely antiagrarian. He is the one responsible for the publication [in the Mexico City papers] of the most mendacious accounts of recent events in the village and he even tried to scare me by making obscene threats. . . .

The inquietude in this region is due in part to the fact that certain interested parties wish to stir up trouble so that they can obtain . . . the help of the military forces to reëstablish themselves in the dominant position which they once occupied, and, in part, to the fact that those really in need are now actually in control of the ejido administration and are thus interfering with the political ambitions of certain militant groups in the state.

The People's Advocate recommended that a mixed commission representing all interested parties be sent to Tapilula to make a thorough investigation and, by a new and definitive distribution of the ejido lands, to settle the whole question once and for all. Before this recommendation could be, or, at any rate, was carried out,

however, affairs of greater moment absorbed the attention of the government: in December, 1923, the de la Huerta revolution broke out. The two groups in Tapilula immediately took opposite sides—the Agraristas supporting the government (that is, Alvaro Obregón) and the Ricos enrolling in the ranks of the local de la Huerta chief, General Emilio Morelos.

This was a most unfortunate move on the part of the Ricos, for in a few months the Obregón government quashed the de la Huerta uprising and the Ricos were forced to flee the village and go into hiding. As time passed, however, and things settled down, the Ricos gradually drifted back into Tapilula and by the middle of 1924 felt strong enough to renew their campaign against the Agraristas. And, as usual, the Ricos were aided by their good friend Governor Zetina. This time the governor's aid and comfort to the Ricos consisted in sending to Tapilula a detachment of the state militia in charge of a certain Captain Pedro Ramírez.

Captain Ramírez, who, incidentally, was one of the principal supporters of General Morelos and hence of the de la Huerta revolution, lost no time in undertaking to rehabilitate the cause of the Ricos. His first commission, apparently, was to get rid of the Municipal President who had been elected by the Agraristas after the assassination of Carlos Acosta. This he accomplished with neatness and dispatch by kidnapping the president one dark night and beating him over the head with his pistol butt. The poor man did not die, but, what was probably just as satisfactory for the purposes at hand, has been feeble-minded from that day to this. According to charges made by the Agraristas, other activities by Ramírez during the latter part of 1924 were: the assassination of two brothers who had supported Obregón in the de la Huerta revolution, the stealing of horses and mules belonging to Agraristas, and the robbing of some of the Agraristas of their alfalfa crops. When the N.A.C. complained to Governor Zetina about the activities of Ramírez and asked for protection for Ricardo Rincón and his associates, the governor claimed that Ramírez was not stationed in Tapilula and that, moreover, Ricardo Rincón had committed various murders and was a fugitive from justice.

During the first months of 1925 all was quiet on the western front of Tapilula. But this was only a lull before the storm precipitated by the campaign for the election of a new governor to take the place of Zetina whose term was finally coming to an end. In this election the principal candidates were Mateo Huerta, reputed to be an honest man and a friend of the poor, and Carlos Rubín, henchman and

"imposition candidate" of the retiring governor and hence allied with the reactionary forces. As was to have been expected, the Ricos in Tapilula supported the candidacy of Rubín and the Agraristas aligned themselves with Huerta.

When the political campaign was at its warmest, the same Captain Pedro Ramírez who was so active in doing dirty work for the Ricos in 1924 and was, of course, one of the partisans of Carlos Rubín, took advantage of the fact that Tapilula was temporarily without a garrison of federal soldiers to attack and kill one of his enemies. When Ramírez heard that some of the citizens had sent to near-by villages for reinforcements and were going to arrest him, according to a report made by one of the agents of the Ministry of Government:

> Ramírez ordered his men to hide behind the church tower and the roofs of the houses adjacent. . . . When, about eleven o'clock in the morning, Vidal Bonilla and Máximo Luz [both Agraristas] passed near the church, shots rang out and they fell dead. . . . At four o'clock in the afternoon, reinforcements came from neighboring villages; both sides opened fire and the battle continued until two o'clock in the morning when federal troops arrived to restore order. . . . Two dead and fifteen wounded were found on the field. . . .

Despite these valiant electioneering tactics on the part of Captain Ramírez and his friends, their candidate, Carlos Rubín, was defeated and the Agrarista candidate, Mateo Huerta, was elected governor. In the face of this situation, once again a number of Rico families decided that it would be safer to leave Tapilula, at least for a time.

Seizing the opportunity created by the absence of the Ricos and the relative peace prevailing in the village, the N.A.C. decided to put a final stop to the constant strife by making a definitive distribution of the ejido parcels as provided under the new Law of Ejido Patrimony. Accordingly a commission of engineers was sent to Tapilula, and, after some months of labor, finally reported, on November 29, 1927, that the redistribution of ejido parcels had been completed. In view of subsequent events, it is important to note that there were a number of irregularities in the procedure followed by the N.A.C. engineers in dividing up the land. These were explained to the N.A.C. in a letter from the Chief of the Technical Department which ended on the following apologetic note: "It must not be forgotten that this was one of the first villages in which the Law of Family Patrimony was applied and [the engineers], for fear of a failure which would have resounded in all the neighboring villages, had to accede in part to the pretensions of the ejidatarios."

The Fall of Ricardo Rincón

From 1922 to the end of 1927 the Agraristas and their chief leader, Ricardo Rincón, ruled the roost in Tapilula. Beginning with 1928, however, the power of Rincón and the fortunes of his supporters began to wane. Up to 1928 there seemed to be a clear division in the village between the rich and the poor, the oppressors and the oppressed. After 1928 one is not so sure. One begins to hear things about Rincón (who, incidentally, was reëlected President of the Administrative Committee—or the Ejido Commissariat as it was now called—in July 1928, after already having served two years in that office) which do not quite fit in with his role as the self-sacrificing defender of the poor. For example, there was the matter of Rincón's relations to the Coöperative Bank.

Back in January 1923, several of the Ricos got together and formed a Coöperative Credit Society. When Octavio Barra and several other Agraristas complained to the N.A.C. that no one had any confidence in the Rico coöperative and that it had been formed by a bunch of "politicians whose only intention was to make money out of the poor," the N.A.C. sent a special investigator to look into the matter. This gentleman reported back, in effect, that Barra was right and the Rico coöperative was not worthy of support. Some three years later the N.A.C. gave its official sanction to a new Agricultural Coöperative Society formed by Ricardo Rincón, Alberto Campos and other Agraristas.

On October 20, 1927, the Regional Organizer in the state for the N.A.C. informed the department of the Ministry of Agriculture in charge of Ejido Banks[6] that Ricardo Rincón, the president of the Coöperative Society in Tapilula had been "systematically refusing to permit the Coöperative to grant loans to a number of ejidatarios who are perfectly solvent. . . ." Moreover, said the Regional Organizer, Rincón had for several years past been engaged in trading operations in barley and more recently in corn "thus interfering with the work of the Ejido Bank" in this region. In another report, made some months later by a special investigator for the Ministry of Agriculture, Rincón was charged with "trying to gain complete control over all the loans made by the Ejido Bank through his coöperative and to prevent the Bank from having anything to say about the allocation of individual loans."

While the evidence was accumulating that Rincón, the Defender

[6] These government banks, designed to organize and loan money to local village coöperatives, were established in 1926. For various reasons they functioned very inefficiently and were placed in liquidation at the beginning of 1932. See Chapter XXI.

of the Poor, had with the passing of the years been transformed into Rincón the Business Man, other and greater evils befell the Agrarista group.

As the term of Governor Huerta approached its end in the latter part of 1928 a political campaign for the election of a new governor was waged. This time, unfortunately, the Agraristas in Tapilula bet on the wrong horse and when the candidate supported by the Ricos was swept into office by a large majority the Ricos took this as sufficient mandate to have at their old enemies. Their revenge took the form of shooting some of the Agraristas (7 dead and 4 wounded) and running most of the rest of them out of town. That the Agraristas fell upon unhappy days indeed may be seen from the following letter from two of them addressed to the Minister of Government and dated November 2, 1928.

The undersigned, representing 1,800 ejidatarios of Tapilula, wish to inform you that for more than two months we have been made victims of unnumbered attacks upon our persons and our small interests at the hands of the Governor of the state who has sent a Captain with troops [to persecute us]. . . . The reason for these persecutions is that in the recent elections we did not support the candidacy of Mato del Campo for National Senator and Julio Villa for Congressman; individuals who have been . . . responsible for the fact that every person who did not vote in their favor has been pursued, jailed, and beaten. . . . Many citizens have been forced to flee their villages leaving their families in the most complete misery and their wives struggling for the support of their small children.

It is sad to have to tell you facts like the following: the ejidatarios who do not respond to the call of these gentlemen for political meetings are declared to be their enemies and thus the persecution starts, for they carry us *campesinos* around first here and then there like we were army horses and they do not take into account that we are poor and do not even have the necessary resources for the most indispensable expenses, and all this because they have the support of the Governor.

The Ricos were undoubtedly having their innings and were putting the Agraristas "on the spot" whenever and wherever they could find them. However, as the record now begins to disclose more and more clearly, the cause of right and justice did not lie entirely with the Agraristas. On the contrary, the charges against Rincón and his group begin to assume so dark a hue that it is difficult to distinguish the oppressed from the oppressors. Reports from the Regional Organizer's office and other officials of the N.A.C. at this time state:

(a) That the greatest irregularity existed in the distribution of

ejido parcels made by Rincón and the members of the Agrarista Commissariat.

There are individuals who have title to two parcels under the same name; some families have title to four or five parcels; parcels are held by women with men's names although they are not heads of families . . . 102 parcels are held by persons not living in the village. . . . The Ejido Commissariat holds 117 parcels "without owners" which it cultivates for its own benefit.

There is a group of about 50 persons who have formed a society called the Gentlemen Eagles (*Caballeros Aguilas*) . . . who by renting for a small sum the parcels of other individuals . . . are practically the owners of the whole ejido.

(b) That the Ejido Bank and the Coöperative had been run almost entirely for the benefit of Rincón and his friends.

The bank has not been concerned with organizing or improving the economic condition of the ejidatarios; but it has helped to impoverish them by loaning to single individuals sums greater than 2,000 pesos. These loans, made in small amounts in the names of the servants of the person concerned, were repaid in corn, but with corn which the persons receiving the loans bought at ridiculous prices from other ejidatarios with the very money advanced to them by the bank. . . . Moreover, the Gentlemen Eagles were permitted with the credit of the bank to sell other ejidatarios irrigation water for which service they collected [25 per cent] of the harvests of their victims. . . .

(c) That under the regime of Rincón the system of collecting 15 per cent of the harvests for the payment of taxes and for the formation of a fund for the improvement of the village as required by law had never been followed, but that instead Rincón in his capacity as president of the Ejido Commissariat had from time to time collected such amounts as he saw fit and spent them in the same way.

(d) And, that in general:

Ricardo Rincón, who functioned as the First Agrarian Authority of Tapilula from 1923 to the end of 1928, became a tyrant . . . dedicated to the exploitation of his fellow ejidatarios and transformed the ejido into a feudal estate of which he was the absolute master.

In view of the fact that Rincón (who was still legally president of the Ejido Commissariat and head of the Coöperative) had for some months found it inadvisable "for political reasons" to appear in Tapilula, the whole administrative machinery of the ejido had ceased to function. Obviously, before anything could be done to

straighten out the affairs of the village, it would be necessary to constitute a new Commissariat. Accordingly, the latter part of 1928, the N.A.C. designated as its representative in the Tapilula zone a certain Romero Arbol and instructed him to call elections and in general to clean up the whole situation.

After many difficulties Arbol finally managed to hold an election, on April 28, 1929, in which the Ricos were triumphant. The fact that the Ricos had publicly stated the day before the election that if they did not win they would make *mole*[6] out of the few Agraristas still in the village, may have had something to do with their victory.

And now the troubles of the representative (*Jefe de Zona*) of the N.A.C., Romero Arbol, began in earnest. The members of the new Rico Commissariat marched to his office and announced "flatly and firmly that they were going to start taking over the land and harvests of their political enemies just as their parcels had previously been taken away from them." Next, the Ricos made it clear that they had no intention of obeying the *Jefe de Zona's* orders to turn over to him the 15 per cent of their harvests required by law. When Arbol attempted to enforce the agrarian laws in relation to both of these matters and in other ways to reorganize the affairs of the ejido without reference to party lines, the Ricos appealed to the governor of the state whom they had helped elect only a few months before. They charged Arbol with refusing to give land to over 300 ejidatarios who had no land; with exceeding his authority by interfering in the affairs of the Commissariat to an extent "that the Ejido Commissariat served only to accept the responsibilities of his acts"; and with being a friend of Ricardo Rincón whom he allowed to continue in the possession of over 200 hectares of ejido lands.

Arbol, on the other hand, in letters to his superior, the Regional Organizer, charged the Ricos with persecuting the Agraristas and at the same time attempting to continue their system of exploiting the ejidatarios.

> Without exaggeration, out of the 1,400 parcels of land distributed in this village, not even 50 are worked personally and directly—all the rest are rented out on shares and worked by peons. . . . Generally speaking, this situation is due to the fact that all of the people here are addicted to pulque to such an extent that they will deprive themselves of corn before they will do without pulque. As a result, at the time of planting . . . they do not have a cent either for their sustenance or to pay for irrigation water. Thus they have to borrow from the grain monopolizers; unable to free themselves from their exploiters, the peasants in this region are in the same or worse conditions than they were before they had an ejido.

[6] *Mole*—literally, a dark brown chile sauce.

In this quarrel between the *Jefe de Zona* and the Ricos, the governor sided with the Ricos. The result was that the Regional Organizer, although admitting his subordinate, Romero Arbol, to be "a man of honor and efficiency, if, perhaps, lacking somewhat in tact," had to request the N.A.C. to transfer Arbol to another zone.

The final incident of importance in the life of Tapilula in the period covered by this case study resulted in something approaching a national scandal. In July, 1929, the Minister of Agriculture decided that if *finis* was ever to be written to the long series of disorders and irregularities of every sort in Tapilula it would be necessary to make a complete redistribution of the ejido lands. Accordingly, orders to this effect were given and in the same month a committee of engineers sent by the N.A.C. started to work in Tapilula.

Now an examination of titles and a redistribution of ejido parcels was, of course, the last thing desired by Ricardo Rincón and the more favored of his friends in the Agrarista group. For over a year the Agrarista leaders had been living in exile; they had been ousted from the control of the Ejido Commissariat, the Coöperative Society and the Municipal government; the governor of the state, to say the least, was not their friend; and, finally, no less a person than the Minister of Agriculture himself had given the orders for the redistribution of the ejido parcels. The chances of ever regaining their old place of power looked dark indeed; but the Agraristas determined to make one last stand. . . . Why not go over the head of the Minister of Agriculture and present their case in the National Congress and if necessary call for a congressional investigation?

On a certain day in the fall of 1929, Rangel Prieto, Congressman from the Eighth District and (as he described himself) "defender of the ejidatarios of the Nation," asked permission of the Chamber to address it on a "subject of grave interest to the Revolution." It had been brought to his attention, said Congressman Prieto in effect, (and here a letter from Ricardo Rincón was read and inserted in the record) that the Minister of Agriculture had given orders for a redistribution of ejido parcels in the village of Tapilula and that 552 ejidatarios, who because of political persecution were unable to return to the village, were in danger of losing their lands. Without any intention of attacking the purity of the revolutionary principles of the Minister, the Chamber should be informed that this action on the part of the Minister was entirely illegal; for the Law of Ejido Patrimony had already been applied in Tapilula and on November 27, 1927, the N.A.C. had given the ejidatarios in that place final and definitive titles to their ejido parcels. Moreover, this proposed new distribution of ejido parcels was at bottom nothing less than a "piece

of dirty politics," and simply an attempt on the part of the present governor to revenge himself on those persons in the village (Agraristas) who had supported his opponent in the recent state elections. Wherefore, concluded Congressman Prieto, I move that the Minister of Agriculture be called before the bar of this House to explain his actions.

Limitations of space do not permit a summary of the spirited debate which greeted Prieto's motion or of the even more spirited debate which took place when a few hours later the Minister of Agriculture accepted the "invitation" of Congress and appeared in person to defend his procedure. Sufficient it is to say that the Minister was able to show to the satisfaction of the Chamber that his action in ordering a new distribution of ejido parcels in Tapilula was legal in that there was a section of the law which provided that if in one year after a distribution of land had been made under the Law of Ejido Patrimony, valid complaints of injustices or irregularities were made, a new adjudication of parcels could be effected. Complaints of the type here in question had been made and duly recorded within the year required by law—wherefore, a new distribution or reapplication of the Law of Ejido Patrimony was perfectly legal. Moreover, said the Minister, those who were protesting against the proposed redistribution of ejido parcels "were a minority of individuals in possession of more than their share of ejido land—a group of little ejido 'bosses' who want to hold on to the numerous parcels which they now exploit. . . ." And, finally, the Minister pointed to chapter and verse in his official correspondence to prove that, far from aiding the governor or anyone else to persecute Ricardo Rincón and his friends, he had done everything in his power to help and protect the Agraristas. Whereupon, having said his say, the Minister retired from the Chamber "to the accompaniment of applause and hisses."

But the question was not allowed to rest there. Congressman Prieto's next move was to get himself appointed on a committee to discuss the whole matter with the President of the Republic. But in doing this the "defender of the ejidatarios," as the Mexicans say, *metió la pata* (put his foot into it); for, in the report of the committee to Congress, it was revealed that Prieto in his interview with the president had to back water and admit, first, that Rincón had made considerable money out of his maladministration of the funds of the ejido coöperative and, second, that the real reason why Rincón could not return to Tapilula was that he had been indicted for homicide and was a fugitive from justice.

Despite these damaging admissions on the part of Prieto, Ricardo Rincón and his fellows-in-misery of the old Agrarista group continued

to press their case and to try to prevent a new division of the ejido lands.[7] But to no avail, for the accumulation of evidence as the result of special investigations made by the N.A.C. satisfied the agrarian authorities that the distribution of ejido parcels made on the occasion of the application of the Law of Ejido Patrimony in 1927 was unjust, unfair and illegal—and that for all these things Ricardo Rincón was largely responsible. In due time a new and (presumably) better distribution of the ejido parcels was carried out under the auspices of the N.A.C. and everybody was happy. Ricardo Rincón remained in exile. The Ricos continued in power. Tapilula settled down to peace and prosperity.

Or, at any rate, one assumes that this must have been the case for, believe it or not, in August, 1932, Tapilula received a prize for being one of the best organized ejidos in the Republic!

[7] The following is an excerpt from the last anguished plea signed by Rincón and sixteen other Agraristas and addressed to the president of the N.A.C. on July 7, 1930:

". . . For more than a year we, the undersigned, have been hiding in this Capital [Mexico City] and in various places in the Federal District and living in a most precarious economic situation; for, not having had any work during so long a time, we have scarcely been able to get together enough money for the support of our families. . . . We have been subjected to a series of persecutions and most reprehensible acts by the Municipal Authorities of Tapilula who, in order to satisfy their thirst for gold and to the end of favoring a small number of their intimate friends, have dictated various dispositions which prejudice our interests and injure our persons to a superlative degree. . . . Over 600 persons have been deported from Tapilula and they have been threatened with being sacrificed if they return to the said village. . . . More than 30 of our fellows who ventured to return to their homes . . . have been villainously assassinated and their relatives mistreated with every imaginable kind of cruelty as we can prove. . . .

"We do not wish anything in these lines, sincerely written in the service of truth and with a view to aiding justice, but to say . . . that the cause of the unheard of procedures employed against us is to be found in the fact that our group participated in the last electoral campaign . . . fighting for the triumph of an able candidate . . . and when the victory of the present Governor of the state had been recognized, we abandoned the thorny paths of politics to dedicate ourselves to the fruitful ways of work. . . . In this pacific attitude we were when the Municipal Authorities . . . unwilling to tolerate the grave error into which we had fallen . . . of having opposed them politically, initiated the series of attacks on us which we have mentioned, giving as an excuse that we were guilty of criminal offenses. . . .

"As the serenity and rectitude of the Honorable Commission so worthily presided over by you is well known, we hope that you will be so kind as to do us the great service of using your valuable influence with the President of the Republic, the Ministry of State and of the Office of Government and the Governor of the state to see that we are given guarantees . . . in order that we may return to our homes and dedicate ourselves once more to the cultivation of our parcels so long abandoned. . . ."

CHAPTER XXI

CREDIT AND MARKETS— FIRST ATTEMPTS AT ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

The Problem

Mexico has never at any time during its history had anything even approximating an adequate system of agricultural credit. An attempt was made during the early days of the Colonial period to introduce the system of *Pósitos* which had been developed in Spain as a simple and relatively effective means of making crop advances to farmers. Later on the so-called *Cajas de Comunidad* were organized as something in the nature of community funds or mutual savings banks for the special benefit of the Indians. Neither one of these systems, however, was very successful[1] and in the Colonial period the Catholic Church was practically the only source of agricultural credit. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, after the Reform Laws had broken the economic power of the Church, a few institutions known as *Bancos de Emisión* (Banks of Issue) made such loans as were made for farming operations. For the most part only the large *hacendados* could obtain credit of any sort and then only at ruinous rates of interest. The small farmer either had to finance his operations out of his meager savings or fall into the hands of private money lenders and loan sharks.[2]

Periodic revolutionary disturbances, and the imperfect and unsatisfactory system of registering land titles both contributed to the great risks which characterized agricultural banking in Mexico. High rates of interest (often as high as 50 per cent) became traditional. Agriculture was possible at all only because of low wages and wasteful and uneconomic methods of exploitation.[3]

The first official attempt of any great importance to solve the problem of agricultural credit was made shortly before the end of the Díaz administration. By a decree of June 17, 1908, there was established the ill-fated *Caja de Préstamos para Obras de Irrigación y Fomento de la Agricultura* (Loan Bank for Irrigation Works and the Development of Agriculture). With a capital of 10 million pesos, (later in-

[1] Mendieta y Nuñez, *El crédito agrario en México*, pp. 31 ff.

[2] Gama, *La propriedad en México—La reforma agraria*, pp. 120-21.

[3] Gòmez Morìn, *El Crédito agrícola en México*, p. 135.

creased to 50 million pesos by the sale of 4½ per cent gold bonds guaranteed as to principal and interest by the government), this bank received its charter on September 3, 1908. In the short space of a few months 30 million pesos were loaned. But not a single one of these or any of the subsequent loans were made to small farmers. The *Caja* from the very beginning was merely an instrument through which a coterie of officials and their friends exploited their own private enterprises, for the most part, having very little to do with agriculture. Out of a total of 55 million pesos loaned not less than 53 million went to some 98 individuals. The end, of course, was financial disaster and the government is still carrying the burden of the enforced liquidation of this bank.[4]

During the postrevolutionary period, agricultural credit (except that supplied by the government institutions to be discussed later in this chapter and that provided by private organizations in certain regions and for special crops[5]) even for the financing of large haciendas has been practically nonexistent in any organized or formal sense.[6]

The lack of adequate institutional structure and the disorder which have characterized the financing of agricultural operations in general in Mexico have been more exaggerated in the special field of the marketing of agricultural products than in any other division. Agricultural markets, if by this term one means public exchanges with nation-wide coverage where supply and demand are enchanneled and prices set, are conspicuous by their absence. This is partly a result (and at the same time a cause) of the relatively loose internal integration of the whole Mexican economic system. Many regions represent practically closed economies. An interesting index of the extent to which this is true may be found in the figures for the movement of the two principal food crops—corn and frijoles. In the year 1932, for example, less than 76 per cent

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[4] González Roa, *The Mexican People and their Detractors*, pp. 72-73.

[5] Principally tomatoes and other fresh vegetables on the West Coast, cotton in the Laguna district and bananas in Veracruz.

[6] So far as large scale undertakings are concerned the reason for the lack of credit since the revolution has been very simple: the banks have been afraid to loan money and the *hacendados* have been afraid to borrow it. Perhaps the best evidence of the lack of confidence on all sides is to be found in the interest rates. In 1928, for example, according to the figures published by the Department of National Statistics, only 23.8 million pesos of mortgage loans were made on rural properties in the whole Republic. More than half of the 884 loans involving some 45 per cent of the value of the total loans were made at rates higher than 8 per cent and a good 46 per cent of the total number of loans, or about a third of all loans measured in terms of value, were made at rates varying from 11 to 36 per cent and up. See *Anuario de 1930*, Departamento de Estadística Nacional, p. 366.

of the frijole crop and only 26 per cent of the corn crop were transported on the railways.[7] Even when allowance is made for the undoubtedly considerable internal movement of these crops by other methods of transportation (burro, muleback, and truck), these figures clearly indicate that for the most part corn and frijoles, which occupy on the average around 73 per cent of the crop land planted each year, are consumed within relatively short distances from the places where they are raised.

In the case of that part of the corn and frijole crops which is the subject of trade and interchange as well as of those crops enjoying a much larger movement than corn and frijoles,[8] the markets are singularly disorganized. Monopolies, "corners" and political manipulations, as a study of the erratic and "unreal" nature of price trends reveals only too clearly, are much more important than the operation of the laws of supply and demand. The result of this situation, as one Mexican economist recently pointed out, is that "The agriculturalist, lacking in resources, is forced to sell his produce quickly and in the nearest place; the farmer, and especially the small farmer, is at the mercy of the local commission merchant who also functions as a banker, often in a usurious manner."[9]

THE SPECIAL NATURE OF THE EJIDO CREDIT PROBLEM

Even if Mexico at the beginning of the agrarian reform had possessed a system of agricultural credit and even if this system had been adapted to the needs of small farmers, it is doubtful that it could have been made to serve the ends of the ejidatarios. For so special are the legal, economic and social problems presented by this class of farmers created by the revolution that, for all practical purposes, they lie outside the field of any customary type of either private or public banking enterprise. The problem of providing ejidatarios with funds to work their newly acquired lands and market their products has been, and is, a problem of creating an entirely new type of credit structure.

In the first place it must be recalled that both as a matter of fact and as a matter of law the vast majority of the ejidatarios have very little, if any, private capital. As a matter of fact, because by definition those who receive ejidos are drawn from the vast body of "the miserable and the disinherited"; as a matter of law, because no person

[7] Fernández y Fernández, *El salario agrícola in México.*

[8] In 1932 the ratio, for example, of total tons transported on railways to total tons produced for rice was 117 per cent, for wheat 106 per cent, and for cotton 408 per cent. *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.*

who possesses "commercial or industrial capital of more than 2,500 pesos," or land "equal to or greater in extension than a [ejido] parcel" may benefit under the ejido laws.[10]

Second, ejido parcels are "imprescriptible and inalienable . . . and therefore in no case and in no form whatsoever may they be ceded, conveyed, rented, hypothecated, or made subject to lien in whole or in part." Moreover, ejido lands may not be the object of seizure as the result of a suit, law, decree, order or otherwise by any authority private or official, whether Federal, State or Municipal. All of which means that practically the only security an individual ejidatario can offer for a loan is his crop; and even with respect to his crop there are certain restrictions which render this security of doubtful value to an ordinary bank.

Finally, to the legal and economic peculiarities of the problem of providing credit for the ejidatario there must be added certain complicating factors of a social and political nature. It must be constantly held in mind that the great mass of Mexico's rural population has for centuries been living outside of and divorced from the institutions and procedures of modern economic life,[11] and is, for the most part, profoundly ignorant of financial and credit operations of any type.[12] The problem of credit for the ejidatario in its simplest

[10] These are the provisions of the recently promulgated Agrarian Code (Appendix B, II, 35). Up until the enactment of the law of March 21, 1929 (Appendix B, II, 27), however, the amount of commercial or industrial capital which a candidate for an ejido parcel could possess was only 1,000 pesos.

[11] The following description of the extent of the comprehension of pecuniary modes and methods in a typical rural community in Yucatán illustrates, as compared with many villages in Mexico, a relatively sophisticated type of community:

"Everyone understands the general nature of money, knows how to count currency, and uses silver, copper and—once in a while—gold coins. In making purchases in the towns and in the local sales for larger amounts (chiefly cattle), Mexican national currency is used. In the minor transactions, however, and therefore in payment of most purchases, money plays a secondary rôle. In the stores most purchases are made with eggs. . . . Copper centavos serve as small change. About one-fifth of all small local purchases are made with maize and a smaller fraction in real money. The traveling merchants are paid chiefly in poultry, but partly in money. The amount of money in circulation depends on the time of the year and the value of maize; just after the annual harvest has been sold, there is more; on the other hand, if people have withheld their surplus maize from the market for a better price, most purchases must be made with eggs, maize or hens.

"There is no banking, and no lending of money at interest." Robert Redfield and Alfonso Villa, *Chan Kom—A Maya Village*, pp. 60-61, published by the Carnegie Instutution of Washington.

[12] Most of the lower strata of the farmers have, of course, had some experience with the widespread system of crop-advances by which the *hacendados* have traditionally provided their renters, tenants, resident laborers and sometimes even neighboring "independent" small farmers with seeds, plows, work animals and small amounts of cash. Familiarity with this personalistic and usurious system, however, can hardly be regarded

form, therefore, is one of education. They must be taught the meaning of loans, notes, bonds, checks, shares, warehouse receipts, interest rates—in a word, they must be taught first that there *is* such a thing as agricultural credit, and, second, how this mysterious thing works.

But there is also another type of training the lack of which makes it difficult to introduce obviously indicated types of credit organization. The legal set-up of the ejido being what it is, it would seem that some form of coöperative society with collective responsibility would be the most satisfactory means for financing agricultural operations. Any attempt, however, to proceed along these lines meets the obstacle of what the prominent agrarian leader, Luis León, has described as the "lack of spiritual preparation." "The Mexican peasants," writes León,[13] "are still too individualistic. . . . As the result of their experience as an exploited class they feel a profound lack of confidence in any undertaking in which they cannot see complete compensation for their work clearly guaranteed. . . . They have no interest in collective work unless they are sure of its advantages." From this point of view, then, agricultural credit for the ejidatario becomes a question of education of a somewhat more complicated type—education, that is, in coöperative enterprise,[14] mutual confidence,[15] and in the meaning of moral responsibility in business transactions.[16]

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as knowledge of credit operations. Indeed, the system may be said to foster attitudes—servile dependence and lack of responsibility and initiative—just the opposite of those demanded for the successful working of modern methods of financing agricultural operations. For example, consider the following report (not at all uncommon) with reference to an ejido with the charming name of Agua de la Mula in the state of Coahuila:

"A number of the ejidatarios still lament the disappearance of the 'boss' who used to lend them seed, implements, oxen and corn for their plantings. Now they have no one to whom they can turn for help. The majority of the ejidatarios are quarreling with the former President of the Executive Committee . . . over loans for seed and implements." *Las misiones culturales, 1932-1933*, p. 46.

[13] "El patrimonio ejidal," *El Nacional*, December 6, 1932.

[14] "No ejido in this zone has used its coöperative funds to buy farm implements; and I think this would be undesirable, given the exaggerated individualism of our peasants." Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 7-1, Michoacán (62 ejidos).

[15] "My greatest problem in this zone is the lack of comprehension on the part of the Administrative Committees and in general on the part of the ejidatarios; the cause of this incomprehension is their ignorance, their lack of culture and their lack of confidence in the programs and plans for ejido organization which are proposed to them." Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 4-5, Hidalgo (45 ejidos).

[16] "We need to establish a bank which will be a creator of credit for the peasants . . . the bank must undertake a labor of education, of strict vigilance over the peasants and their coöperatives. . . . We must watch them in order that they shall learn to comply with their promises. . . . When they have . . . become imbued with the idea of meeting

A few concrete illustrations will serve better and more quickly to present the essential nature of the credit problem for ejidatarios than any amount of generalization. The following quotations are from the reports (1933) of the field representatives (*Jefes de Zona*) of the National Agrarian Commission.

PUEBLA, ZONE 8-11 (36 EJIDOS)

The ejidatarios in this area must be provided with money and with implements with which to work their parcels, for they can't do anything by themselves just with the bare land which has been given them. . . . The only individuals in this region who have received any benefit from the ejidos are those non-ejidatarios who have animals and money; these are the ones who control the ejido parcels and who receive two-thirds of the crops which the ejidatarios produce.

JALISCO, ZONE 5-9 (23 EJIDOS)

The principal problem in this zone is the almost complete lack of farm implements, work animals, and money for the subsistence of the ejidatario and his family during the period of cultivation.

GUANAJUATO, ZONE 3-5 (21 EJIDOS)

A problem of vital importance not only in this zone but throughout the state is the lack of work animals; the need for credit to buy these [animals] has been felt here from time immemorial. In order to cultivate their lands the ejidatarios are obliged to rent oxen from persons outside the ejido, paying from ten to twelve hectoliters of corn. This means for many the loss of half or more than half of their harvests.

MÉXICO, ZONE 6-3 (38 EJIDOS)

As in this zone the principal problem is the lack of water for irrigation . . . it is indispensable that the Department concede credits to the pueblos for the construction of irrigation works, for the execution of such works is beyond their economic possibilities.

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their obligations, we will then have a [real] system of peasant credit." Speech before Congress by Pérez Treviño, Minister of Agriculture, reprinted in: *Ley de crédito agrícola* . . . p. 27.

"We must provide all the ejidatarios in this zone . . . with credit, but before doing so we must create in them the idea of punctual payment of their debts; for at the present time an ejidatario will obtain a loan . . . but when payment comes due he feels no obligation to pay it; he cares nothing about the accumulation of interest . . . and abandons his debt. . . ." Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 7-4, Michoacán (52 ejidos).

HIDALGO, ZONE 4-6 (41 EJIDOS)

Fifty per cent of the ejidatarios in this zone need work oxen and agricultural implements. . . . It is impossible for the ejidatarios to acquire these with the products of their parcels, for the typical maximum parcel in this zone is 5.9 hectares of seasonal land of the second class. The majority of the ejidatarios rent their parcels on half shares because it is absolutely uneconomic to buy a pair of mules to cultivate such insignificant patches of land.

The foregoing cases illustrate the need for "production credit," but unless the ejido is to be conceived purely as a subsistence unit, a closed circle with neither economic entrance nor outlet, it should be obvious that credit for the financing of marketing operations is quite as important as that for production. The failure to provide credit for crop movements inevitably must mean that the ejidatarios will become the victims of the vicious system of *compras al tiempo* (buying of "futures"). This system, almost the sole means by which traditionally the small farmer has been able to market his crops in Mexico, has many variations only the most widespread of which may be mentioned here.

At any time in the period between planting and harvest a farmer in need of money may agree to sell his crop to one of the numerous commission brokers (*acaparadores*—monopolizers, they are usually called) scattered throughout the rural districts. The nearer the harvest the more the farmer will be offered for his crop, but rare indeed is the case when the farmer receives in cash half the value his crop will have at the time of the harvest and often he receives as little as one-fourth its future value. This means that in the short space of a few months the *acaparador* makes anywhere from 100 to 175 per cent on his investment. A slightly different procedure, and one even more remunerative for the commission merchant, is to buy the farmer's crop without stipulating the future price. That is, the farmer in return for a small amount of ready cash, will agree to hand over his crop when it is harvested with the understanding that he is to receive the market price at the time less a certain per cent. It is not unusual for an *acaparador* under this system to pay as little as one peso a hectoliter for corn worth three pesos or more at the time it is delivered to him, thus making a neat profit of several hundred per cent in, say, ninety days with almost no risk.[17]

[17] Fernández y Fernández, *El salario agrícola en México.*

That the ejidatario has not been immune from the workings of the system just described may be seen from the following cases selected from scores of similar reports from all parts of the country.

MICHOACAN, ZONE 7-5 (57 EJIDOS)

Among the most important problems related to the ejidos in this region is the absolute lack of credit and of warehouses and storage places for the ejido crops. . . . Through their inability to hold their crops for good prices, the ejidatarios suffer great losses.

JALISCO, ZONE 5-6 (28 EJIDOS)

. . . Another serious problem is that of the *acaparadores* who buy the products of the ejidatarios at very low prices . . . due to the fact that the ejidatarios do not have enough money to live on. . . . Few, indeed, are the ejidatarios who are well enough off to be able to hold their crops until they can sell them at the best price.

HIDALGO, ZONE 4-4 (18 EJIDOS)

All of the pueblos in this zone because of the lack of money to buy agricultural implements and supplies and to defray the other costs of cultivating their lands, find themselves in the very difficult position of being unable to prevent the little which they are accustomed to harvest from falling into the hands of the *acaparador* who pays very low prices to the peasants. . . . It is undeniable that as long as some way is not found to render immediate economic aid to the peasant, his moral and material development will be almost nil.

The upshot of all that has been said in the preceding pages is the simple and fundamental fact that, whatever may be the economic, social and political considerations involved, the ejidatarios must have credit. The average size of the ejido parcel granted up to the present time is small enough even under the best of conditions. The only hope the ejidatario has in the vast majority of cases of gaining even a subsistence from his newly acquired land is for someone to finance both his production and marketing operations. He must have not only long term loans for the purchase of plows, work animals, machinery and other relatively permanent types of equipment, but also short term advances for seed, fertilizer, food for his livestock and consumption goods for himself and his family. In the nature of the case, it is the government which must step in and supply the necessary funds for an adequate system of ejido credit. The

immediate alternative is the abandonment of the ejidatario to exploitation by the *hacendado*, the loan shark, and the local politician; the ultimate alternative is the complete failure of the whole ejido program.

The Program and Progress

During the early years of the agrarian reform the question of agricultural credit was agitated on a number of occasions and several preliminary gestures were made with a view to encouraging the establishment of agricultural banks.[18] It was not until 1926, however, that the first real attempt was made to deal in a formal and comprehensive fashion with the problem. In that year a series of laws were enacted. The two most important were the Law of Agricultural Credit of February 10[19] which established a general institution of agricultural credit known as the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, and the Law of Ejido Agricultural Banks of March 16[20] which created a special system of regional banks designed primarily to serve the needs of the ejidatarios. On January 2, 1931, both these laws with their several regulations and modifications were thrown into the discard and the whole system of agricultural credit was reformed and reorganized under a law entitled, The Law of Agricultural Credit for Ejidatarios and Small Agriculturalists.[21] Two years later there was another shake-up and on January 24, 1934, the law of January 2, 1931, was replaced by an entirely new law.[22]

Once again the story has been written by the lawyers! Accordingly, it is to the laws and the whys and wherefores of their reforms that we must first turn if we would know the contents of this interesting chapter in Mexico's agrarian history.

The Structure of the Original System of Agricultural Credit

The original attempt of the government to set up a system of agricultural credit involved the creation of two separate institutional structures. First in order of temporal precedence as well as in financial importance was the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, authorized by the law of February 10, 1926. This bank was formally opened for business on March 10, 1926, with a nominal capital of 50 million pesos and a paid-up capital of a little over 20.3 million pesos. Of the paid-up capital, some 11.8 million pesos was in cash

[18] See the laws of Sept. 29, 1924 and Dec. 24, 1924 and the decree of July 21, 1925—Appendix B, VIII, 1, 2 and 3.

[19] *Ibid.*, VIII, 4.

[20] *Ibid.*, VIII, 6.

[21] *Ibid.*, VIII, 17.

[22] *Ibid.*, VIII, 22.

as follows: the federal government 9.5 million; the Bank of Mexico (the federal government bank of issue and discount) 1.9 million; state governments 55,000; other banks and private individuals 262,000. The rest of the total paid in capital, or some 8 million pesos, was in the form of credits and properties of the old *Caja de Préstamos*[23] (in liquidation). From these figures it will readily be seen that the new bank was in every sense an official bank, definitely owned and controlled by the federal government.

By the law of February 10, 1926, the National Bank of Agricultural Credit was authorized to make loans to individuals, to issue debentures and mortgage bonds, to guarantee principal, interests or dividends of securities issued by agricultural credit institutions and in general to promote organizations and enterprises contributing to the agricultural development of the country. But the avowed purpose of the bank, the real function it was expected to perform, was that of rounding out and completing the agrarian reform—that is, it was expected that the bank would devote the major part of its attention and funds to assisting small farmers, including in this category the ejidatarios. To this end the law charged the bank with the obligation of organizing and encouraging in every way possible the development of special coöperative credit associations to which loans could be made on the basis of collective responsibility.

Almost simultaneously with the establishing of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit the government launched a second and entirely independent system of credit institutions by the Law of Ejido Banks of March 16, 1926. These banks were (originally) placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture and were distinguished by the fact that they were allowed to operate only with their associated coöperative societies. Moreover, only ejidatarios or "small agriculturalists whose economic and social interests are intimately linked with ejido units" could be members of the coöperatives.[24]

On May 1, 1926, the system of Ejido Banks was inaugurated by the establishment of four banks—one in each of the states of Durango, Hidalgo, Guanajuato and Michoacán. The nominal capital for each bank was 200,000 pesos, or 20,000 shares valued at ten pesos per share. The plan was for the government to start the banks off by

[23] See above p. 375.

[24] The Law of Ejido Banks was "regulated" on April 10, 1926 (Appendix B, VIII, 7). The sections referring to the organization and functioning of the local coöperatives were subject to and further regulated by the special legislation covering all types of coöperatives enacted on April 16, 1926, and January 21, 1927 (Appendix B, VIII, 8 and 12).

purchasing all, or a large part, of the shares and then to retire from financial participation as rapidly as the shares could be sold to the associated coöperative societies. It was also planned to extend the system as quickly as possible to all of the principal agricultural centers in the Republic.

At the beginning of this section it was stated that the laws establishing the National Bank of Agricultural Credit and the Ejido Banks represented the "first real attempt to deal in a formal and comprehensive fashion" with the problem of agricultural credit. And this is true if the emphasis be placed on the words "formal" and "comprehensive." As a matter of fact, however, the Ejido Banks and the National Bank of Agricultural Credit were preceded by and were an outgrowth of an earlier, albeit abortive, effort to meet the credit needs of the ejidos.

In June, 1922, a division was established in the Ministry of Agriculture known as the *Dirección de Cooperación Agrícola*. The announced purpose of this agency was: "to propagate among the beneficiaries of ejido [grants] . . . ideas of association and to provide the necessary elements for the cultivation of the land."[25] During the course of the ensuing twelve months the *Dirección de Cooperación Agrícola* organized a number of coöperative societies to which credits in the form of machinery, implements, and cash were extended to the amount of several hundred thousand pesos.

Meantime (October, 1922) the National Agrarian Commission had issued Circular No. 51 and was also engaged, through its Department of Ejido Development, in organizing coöperatives. To avoid duplication of effort, in June 1923, the *Dirección de Cooperación Agrícola* was merged with the National Agrarian Commission's Department of Ejido Development. This department continued to organize coöperatives and to extend credits in a rather sporadic and irregular fashion. No figures are available concerning either the extent or the success of the credit operations of the Department of Ejido Development. Such evidence as can be obtained indicates that the number of ejidatarios reached was relatively small and that there was endless difficulty over collections.[26] Moreover, the National

[25] *Informe rendido por el C. Gral. Alvaro Obregón . . . ante el H. Congreso de la Unión durante el período de 1921 a 1924*, p. 44.

[26] Apparently a number of loans made by the Department of Ejido Development were eventually written off as the easiest way of settling the matter—see the Decree of December 12, 1930 (Appendix B, IX, 4), which authorized the Federal Executive to cancel the debts of small farmers and ejidatarios owing to the Ministry of Agriculture for agricultural machinery and implements.

Commission's plan, set forth in Circular 51, whereby ejido coöperative societies were to obtain operating capital by setting aside 10 per cent of their harvests each year for the constitution of a fund known as the *fondo de impulsión cooperativa*, worked out on paper somewhat better than it did in practice: in many ejidos it was impossible for the ejidatarios to give up 10 per cent of their harvests and still keep body and soul together; in other ejidos where the 10 per cent was collected, all too often those in charge of the money were guilty of embezzlement or other forms of malfeasance.

A further purpose, then, of the Ejido Banks was to take over the coöperatives established by the National Agrarian Commission, to combine them into regional systems, and introduce some sort of order into the management of the loans and the use of the *fondos de impulsión cooperativa*. To this end the regulation[27] of the Law of Ejido Banks provided that the funds for coöperative development which had been, or would be in the future, collected under the 15 per cent provision of Circular 51 in those ejido communities where the Law of Ejido Patrimony had not been applied should be used to form part of the capital of the Local Coöperative Societies to be established under the new Law of Ejido Banks. The regulation further stipulated that the fund in question "should be dedicated in its entirety" to the purchase of stock in the Regional Ejido Bank with which any given Local Agricultural Coöperative should become associated.[28]

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[27] Appendix B, VIII, 7.

[28] Between 1926 and the recasting of the laws of agricultural credit in January, 1931, additional reforms and modifications with regard to the collection and use of the 15 per cent were made on three occasions: (a) The decree of July 23, 1927 (Appendix B, VIII, 13), reaffirmed the obligation of the ejidos to collect the 15 per cent and to devote two-thirds thereof to the purchase of stock in the Regional Ejido Banks. (b) The law of August 25, 1927 (III, 4), stated that ejidatarios, even in those cases where the Law of Ejido Patrimony had been applied and the individual parcels of crop land had been definitively allocated, should continue to turn over to the ejido administrative authorities 15 per cent of their harvests—one-third of which was to be used for the payment of taxes and for material improvements and the remaining two-thirds for the constitution of the *fondo de impulsión cooperativa*. The law further provided that in case any ejidatario refused to pay the 15 per cent his ejido parcel should be taken away from him either temporarily, or permanently, depending upon the seriousness of the offense. (c) Finally, a special decree of January 19, 1928 (III, 5), empowered the Ministry of Agriculture, in view of the many difficulties which had arisen in the collection of the 15 per cent quota, to fix money equivalents in which payment could be made. These equivalents were to be determined each year by regions on the basis of the quantity and quality of the land involved.

CRITICISM OF THE ORIGINAL SYSTEM OF AGRICULTURAL CREDIT

For many reasons and in many ways the system of agricultural credit set in motion by the laws creating the National Bank and the Ejido Banks did not achieve the success hoped for.

So far as the National Bank of Agricultural Credit was concerned, the first and most obvious fact is that its operations were limited from the very beginning by the lack of sufficient effective capital; for some 8 million pesos or almost 40 per cent of the original paid-up capital of 20.3 million pesos was not in cash but in the form of credits and other assets of doubtful value.[29] This situation would have been bad enough, but when it is remembered that the bank was charged not only with the duty of making ordinary loans but also with the responsibility (and expense!) of creating a whole new credit structure for the benefit of the small farmers and ejidatarios it is easy to see that the cost of administration and supervision automatically limited the operations of the bank to an even greater extent than would have otherwise been the case.[30] The liquid capital was later increased somewhat over the initial amount, but, even if the bank had had the advantage of the most astute management in the world (which unfortunately was far from being the case) it is obvious that it could never have done more than make a feeble gesture toward supplying the credit needs of Mexico's 3.6 million agriculturists.

In the second place, as was perhaps not unnatural under the circumstances, the bank tried to do business where business seemed to be most profitable. This meant in practice that the small farmer and the ejidatario organized in coöperative societies were neglected in favor of private individuals. It was clearly the intention of the law, as may be seen from the interest rates and other conditions of loans, to favor the coöperative societies at the expense of private individuals, but this very fact made it more desirable from a purely commercial point of view to make loans to private individuals. In the period of a little less than five years during which the bank operated under the original Law of Agricultural Credit, loans were made

[29] These "assets" of the old *Caja de Préstamos* were mostly rural properties, but properties of such kind and of such size that they could not be sold, exploited by the bank, or even rented. They simply hung as a dead weight around the bank's neck. An attempt which was made to dispose of one of the best of these properties by dividing it up and settling colonists on it proved to be too expensive and was eventually abandoned.

[30] Sánchez de Tagle, "Dinero para los agricultores," *El Excelsior*, October 17, 1929.

totalling around 36.5 million pesos, but of this amount only 3.2 million pesos, or 8.9 per cent, went to 9,495 ejidatarios and 3.4 million pesos, or 9.2 per cent, to 6,025 non-ejidatarios organized in coöperative societies, while 29.9 million pesos, or 81.9 per cent of the total was loaned to 1,409 individuals (Fig. 36, p. 401). Put in another way, while 1,409 individuals (presumably agriculturalists operating on a relatively large scale) were receiving loans averaging 21,237 pesos per loan, 200 coöperative societies of ejidatarios were extended credits averaging only 341 pesos per member and 143 coöperative societies of non-ejidatarios received loans averaging 557 pesos per member.[31]

But the figures just presented do not by any means tell the whole story. It is regrettable to have to add that many of the loans to private individuals were extended for "reasons of state" rather than for the reasons with reference to which banks are theoretically supposed to operate. Thus, for example, in 1926 a series of loans were made on doubtful security to a group of well-connected gentlemen interested in chick-peas in the state of Sonora; in 1927 a former member of the Cabinet borrowed 100,000 pesos with which to buy an hacienda; another 100,000 pesos was loaned to a prominent agrarian leader, also a former member of the Cabinet; in the same year two well-known generals in the army received loans for lesser amounts; finally, there was the case of several millions of pesos (no one knows how many) that were advanced to a certain engineering company. Not all of these loans, to be sure, were "bad"; some of them were repaid promptly with interest, for others the bank regained only the principal; but not a single one of them was "legitimate" and an appreciable number either remain on the books to this day with the possibility of their collection becoming more and more remote, or have simply been written off as good riddance of bad rubbish.

A third reason for the failure of the National Bank to meet the high expectations of its founders was just plain poor judgment on the part of its officials.[32] While the administrative costs were allowed to mount year by year the amount of business done by the bank steadily declined. Thus in the year 1930 when the ratio of loans

[31] Appendix A, Table 54.

[32] Undoubtedly the faults of administration are partly to be explained by the injection of politics into the choice of the bank's officers. This was notoriously the case in the latter part of 1929 and during all of the last year of the bank's existence. In 1930, the manager and many of the members of the board were distinguished by their capacity for maintaining friendly relations with important figures in the Ortiz Rubio government rather than for their ability as bankers.

repaid was less than 32 per cent and the total loans made were around 3 million pesos, the total operating costs of the bank were close to 700,000 pesos. In the same year it cost the bank 17 per cent of the value of the loans made to coöperative societies to administer loans which were only producing 8 per cent interest! Credits, even when not extended for "reasons of state," displayed a discouragingly uniform tendency to become "frozen"—sometimes so tight that they were finally written off the books. The outstanding case of this type was the 1.8 million pesos of the bank's money used to finance an undertaking known as the *Sociedad Regional de Productores de Leche* (Regional Society of Milk Producers). In this little essay in the "development of the nation's agricultural resources" the bank dropped a million pesos. Although no figures are available to show just how much of the bank's assets were congealed at any given time, some light is thrown on the subject by the statement in the 1928 annual report to the effect that the capital of the bank at that time was not "completely frozen"![33]

The difficulties and shortcomings of the Ejido Banks matched in many respects those of the National Bank. Once again, the principal problem was lack of operating funds. The total capital of the nine regional banks which were founded in as many states under the Law of Ejido Banks never amounted to as much as 1.4 million pesos. Of this amount the federal government, although it was supposed to supply each bank with an initial capital of 200,000 pesos, on the average actually put up less than 100,000 pesos per bank or a total of some 866,000 pesos in all. The remaining 500,000 pesos of capital came from the associated coöperative societies.[34] As a result of the situation created by the stringent limitation of funds during the four and a half years that the system was in operation, less than 800 coöperative societies were formed with a total membership of perhaps 50,000 ejidatarios and small farmers.[35] No figures are available with reference to the total loans made by the Ejido Banks, but there is reason to believe that in only a few years did the

[33] Sánchez de Tagle, *op. cit.*

[34] Appendix A, Table 53.

[35] For comparison: in the nine states in which Regional Ejido Banks were established there were at the end of 1931 (the year in which the system of Ejido Banks was superseded) 1,974 ejidos definitively constituted with a total population of 413,818 ejidatarios. The total number of definitive ejidos in the Republic in 1931 was 3,756 with a total of 717,234 ejidatarios. Thus even if the Ejido Banks had been able to make adequate loans to every one of the some 800 coöperatives nominally associated with them they would have been supplying less than 41 per cent of the definitive ejidos theoretically in need of credit in the states in which they were operating and less than 22 per cent of the ejidos in the whole Republic.

sum of the operations of all the banks exceed a million pesos. Little wonder that the ejidatarios complained bitterly of the small amount of assistance they received from the ejido banks.[36]

In addition to the embarrassment arising from the lack of capital and the consequent inability to meet more than a small fraction of the demands for loans, the Ejido Banks, according to some critics, labored under the disadvantages of maladministration, if not misfeasance. In summarizing the work of the Ejido Banks the Manager of the National Bank of Agriculture stated in 1933:

> The system of Ejido Banks, so generous from the sentimental point of view, was very weak from the economic point of view. . . . Despite the fact that the salaries and other expenses of these banks were paid out of the budget of the federal government, the administrative methods (much too liberal) soon brought about the practical paralysis of their operations, thus training the peasants in ways having little relation to the [proper] conduct of credit relations."[37]

In 1931 the President of the central League of Agrarian Communities went so far as to say that the Ejido Banks had produced "no practical results whatsoever," that loans were made "only to the rich and those with political influence," and that the foremen and *encomenderos* of Colonial times were "nothing compared with these so-called Agricultural Banks and their octopus tentacles with which the politicians were feeding on and exhausting the energy of the peasant and the riches of the nation."[38]

Whether or not the charges illustrated in the above paragraph were true to quite the extent that this dramatic quotation suggests, from such records as are available it would certainly appear that restricted capital funds, low interest rates, and unwise loans quickly brought some at least of the Ejido Banks to the point of insolvency. The bank in the state of Guanajuato, for example, according to one set of figures, in the years 1926-1927, spent over 93,000 pesos on salaries alone while the total loans for the period in question were

[36] The following remarks made by an "unknown young ejidatario" in an agrarian congress held in Guanajuato (one of the first states in which an Ejido Bank was established) in June, 1930, are typical:

". . . In Guanajuato there is only one thing lacking to make the [ejido] lands, which now scarcely provide their possessors with enough to eat, really productive: money. The day when every ejido has its oxen and its plows and when the ejidatarios have enough to fill their stomachs while they are waiting for the harvests, will see the ejido parcels produce enough to pay taxes, to provide seed for the next year and even a little for savings. But until that day comes you might as well forget projects and utopias . . . for the agrarian problem cannot be solved without money." *El Universal*, June 9, 1930.

[37] Silva, "El crédito a los agricultores en pequeño," *El Economista*, June 15, 1933, p. 573.

[38] Interview with Rafael Cal y Mayor, as reported in *El Universal*, January 31, 1931.

only 316,000 pesos.[39] One does not have to be a bank examiner to see that an institution run in this fashion, even with the government footing most of the bills, is headed for speedy extinction.

Further testimony of the failure of the first attempt of the government to establish a system of agricultural credit may be found in the following words of ex-President Calles summarizing the whole credit situation in June 1930:

> The system of agricultural credit, unfortunately, has not produced the results we hoped for—neither in the Bank of Mexico, the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, nor in the Ejido Banks. . . . For the most part . . . we have fallen into the vices of the old *Caja de Préstamos*. . . . That is: the greater part of the capital has been loaned to big companies which are only partly concerned with agriculture; or, thanks to political influence, to ejido corporations which will never be able to pay.[40]

[39] Gama, *La propriedad en México*, pp. 120-21.

[40] Interview as reported in *El Universal*, June 23, 1930. See footnote 15 on p. 114.

CHAPTER XXII

CREDIT AND MARKETS, 1931-1934

It is rather curious and an interesting commentary on the lack of coördination and unified direction in the agrarian reform that the Ortiz Rubio administration which, with reference to all other aspects of the reform, was clearly reactionary, should have been responsible for an attempt to rescue the government banks from confusion and futility and to reorganize them on definitely coöperative principles for the exclusive benefit of the ejidatario and the small farmer. And, yet, that was precisely the purpose of the series of reforms in the laws governing agricultural credit inaugurated in January, 1931.

The Law of Agricultural Credit for Ejidatarios and Small Agriculturists

The "exposition of motives" of the Law of Agricultural Credit for Ejidatarios and Small Agriculturalists[1] set forth the following criteria as, in the opinion of President Ortiz Rubio and the members of his Cabinet,[2] basic to any system of farm credit sponsored by the government: (a) "Agricultural credit developed and organized with the elements and resources of the State should be destined exclusively for the ejidatarios and the small agriculturalists." (b) As the experience with the Ejido Banks and the National Bank of Agricultural Credit has proved, "It is absolutely indispensable that the institutions of credit should be unified in one single system." (c) The government controlled system of credit should not be simply "a bureaucratic dependency, nor, on the other hand, should it be a commercial institution dedicated to profit making . . . ; it must fulfill both social and economic functions." (d) "The . . . system of credit must be devoted above all to the development and progress of the ejido economy, and should be so organized as to bring about a close and effective coördination between the economic and social activities of the system and of the authorities in charge of the distribution and administration of the ejidos.". . . (e) "As a corollary of the foregoing the . . . system should not restrict its activities simply to carrying out the traditional functions of credit institutions, . . . but

[1] Appendix B, VIII, 17.

[2] The whole subject of agricultural credit, its past and future, was discussed at some length by the Cabinet preparatory to the framing of the new law.

it should be so organized as to be able to intervene advantageously in the control of the production, distribution, transformation and marketing of the farm products of the entities with which it is related in particular and of the national industry of agriculture in general."[3]

The first step in carrying out the Ortiz Rubio program was to scrap the old system of agricultural credit. Accordingly, the new law repealed the Law of Agricultural Credit of February 10, 1926, and, in effect, also the Law of Ejido Agricultural Banks of March 16, 1926.[4]

The new orientations, the fundamental principles stated in the exposition of motives and written into the law in a half dozen places were:

(a) "The . . . system will make loans exclusively to ejidatarios and small agriculturalists . . . and" (b) "in accordance with modern tendencies of agricultural economy the system will engage in [credit] operations with ejidatarios and small agriculturalists only when they are organized in coöperative societies. . . . Credit operations of whatever sort with separate individuals are prohibited."[5]

The institutional machinery set up under the new law included: a central bank—that is, the old *Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola* reformed *ad hoc; Bancos Regionales* organized by the central bank and associated with it; *Sociedades Cooperativas Agrícolas* formed by ejidatarios and other small farmers and, in turn, associated with the regional banks; and *Almacenes de Depósito*, or warehouses, subsidiary to any one of the aforementioned institutions.

The formal capital structure of the reorganized National Bank of Agricultural Credit did not differ greatly from the original bank established by the law of February 10, 1926.[6] The actual capital structure, however, at least as it was envisaged at the time the

[3] *Ley de crédito agrícola para ejidatarios y agricultores en pequeño. . . .* pp. 10-11.

[4] For some reason the new law did not actually and formally repeal the Law of Ejido Banks, although it did declare null and void the decree of August 30, 1928 which created the Department of Agrarian Organization and Ejido Credit, responsible for the administration of the Law of Ejido Banks! It was not until February 26, 1932 that a decree (Appendix B, VIII, 18) was signed providing for the liquidation of the Ejido Banks and the associated Agricultural Coöperative Societies. The liquidation of these institutions was first put in charge of a special commission. Later (because of the inefficiency and slowness of the special commission) a decree of December 6, 1933 (VIII, 21) turned the matter over to the National Bank of Agricultural Credit.

[5] *Ley de crédito agrícola . . .*, p. 12.

[6] The nominal capital of 50 million pesos was represented by three series of shares: "A" shares (51 per cent or more of the total stock) held only by the federal government; "B" shares which could be bought by state and local governments; and "C" shares to be held by the regional banks, coöperative societies or private individuals.

law was enacted, was to have been a considerable improvement over the old bank. In the first place the law required the government to purchase the properties of the *Caja de Préstamos* which had been turned over to the bank as part of its "frozen" capital when it was opened in 1926. From the Ejido Banks and the good accounts of the original National Bank, it was expected that some 14 million pesos could be salvaged for immediate use. In addition, the government proposed to appropriate "for an indefinite period" 6 million pesos annually from the federal budget. Finally, the government planned to augment the capital of the bank still further by a half million pesos each year from the income of the various federal irrigation projects. In these various ways, it was hoped that the bank could be opened with actual effective funds of around 15 million pesos and that in the course of five years this amount could be raised to the full authorized capital sum of 50 million pesos.[7]

The principal functions of the reformed *Banco Agrícola* may be summarized as follows:

(1) To encourage, to regulate and to maintain vigilance over the organization and functioning of coöperative agricultural societies and regional banks of agricultural credit;

(2) To purchase stock in the regional banks and extend credit to them by discounting their paper, guaranteeing their mortgage bonds, securities, and so forth;

(3) To issue cashier's bonds (*bonos de caja*), debenture and mortgage bonds;

(4) To organize and administer warehouses and companies for the transformation and marketing of the agricultural products of the members of the regional banks and coöperative societies;

(5) To organize and administer a Farmer's Savings Department;

(6) To colonize lands of the federal government or of companies or persons "when the project is of public interest and the expenses are paid by the proprietor concerned";

(7) To assume responsibility for the economic organization of the ejidos and the education of the ejidatarios in banking, marketing, and other agricultural and economic matters; and

(8) To take charge of the Public Registry of Agricultural Credit.

The functions of the various Regional Banks of Agricultural Credit

[7] *Ley de crédito agrícola* . . . , pp. 14-15.

In the exposition of motives it was also stated: "In view of the fact that the new system will have to carry on an intensive and costly work of social education and ejido organization, . . . arrangements will be made between the various banking institutions and the Ministry of Agriculture, whereby the cost of this work will be covered by funds to be supplied by the Federal Government." *Ibid.*, p. 14.

associated with the central or national bank were: to encourage the organization of and extend credits to the coöperative societies in their respective zones; to create commercial and industrial companies, warehouses, and so forth, for the transformation and marketing of the agricultural products of the member societies; and, in general, to coöperate with the National Bank in the program of the economic organization and education of the ejidatarios and small farmers. The Regional Banks were also permitted to carry on ordinary commercial banking operations in accordance with the provisions of the General Laws of Credit Institutions, but with the restriction that a seventy-day limit was placed on time deposits.

The minimum authorized capital of each Regional Bank was 300,000 pesos divided into ten peso shares issued in two series: "Y" shares subscribed by the National Bank and "Z" shares purchased by member societies. For each Regional Bank opened, the National Bank was required to furnish at least 60 per cent of the nominal capital of 300,000 pesos. The Regional Banks, in turn, had to purchase "C" shares of the National Bank to an amount equal to 5 per cent of the total capital.

The heart and core of the system of credit established by the law of January 2, 1931, was the Agricultural Coöperative Society. Only ejidatarios and small farmers[8] could be members of such societies. Associations could be formed of ejidatarios and small farmers separately or together. The implications of the law, however, were that the two groups, normally, would remain separate, each with its own societies. Since this was actually the case in practice and since our major concern is with the ejido, we may leave to one side the sections of the law governing societies of small farmers and concentrate our attention on the regulations relating to the ejido cooperatives. The latter may be summarized briefly as follows:

1. No ejido coöperatives could be formed unless: (a) a majority of the ejidatarios in the community agreed to become members; and (b) the community had already actually received at least provisional possession of its lands.

[8] Small farmers (*agricultores en pequeño*) were defined as those "habitually engaged in the exploitation or cultivation of the land in whatever form whether in the capacity of proprietors, possessors, colonists, renters, or share-croppers, always providing that the exploitation or cultivation be carried on personally by the individuals in question with the help of the members of their family or outsiders, and providing that the number of outsiders permanently employed in the agricultural work be not more than five and that the size of the property be not greater than that defined as a small property [i.e., according to the laws then in effect, from 150 hectares of irrigable or moist lands, 300 hectares of seasonal land of the second class, etc., up to 3,000 hectares of timber land] under the agrarian laws"

2. The principal functions of the ejido coöperatives were to obtain credits from the Regional Banks; to make loans to the members of the societies; organize the production and marketing of crops, including under this heading the purchase and resale to the members of the coöperatives of seed, fertilizer, agricultural implements, the establishing of warehouses, and so forth; to act as agents for the members in all administrative and fiscal dealings related to agricultural matters with the local and federal governments; and to carry out the development and exploitation of the properties (forests, pastures, and so forth) held in common by the ejido communities.

3. Every society was to be organized on the basis of unlimited joint responsibility.

4. Each society was required to establish a fund, known as the *fondo social*, to be constituted by setting aside 2 per cent of the value of the loans made to its members, 25 per cent of the net profits derived from all operations, 2 per cent of the harvests, and all of the cash profits (*productos líquidos*) derived from the exploitation of the common lands.[9] This fund, generally speaking, could be put to any use of benefit to the whole community.

5. The officers of the ejido coöperatives were to be identical with those (that is, the Administrative Committees or Ejido Commissariats) designated under the Law of Ejido Patrimony for the general governance of the ejido communities.

6. Ejido coöperatives were to be closely regulated by the National Bank of Agricultural Credit. The law empowered the bank, operating through the officers and inspectors of the Regional Banks with which the respective coöperatives were associated, to approve or disapprove the loans and other credit operations of societies, to inspect their books, to recommend to the National Agrarian Commission changes in the officers when for any reason this seemed desirable.[10]

[9] This was in effect one more step in the history of the much modified 15 per cent section of Circular 51. In order to bring the Law of Ejido Patrimony into line with this new provision of the law of agricultural credit with reference to the formation of the *fonda social*, a decree of December 27, 1932 (Appendix B, III, 7) reformed the law of August 25, 1927 by: (a) abolishing the sections of the law (Art. 20, fr. VI) requiring each ejidatario to surrender 15 per cent of his harvest to the ejido authorities; and (b) stating (Art. 23) that "the economic obligations of ejidatarios in definitive possession of their ejidos, derived from obligations contracted for the execution of improvements of common benefit or for the constitution of the funds for collective improvement or coöperative organization referred to in the Law of Agricultural Credit," should be fixed by the action of the ejidatarios themselves.

[10] The powers of supervision and control by the National Bank over the affairs of ejido coöperatives were especially comprehensive in the field of marketing operations. The law provides that when a society, in the judgment of the Regional Bank with which it is associated, "has advanced sufficiently in its coöperative organization, it must carry out

A VILLAGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PRESENTS A PETITION
FOR "TIERRA Y LIBROS"

The credits or loans permitted by the law to the several institutions in the system of agricultural credit were of five types: (1) *préstamos de avío*, or crop advances for the purchase of seed, fertilizer, tools, and so forth, to run not more than eighteen months and not to exceed 75 per cent of the value of the crop; (2) *préstamos de refacción* for the purchase of more permanent types of equipment and livestock, and for investment in the planting of orchards and other slow-maturing crops not to exceed 85 per cent of the value of the articles purchased or of the ultimate value of the product and with a maximum term of five years; (3) *préstamos comerciales*—loans made to facilitate agricultural marketing operations of not more than 80 per cent of the value of the product involved and to run not more than 180 days; (4) *préstamos inmobilarios* for the acquisition and construction of works (irrigation, and so forth) of a permanent character—such loans to be amortized by annual payments and to run not more than 25 years; and (5) *préstamos territoriales*, or loans for the purchase of land in amounts not greater than the value of the land acquired and with maximum terms of 25 years.

These various kinds of loans were to be guaranteed by the usual types of liens or mortgages either on the crops or other products involved or on land, except in the case of ejidos where only crops were allowable as security.

Progress and Problems, 1931-1933

From this brief review it is clear that essentially what the reform initiated in January, 1931, did was to centralize, to expand and to strengthen with the resources of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit a system modeled along the lines of the old Ejido Banks and their associated Local Agricultural Coöperatives. The reform was greeted on all sides with enthusiasm. At last the government was really going to help the ejidatarios. The Revolution, as the Minister of Agriculture stated in presenting the law to Congress, was frankly acknowledging its responsibility not only for creating institutions of credit for the ejidatarios, but also for educating them in the uses and methods of self-help through coöperative organization. The law was to be nothing less than a "demonstration of the sincerity of the Governments of the Revolution"; a powerful force "to convert the ejido reform into a success," to complete the solution

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as a unit (*en común*) the sale, hypothecation, transportation, and preparation for market of its agricultural products. . . ." If, after a majority vote has been taken approving any of these operations, any member of the society refuses to coöperate, he is subject to a fine equal to 10 per cent of the value of his products.

of the problem in which "the granting of land was only the first step."[11] Were these high purposes achieved? Let us see.

Like its predecessor of the same name, the reorganized Bank of Agricultural Credit had to engage in a never ending struggle to obtain sufficient liquid capital to carry on its business. Despite its avowal of good intentions, the federal government was unable or unwilling to redeem its promise to convert into liquid funds the 8.8 million pesos of property and assets of one sort and another[12] which, according to the plan of reorganization, were to be exchanged for cash.[13] Similarly the government's promise to increase the bank's capital by a regular budgetary appropriation of 6 million pesos a year, the offer to turn over to the bank a half million pesos a year from the profits derived from irrigation projects, and the agreement whereby the Ministry of Agriculture was to provide the bank with funds for education and organization work—all were quietly forgotten. As for the credits which were supposed to be salvaged from the old Ejido Banks, perhaps the less said the better. The liquidation of these banks is still in process and no one knows how much, if anything, will be recovered. Finally, the thawing out of loans made to private individuals proved a difficult and not very remunerative task. In both 1931 and 1932, despite the prohibition against loans to private individuals, the bank, in an effort to nurse along the loans outstanding at the time of its reorganization, even had to go so far as to make new loans to an amount greater than that recovered. Although in 1933 no new loans were extended and appreciable progress was made in the reduction of the old outstanding credits, nevertheless, at the end of the year the bank still had over 4.5 million pesos tied up in loans to private individuals.[14]

The second difficulty encountered by the new system of agricultural credit was the old problem with which every attempt on the part of the government to furnish credit to the ejidatarios has become

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[11] Manuel Pérez Treviño in: *Ley de crédito agrícola* . . , p. 20.

[12] These were mostly properties and assets of the defunct *Caja de Préstamos* referred to on several occasions. An important item in the amount in question, however, was 352,000 dollars which the bank had been forced, for "reasons of state," to advance to the Richardson Construction Company in 1927. *Informe* . . . *del Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola* . . . *1932*, pp. 2-3.

[13] In 1932, 4 million pesos were set aside in the federal budget for the purpose of the exchange here in question; but, after only a small amount had been turned over to the bank, payments were stopped. In 1933 payments to the amount of 950,000 pesos were made. The total amount still owing to the bank at the end of 1933 was close to 7.5 million pesos. *Informe* . . . *del Banco Nacional* . . . *1932* pp. 2-3; and *Informe* . . . *del Banco Nacional* . . . *1933*, p. 3.

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.

involved: how to combine business on the one hand, and education and social work on the other, and still show a profit at the end of the year. That the new bank was no more successful in this delicate undertaking than the old bank or than the Ejido Banks was soon clear to everyone concerned and to none more so than the responsible government officials themselves. Commenting on the annual report of the bank for 1932, the Minister of Public Finance stated:

> The heroic position taken by the National Bank of Agricultural Credit of refusing to operate except with cōoperative societies on the basis of loans returning only 8 per cent when the vigilance of these credits alone, to say nothing of general administration expenses, also cost 8 per cent, has resulted in a series of losses which must inevitably exhaust the capital of the Bank. In the . . . year 1932 . . . if the total administration expenses of more than 839,000 posos be compared with the total income from interest, commissions, and dividends—which add up to scarcely 558,000 pesos—it will be seen that the Bank was headed straight for ruin.[15]

What was true for 1932 was, as the reports of the bank frankly state, also true for 1931 and 1933. The bank, in the opinion of the officers, simply could not show a profit as a business undertaking and at the same time carry the burden of the economic education of the ejidatarios.

Despite the difficulties under which the bank labored—those which have just been reviewed as well as a number of others[16]—a certain amount of progress was made during the period 1931-1933. At the end of 1933 it was reported that 14 agencies had been established in various parts of the country and that under the direction of the Central Bank, 7 Regional Banks were functioning in as many states. It was also reported that a system of Agricultural Credit Warehouses (*Almacenes de Depósitos del Crédito Agrícola*) had been

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[15] Statement by Marte R. Gómez, as reported in *El Nacional* February 7, 1933.

[16] Such, for example, as the fact that the bank apparently was unable to establish any satisfactory working agreement with the National Agrarian Commission, as witness:

"The Law of Agricultural Credit of 1931 and the reforms made in December 1932 in the agrarian laws require the direct intervention of the Bank in the educating of the peasant . . . and in the economy of the ejido. We have been insisting that the Minister of Agriculture should regulate in precise form our rights and duties in order that . . . we should not interfere with the work of the National Agrarian Commission; however, . . . we have not up to the present time achieved anything definite and for this reason many of our agencies are complaining of obstructions and delays in their work." *Informe . . . del Banco National . . . 1932*, p. 7.

"Our efforts to get the Ministry of Agriculture to regulate our intervention and that of the ejido authorities in order to avoid conflicts of functions have met with no success." *Informe . . . del Banco Nacional . . . 1933*, p. 7.

organized with a central office in Mexico City, operating through 10 agencies which in turn controlled 81 warehouses. Associated with the Regional Banks were 888 local coöperative credit societies as compared with 597 societies in 1932, and 396 in 1931. Of the total of 888 societies founded up to the end of 1933, 578 were formed by ejidatarios and 310 by small farmers.[17] The total membership in these 888 societies was 48,531 in 1933 as compared with 30,080 in the previous year. The "field" staff for the supervision of the coöperatives at the end of 1933 consisted of 55 *Jefes de Zona* and 102 Assistant *Jefes de Zona*, Inspectors and Auditors.

Loans to all coöperatives increased from 682,000 pesos in the interest of 8 societies with 1,014 members in 1931 to 2,203,000 pesos in the interest of 214 societies with 11,711 members in 1933. For societies formed of ejidatarios the figures were: in 1931, loans of 516,000 pesos to the benefit of 5 groups with 853 members; in 1933, loans of 1,154,000 pesos to the benefit of 136 societies with 10,033 members. As shown in Fig. 36, the loans just mentioned not only represented a very considerable expansion as compared with previous years, but also, and what is more important, this expansion was made at the expense of loans to private individuals. However, the total of all loans in 1933 was only 2.2 million pesos or the lowest amount loaned in any year of the bank's existence except 1931.

The amount received by the bank in 1933 in repayment of loans previously made was a little less than 1.5 million pesos, or a recovery percentage of about 35 per cent of the total loans due up to the end of 1933. Although still low, this was a considerable improvement over the previous year when the percentage was less than 27.[18]

The Law of Agricultural Credit of January 24, 1934

Time and again in Mexico lip service has been paid to the principle that the first duty of the government in the field of agricultural credit is to help the ejidatario. Also it has been recognized that the ejidatarios as a class are for many reasons equipped neither by training nor by disposition to be inducted overnight into modern methods of credit procedure and that any attempt to extend a helping hand to this class presupposes a willingness to engage in a long and expensive process of education. And, yet, at the same time, those in

[17] Only about one-third of the total of 888 societies were new in the sense of being societies established in places which had previously had no credit institutions; the remaining societies were either the Local Coöperative Societies of the old National Bank or the Local Agricultural Coöperatives of the old Ejido Banks carried over and reorganized or in the process of reorganization.

[18] *Informe . . . del Banco Nacional . . . 1933*, pp. 5-9.

the government who have interested themselves in the credit side of the agrarian reform have never been quite able to get over the idea that the primary purpose of a bank is to make money, or, at least, to pay its own way. It is the conflict of these two sets of ideas which explains the shifting back and forth in the laws governing agricultural credit.

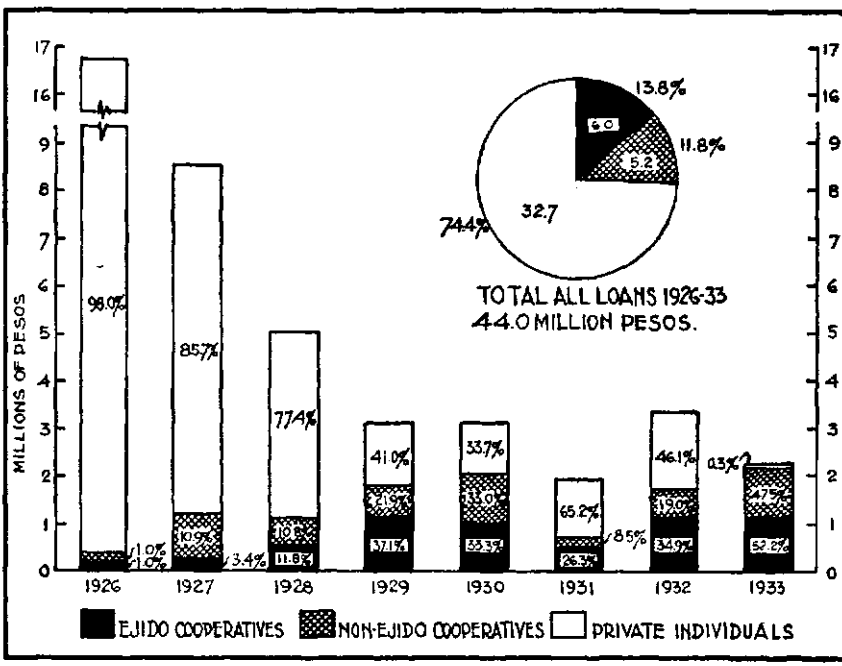

FIG. 36.—Operations of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, March 10, 1926, to December 31, 1933. (See Appendix A, Table 54.)

When the original system of agricultural credit was established in 1926 it was assumed that the government could have its cake and eat it too—that is, that the needs of the peasants could be satisfied and at the same time a nice little profit could be made on the side. A certain amount of expense might have to be incurred for ejido organization work, but that could be met out of the profits from the other operations of the bank. In 1931, after it had been proved, on the one hand, that "the other operations" had not yielded any profits but had, rather, dissipated or "frozen" practically all of the bank's capital and, on the other hand, that the expense incident to educating the ejidatarios in the mysteries of credit and the pecuniary culture were going to be considerably more than a mere

"certain amount," the government about-faced, closed the door on any further "other operations" and declared that thenceforth the ejidatario and the small farmer should receive their due. If it was necessary to spend money on organization and education—well, the government was ready to foot the bill. But when it came time to "put up or shut up," as we have seen, the government chose to shut up. This left the bank holding a bag full of nice ideals but with very few pesos to keep them company.

In the face of this state of affairs and of the fact that such little capital as the bank did have was fast being eaten up by overhead, the officials began to cast about for what in diplomatic circles is known as a "formula" and in the annual report for 1932 they produced the following:

> The principal reason which the legislators had in 1931 for prohibiting us from making loans to private individuals was the circumstance that the capital of the bank could [sic!] be absorbed by large loans thus favoring the few at the expense of the many. They were possessed, perhaps, by the fear that in continuing such operations the Bank would follow the line of least resistance and greatest profit, for unquestionably it is easier and less costly to supervise a few large loans than to operate with a clientele with minimum resources. We recognize this fact, but we feel that we have gone to the opposite extreme, for we have demonstrated that operating with a clientele composed exclusively of coöperative societies has resulted in constant losses because of the high cost of effective supervision over these loans—losses which without this supervision would inevitably be much larger. Without falling into [the error of] the system of 1926 . . . we believe that the [present] law should be reformed so as to permit operations with private individuals on the basis of small loans, always providing that the beneficiaries be agriculturalists of the same type as those in the societies—or even, perhaps, on a higher level. Such a reform would make it possible to extend a helping hand to those agriculturists who, because of the isolated location of their farms, are unable to associate themselves with other persons to form a society. Also it would permit operations with those individuals (such, for example, as are found in the northern part of the Republic) who, even though they have neighbors with whom they could associate themselves in societies, are completely individualistic in their ideas, accustomed to working out their own fortunes by themselves, and fearful of participating . . . in an association of joint and unlimited responsibility such as is required . . . in our coöperative societies.
>
> The reform here suggested will carry with it the advantage of making it possible to increase the volume of operations in any given zone without an appreciable increase in costs, thus permitting the various elements in the system . . . to make profits with which to meet the costs of

supervision and to establish the reserves so indispensable in a credit institution dedicated exclusively to agriculture.[19]

In a word, what the bank proposed was a compromise between the practice under the laws of 1926 and the theory of the law of 1931. The officials said, in effect, it may not be possible to have our cake and eat it too, but why can't we have a little cake (credit for ejidatarios) and eat a little cake (profit from loans to private individuals) and thus leave everybody satisfied and the bank solvent? Or, to change the figure: it may not be desirable, given the ideals of the revolution, to embrace the devil, but certainly there is no harm—and there may be a certain amount of profit—in holding hands with him.

The result of this reasoning was a new Law of Agricultural Credit dated January 24, 1934.[20]

According to its sponsors, the law of January 24, 1934, is basically and primarily a law dedicated to the interests and well-being of the ejidatario and "the humble peasant who is not qualified for credit, but who is [nevertheless] worthy of credit."[21] As in the previous law, the bank is charged with the responsibility for the "economic and social organization of the ejidatarios."[22] The new law opens the door to loans to individual agriculturists—but only a little way and only to certain classes of farmers. The "local credit societies, coöperative in essence," are still "the core of the whole system."[23] To insure that the foregoing shall be the case in fact as well as in theory, the law provides: (a) "at all times preference must be given to operations with organizations of ejidatarios over those of non-ejidatarios and private individuals"; and (b) that operations with private individuals may only be entered into with those classified as small or medium sized farmers[24] and must always be guaranteed

[19] *Informe . . . del Banco Nacional . . . 1932*, pp. 10-11.

[20] Appendix B, VII, 22.

[21] Statement by Marte R. Gómez, *El Nacional*, February 7, 1933.

[22] It should be recalled, however, that the responsibility of the bank extends only to those zones in which the bank operates—see above p. 325.

[23] Marte R. Gómez, as reported in *El Nacional*, February 7, 1933.

[24] The definition of small farmers (*pequeños agricultores*) is the same as in the law of 1931 (see above p. 395); medium sized farmers (*medianos agricultores*) are the same as small farmers in all respects except that the limit on the number of outsiders they are allowed to employ in the exploitation of their properties is ten instead of five. As in the old law neither small nor medium sized farmers "may possess an area larger than that defined as a small property in the agrarian laws in force." The Agrarian Code of March 1934 contains (as compared with the agrarian laws in force in 1931) a new definition of small properties, to wit: up to 150 hectares of irrigable land, or 300 hectares of seasonal land

by mortgages or liens; (c) that no private individual may receive a crop advance (*préstamo de avío*) to an amount greater than 60 per cent of the estimated value of his crop; (d) that in no case may the total amount of all types of loans to a private individual exceed 33 per cent of the value of his property, or 25,000 pesos whatever may be the value of the property; and (e) that loans to private individuals must always be made at a rate of interest not less than 2 per cent higher than that prevailing for the least favored institution.

The structure of the system of agricultural credit under the new law differs in three important respects from that established by the law of 1931. First, although the old Regional Banks are to be maintained for the time being, the law provides that as rapidly as possible these banks shall be supplanted by Unions of Local Societies of Agricultural Credit. The distinctive feature of these Unions is that they are to be owned and controlled by their members to a much greater extent than is the case with the Regional Banks. The Unions are to be made up of seven or more Local Agricultural Credit Societies of ejidatarios and/or non-ejidatarios. Second, the law makes possible the formation of institutions known as Societies of Collective Agricultural Interest. These are essentially temporary organizations which may obtain credit for such special specific purposes as the building of irrigation and drainage works, the construction of works of electrification, industrialization, and so forth. The Societies of Collective Interest are nonprofit-making and may not extend credits to individual members. Third, in place of the single type of Local Coöperative Society based on joint and unlimited responsibility required by the law of 1931, the new law provides for three kinds of societies defined in terms of the extent of the financial responsibility assumed by the members: limited; joint limited; and joint unlimited. (Societies of ejidatarios, however, must always be of the unlimited joint type.)

Of the several changes which the law of January 24, 1934, makes in the rules governing the structure and function of ejido coöperative societies as compared with those laid down in the law of 1931,[25] the most important may be listed as follows: (1) Only ejidatarios may belong to ejido coöperatives. (2) No ejido coöperative may be organized unless at least three-fourths of the ejidatarios in any given community are members, and in any case, the minimum number for the formation of a society shall be twenty. (3) For the constitution of the ejido social fund (*fondo social*) each member of the coöperative must contribute 5 per cent of the gross product of his harvests or

[25] See above pp. 395-96.

other products (*productos brutos de sus cosechas o aprovechamientos*) until such time as the social fund is equal to twice the amount of the annual operations of the society; also, from the net profits of the society there shall be set aside 25 per cent for the social fund until this fund is equal to the average annual value of the operations realized during the preceding five years.[26] (4) Although under the new law provision is made for close supervision of the operations of the ejido coöperatives, there is a noticeable tendency to relinquish some of the rights as well as the responsibilities of the bank as compared with the law of 1931.[27]

The formal capital structure of the National Bank remains essentially the same as that established under the laws of 1926 and 1931 with the difference that the new law does not set any limit to the nominal capital. With reference to the actual capital structure, once more the government binds itself to purchase from the bank (this time within a period of four years) the assets and properties of the *Caja de Préstamos* given to the bank as part of its original capital. The government has also announced its intention to provide the bank with two million pesos in cash to defray the expenses of eji-

[26] As in the case of the similar provision in the law of 1931, this provision in the law of January 24, 1934, must be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the agrarian laws—i.e., in this case, Art. 153 of the new Agrarian Code (Appendix D) which states:

"In each ejido there will be constituted a common fund (*fondo comùn*) of which the following products will form a part:

I. Those from the brush lands and pastures or other resources of the ejido, resulting from exploitations made for the account of the community;

II. The quota agreed upon by the Assembly for the purpose of the general improvement of the ejido;

III. Those referred to in Art. 154 [i.e., funds derived from the sale of expropriated properties within the ejido when such properties are expropriated for the purpose of forming urban zones, highways, etc.];

IV. Any other [product] which does not belong privately to the members of the community.

"The said fund will be destined preferably to the following objects:

(a) The execution of improvements . . . such as schools, irrigation works, urban services, etc.

(b) The constitution of the exploitation fund [i.e., the *fondo social de explotación*] referred to in the Law of Agricultural Credit.

(c) The acquisition of machinery, work or breeding animals, equipment, seed, etc.

"It is absolutely prohibited to invest the fund for religious or political purposes.

"The use made of the fund in all cases must be submitted to the consideration of the Ejido Assembly and approved by the Agrarian Department."

The foregoing, together with the corresponding section in the Law of Agricultural Credit, is the last step in the evolution of the 15 per cent provision of Circular 51.

[27] This is particularly notable in the field of the marketing operations of the societies. The elaborate provisions (see footnote 10, p. 396) requiring the coöperatives to market their products "as a unit" are omitted altogether from the law of 1934.

datario education and organization.[28] Finally, the Six-Year Plan[29] states that: ". . . in the six years covered by the Plan the Government will invest without fail (*forzosamente*) the sum of *fifty million pesos* in the system of agricultural credit, of which the first twenty million must be contributed precisely in the year 1934."[30]

Summary and Comment

It may be that in the new Law of Agricultural Credit the government has at last hit upon a scheme which will provide the ejidatarios with the financial assistance they have so long and so urgently needed. It may be that the government will keep its promise to increase the capital of the National Bank. It may even be that the time is not far off when every ejido will have its coöperative credit society and every ejidatario will have a yoke of oxen and a plow and at least a fair chance of steering a course between the Scylla of the *acaparador* and the Charybdis of starvation. However—and he would be a prophet indeed who would venture to forecast in these matters—the one clear fact which emerges from our survey in the last two chapters is that up to the end of 1933 (the last year for which adequate statistical data are available), the government had not come even within shouting distance of solving the ejido credit problem.

After eight years of mighty labors, innumerable speeches about the poor ejidatario, and a half-dozen or so laws, what had the government to show on December 31, 1933? Eight hundred and eighty-eight coöperative societies of which only 578 were made up of ejidatarios whereas the number of ejidos, definitive and provisional, was 6,406; 38,495 ejidatarios organized in coöperative societies whereas the total number of ejidatarios in the Republic was probably not less than 1 million; a system of agricultural credit with liquid capital assets of perhaps 10 million pesos (a very liberal estimate) to meet the credit needs of certainly not less than 1.5 million ejidatarios and small and medium sized farmers whereas a conservative estimate of the minimum amount necessary for the ejidatarios alone would be 100 million pesos;[31] and, finally, a bank which in the eight years of its existence had extended credits of 6.1 million pesos, or 13.8 per cent of the total loans made, to 27,499 ejidatarios; 5.2 million pesos,

[28] Statement by Marte R. Gómez, in *El Nacional*, February 7, 1933.

[29] The Six-Year Plan is the platform of the National Revolutionary Party. It was adopted in the latter part of 1934 and covers the Presidential term beginning December 1, 1934. The National Revolutionary Party being, as it is, practically identical with the government, the Plan may be regarded as mandatory. See below pp. 451-52.

[30] *Plan Sexenal del P.N.R.*, p. 34.

[31] Estimate of one of the officials of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit given to the author in an interview.

or 11.8 per cent of all loans, to 10,589 small farmers; and 32.7 million pesos or almost three-fourths of all loans, to something less than 1,491 private individuals, presumably landlords.

What is the trouble? Why have the efforts of the revolution to solve the problem of agricultural credit produced, relatively speaking, such feeble results? Why are 96 per cent of the ejidatarios still outside of the credit system and in the vast majority of cases faced with the sorry choice of trying to work their lands without even the simplest kind of equipment and thus running the risk of starvation, or seeking the help of the *hacendado* and the *acaparador*, thus delivering themselves into a situation differing but little from the peonage of prerevolutionary days?

The answers to these questions are implicit in practically all that has been related in this and the previous chapter. But so important are both the theoretical and practical implications of the matter that it is worth while, even at the risk of performing a service of supererogation, to review and amplify a few of the points already brought out.

First, let us consider the lack of funds. No further citation of facts or figures is necessary to prove the thesis that at no time during its history has the system of agricultural credit been endowed with sufficient funds even remotely to approximate the legitimate credit needs of the ejidatarios—to say nothing of the small farmers, medium sized farmers, and big farmers whom at one time or another the system has tried to serve. Now, there can be no doubt that in the years since the first attempt of the government to set up a system of credit for farmers, and perhaps more especially in the last five years, the federal budget has been under a heavy strain. While demands on the budget have increased, the income of the federal government has dropped from a postrevolutionary high of around 328.9 million pesos in 1925 to 222.9 million pesos in 1933 and in one year (1932) it was as low as 197.8 million pesos.[32] One may not question the fact that it would have been impossible during the last eight years for the government to have provided the National Bank with all of the funds it needed even assuming that the bank had been devoted solely to the interests of the ejidatarios and that its affairs had been managed with utmost efficiency and discretion. But one may raise the question of whether or not the government could have invested in the bank more money than it actually has. In other words, one may raise the question: if the government had been really convinced of its duty toward the ejidatarios, if the success of the agrarian reform and more particularly of the ejido

[32] Appendix A, Table 93.

program had been uppermost in the minds of the leaders of the revolutionary party, would it not have been possible to find more than the some 15 million pesos invested in the National Bank and the Ejido Banks up to the end of 1933?[33]

No dogmatic answers to these questions are possible; but, without going outside of the field of agricultural credit, it is perhaps not unfair to call attention to such facts as: that the government owned and controlled Bank of Mexico has found it possible since 1925 to tie up about 12 million pesos[34] in loans to the Association of Henequen Producers of Yucatán—an organization largely composed of *hacendados;* that the Monetary Commission (a government institution) and the Bank of Mexico in 1931 extended credits of 3 million pesos to organize a bank to help the rich cotton growers in the Laguna district;[35] and that in April 1934 the Ministry of Public Finance supplied 21.3 million pesos (mostly, be it said, in properties and assets of the *Comisión Monetaria* and the *Caja de Préstamos*) for the purpose of establishing an organization to make mortgage loans on rural properties and finance colonization and subdivision projects. Conceivably some of these undertakings might be regarded as in some degree rendering aid to small agriculturalists, but it is hard to see how any of them by any stretch of the imagination have helped the ejidatarios. Is it going too far to say that the government's excuse of lack of available funds may be more of an ostensible than a real reason for the failure to develop an adequate system of credit for the ejidatario?

The failure to supply sufficient or, at any rate, more liquid capital is at bottom only one aspect of the fundamental failure of the government to come to grips with the knotty problem of educating and organizing the ejidatarios in coöperative ideology and procedure. If this problem had been faced squarely from the very beginning, undoubtedly much of the confusion,[36] disillusionment,[37] and eco-

[33] No figures are available to show the exact amount of cash which the federal government has turned over at one time or another to the National Bank and the Ejido Banks. The estimate of 15 million pesos would appear to be, if anything, an overstatement.

[34] *El Universal,* October 2, 1934.

[35] Fernández y Fernández, *El salario agrícola en México.*

[36] "Generally speaking the people in this zone are disciplined and ready to be organized but they have been demoralized by the lack of skill in the credit operations effected in some ejidos. . . ." Report of the *Jefe de Zona,* Zone 5-10, Colima (17 ejidos).

"One of the principal difficulties in this zone arises from the fact that in a number of ejidos there is no record of the credits extended in previous years by the Ejido Bank. . . . Despite the fact that the ejidatarios have receipts for crops that were turned over to the bank, their accounts have not been credited because of the carelessless of the previous administrations." Report of the *Jefe de Zona,* Zone 3-7, Guanajuato (22 ejidos).

[37] "The so-called coöperatives organized in this zone were a complete failure and only

nomic loss[38] which has resulted from the shifting back and forth and constant tinkering with the system could have been avoided and a far better showing could have been made despite limited funds. If there had been any clarity of perception, any singleness of purpose in the government program, much of the lack of continuity in policy and procedure and much of the political maneuvering, maladministration, and inefficiency which have all too often distorted and debilitated high purposes and good intentions could have been eliminated.[39]

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served as instruments of exploitation; for this reason the ejidatarios in general prefer to work independently. . . ." Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 5-1, Jalisco (31 ejidos).

"There is not a single ejido in this zone which has acquired plows with its coöperative funds. . . . A number of ejidos have been petitioning to use their fund to buy plows but up to the present they have not been successful because the Liquidating Committee has appropriated the coöperative funds which were deposited in the Ejido Bank . . . and refuses to return them. . . . This has created a great lack of confidence . . . and the ejidatarios have refused to make any further payments to the coöperative fund. . . ." Report of the *Jefe de Zona*, Zone 8-8, Puebla (64 ejidos).

[38] "If the . . . [National Bank of Agricultural Credit] had extended financial aid to the Ejido Banks it would not have been necessary to liquidate that system with such grave damage to the peasants who were made to pay for the liquidation [according to the decree of December 6, 1933—Appendix B, VIII, 21—the National Bank was empowered to use 50,000 pesos of the assets of the Ejido Banks to defray the expenses of liquidation] and to reinstate and initiate a new system . . . which only served to destroy an economic organization that, had it been given the help which it was denied instead of being allowed to flounder on the doubt, the lack of confidence and the disillusionment of the peasant, should have by this time constituted a firm basis for Mexican ejido credit." Rodríguez Adame, "La organización del ejido," *El Nacional*, August 20, 1934.

[39] "[The coöperatives organized by the Ejido Bank in this state] . . . have been a complete failure, for in their formation and functioning neither the law nor the dispositions of the National Agrarian Commission were taken into account. . . . There are numerous cases in which there are two or three coöperatives with various names in a single ejido and the ejidatarios do not know whether they have been or still are members. . . . Disorder has been unlimited; loans were made without investigating the credit capacity of those whom they were trying to help; no vigilance was maintained over these loans and now that the bank is trying to collect the debts that appear on its books many of the coöperatives claim that they have not received a single cent and others that they have already cleared up their indebtedness. Consumers' stores were established which lasted hardly a year and there are no documents to show what happened to the funds. . . .

"With regard to the coöperatives associated with the National Bank of Agricultural Credit I have collected opinions from the ejidatarios which demonstrate that this bank also failed to prepare the ground [before organizing coöperatives]. Instead, straight off, or after one or two talks, they proceeded to petition the N.A.C. for authority to form a coöperative and put it in charge of the administration of the ejido. That the results have been unfortunate can be proved by the cases of the ejidos of Mexquipayac . . . and Cuanalán. The first mentioned, after having become associated with the National Bank about a year ago, has just petitioned for its reinstatement with the Commission . . . because of the lack of attention to their internal affairs on the part of the personnel of the Bank. In Cuanalán the ejidatarios refused . . . to associate themselves with the . . .

Some students of the problem of the economic organization of the ejido have not been unaware of the hazards involved in the implantation of the coöperative in Mexico. They have pointed out that the social and economic heritage of the Mexican peasant[40] and the subjective accompaniments of this heritage in attitudes of improvidence and of impatience with the slow processes of wealth accumulated by the sweat of one's brow,[41] of irresponsibility and *informalidad* in the face of contractual obligations, and of suspiciousness and lack of confidence are poor material indeed with which to build a system of coöperative credit. No one can deny that these psychological obstacles are real and ponderous. But what are we to conclude? That associative effort, economic action in common, in short, coöperation, is forever unrealizable in Mexico? Is there something in the nature of the race which makes it impossible for Mexican peasants to work together for their mutual benefit? It is possible that such may be the case. But, as one reviews the history, as one studies the concrete experience of the government in its adventures in agricultural credit, it appears that by pointing to the cultural limitations and the psychological peculiarities of the Mexican peasant what one is really doing is simply *stating the elements in the problem.*

The problem of ejido credit in Mexico is not primarily a question of laws, formal institutional organization, or even as has been

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Bank . . . because they could not see any advantage in the arrangement." Special Report of the Regional Organizer in the State of México, April 14, 1933.

[40] ". . . We all know the humble realities of our country, but nevertheless we are at great pains to ignore them. . . . Our agriculture is in an unusual degree backward and in the hands of an indigenous population isolated from the population of European culture and divided in turn into groups ethnically and linguistically distinct. [Moreover] the majority of the indigenous population does not know how to read and write and in large part does not speak Spanish.

"The moral condition of the Indian is also, in the majority of cases, truly disastrous; the Indian reveals clearly the terrible inheritance of submission and fanaticism; he faces life in an attitude of silent resignation, of indolence and depression. . . . Under such conditions coöperative societies as conceived in the present [1931] law—that is, as the only basis of agricultural credit—cannot be other than a mere empty show for the benefit of the very few. . . ." Mendieta y Nuñez, *El crédito agrario en México,* pp. 143-44; and 157-58.

[41] "I believe that we do not . . . gain anything by invoking the example of the success obtained by coöperative organizations in other nations. . . . It is dangerous, if not prejudicial, to talk to our incipient coöperators about . . . [those successes] for they will imagine, or can imagine, that these English and German coöperatives have achieved such notable results in a few months. We do not know how to wait, nor do we have an exact notion of what time is. Moreover, the situation of crisis and misery in which we live makes us dream of rapid solutions which will give us riches between morning and night like a miracle of the lottery. . . ." Ramírez Cabañas, "El crédito y la coöperación," *El Universal,* January 17, 1934.

indicated, of money: the problem resides in and is precisely the ejidatario himself. Until the government is ready to recognize this and to back up recognition by a willingness to dedicate as a legitimate part of the banking system the time, money, and personnel necessary for the difficult and delicate task of modifying age-old cultural complexes and of reforming and redirecting time-encrusted psychological attitudes, it must inevitably continue to see its efforts to organize the ejidatarios vitiated. In sum, the problem of ejido credit, in its most fundamental aspects, is not a banking problem; it is a problem in education. Progress in its solution for a number of years to come must be measured not in terms of profits and pecuniary gains, but in changed attitudes and values, in the growth of initiative, responsibility, and the coöperative spirit.

CHAPTER XXIII

CASE V: PESOS AND POLITICS

Hard, painful, rough and rugged has been the road of agricultural credit for the [Mexican] peasant. On this road faith . . . has been on the point of being abandoned and, at times, enthusiasm for the work has dwindled. And, yet, whenever the institutions of agricultural credit were about to see written above their balances the prophetic '*mane, thæcel, phares*' as a sign of their inevitable ruin, a new Antæus has risen again to continue the upward march.

—Angel Silva, "El crédito a los agricultores en pequeño."

THEY WILL tell you in the ejido of Remedios that water is so scarce they have had to devise a system which they call *baños de escalera:* a ladder is placed against the side of the house; the father stands on the top rung, then the mother below, and, finally, the children in order of seniority; when all are ready someone stationed on the roof carefully douses the whole family with a single bucket of water. The present writer during his stay in Remedios did not actually witness this ingenious system of alfresco ablution, but he can testify that conditions certainly warrant some such economical procedure, for there is not a river, stream, or spring worthy of the name within miles of the village. And for more than six months of the year not a drop of rain falls.

Although the problem of an adequate supply of water for domestic purposes is acute, from the point of view of agriculture things are not so bad as they appear. Indeed, Remedios, with an average annual rainfall of around twenty-three inches is considerably better off than most of the villages located on the northwestern side of the great Mesa del Norte. Twenty-three inches is just about enough water—given the fairly good soil of the broad valley where the ejido lands are located, the relatively equable temperature, and the absence during most years of severe frost and hail—for reasonably successful dry farming. On the best land corn and frijoles (the only crops raised), even with the relatively primitive methods of cultivation still in use, yield around 100 for 1 and 65 for 1 respectively.

On the whole, despite the dry and sere aspect of the landscape, Remedios, so far as basic agricultural resources are concerned, is fairly well fixed compared with many other ejidos. The 5,755 hectares in the ejido, while obviously not offering the basis of a life of

luxury, might be expected at least to provide a subsistence for the 400 ejidatarios and their families to whom the land was originally granted. More especially might this be expected if one takes into account the fact that the community has been something of a "pet" of the local agrarian and political authorities and has received an unusual amount of help from the government agencies of agricultural credit.

In all truth, Remedios has made a very considerable, not to say surprising, amount of progress. Where ten years ago there were only a few mud huts on a flat, dusty plain there now stands a busy little town—a regional center for commerce and trade of real importance. The streets are broad and laid out with care and an eye to future growth. An exceptionally large and well-planned rural school has just been built and is at present attended by about 300 children. In a few more months the construction of a really imposing town hall will be completed. Electric lights have been introduced into a number of homes and lines are being extended as rapidly as possible. Neat little adobe houses are being built literally by the dozens. The principal business street boasts a score of structures including a moving picture theatre, a hotel, and a "Delux Barbershop." Almost the only thing lacking is water—and plans are now under way for two artesian wells.

And yet, regarded from a purely business point of view—that is, from the point of view, for example, of the local government agricultural bank—Remedios is at the present time to all intents and purposes, bankrupt. Why? In the answer to this question hangs the tale of Remedios, and, by implication, the story of the trials and tribulations of the government system of agricultural credit in all ejidos.

The Battle of Injunctions

Were it not the purpose of this case study to illustrate the problems of agricultural credit, it would be most revealing to make a careful and detailed analysis of the process by which Remedios obtained possession of its ejido lands; for few better examples could be found of the way in which determined landlords have used every legal weapon available to save their property and to prevent the government from carrying out its agrarian program. Under the circumstances, however, we will limit ourselves to a bare outline of this aspect of the history of the ejido under consideration.

April 10, 1917: Remedios petitions the State Agrarian Commission for ejido lands alleging that it is an independent village dedicated to agriculture; that it has a population of 400 families including 1,918

individuals; that it is embedded (*enclavada*) in an hacienda of 89,300 hectares known by the name of Santa Clara and owned by Señorita María González Roa, heir of Carlotta González Roa, widow of Sánchez; and that it has no lands of its own.

October 4, 1917: The administrator and owner of the hacienda of Santa Clara are notified of the petition made by the village of Remedios.

December 25, 1917: The State Legislature decrees that Remedios is a free village (*pueblo libre*).[1]

March 16, 1918: The District Court grants an *amparo* (injunction) to the owner of Santa Clara against the decree of the State Legislature which changed the political category of Remedios.

March 18, 1918: The National Agrarian Commission (N.A.C.) authorizes the State Agrarian Commission (S.A.C.) to proceed with the Remedios petition despite the injunction of the District Court.

December 24, 1918: The S.A.C. notifies the legal representative of Santa Clara that the petition for lands made by Remedios has been accepted and that proofs by law must be presented to the S.A.C. On the same date the S.A.C informs the village of Remedios that the Federal Supreme Court has refused to uphold the injunction granted by the local District Court against the decree of the State Legislature changing the political classification of the community. (But see below.)

January 25, 1919: Engineers paid by the village (the S.A.C. had no funds) begin a survey to determine the amount of land needed by the community.

January 27, 1919: Survey suspended because of a temporary injunction sought and obtained in the District Court by the owner of Santa Clara prohibiting the acts in question.

July 25, 1919: The Federal Supreme Court hands down a decision to the effect that since the owners of Santa Clara were not indemnified at the time, the act of the State Legislature making a free village out of Remedios is null and void.

In October, 1919: The S.A.C. informs the citizens of Remedios that in view of the decision of the Supreme Court and of the local District Court no further action on the villages' petition for ejido lands can be taken.

December 14, 1919: Backed by the Legal Representative (*Delegado*) of the N.A.C., Remedios makes a new petition for ejido lands. This petition is accepted by the S.A.C. on December 22, 1919, and the owner of Santa Clara so notified on January 15, 1921.

April 27, 1921: The State Legislature by a new decree authorizes the expropriation from the hacienda of Santa Clara of 200 hectares "with

[1] Under the agrarian laws then in force only certain types of villages—*pueblos*, *comunidades*, etc., had the right to petition for land. Since Remedios was listed in the 1910 census as a *ranchería* (a type not named in the law), the State Legislature undertook to change its category in order thus to legalize its petition for ejido lands. This was a common practice in many states.

the object of forming out of this land an urban zone for the necessities and development" of the village of Remedios.

May 2, 1921: After the usual investigations and legal procedures the S.A.C. grants Remedios' petition for ejido lands and on May 18, 1921, places the village in provisional possession of 5,755 hectares of land belonging to the hacienda of Santa Clara.

September 1, 1921: The District Court grants an injunction against the State Legislature's decree of April 27, 1921. (See above.)

Interlude of fourteen months: During this time the legal machinery creaks slowly along. Among other things, the *Delegado* of the N.A.C. makes a thorough investigation of the whole case and arrives at the following conclusions:

"There can be no doubt that Remedios needs lands . . . as it is clear that the 400 heads of families given in the official census have no lands of their own . . . and that they have been exploited by the hacienda which paid them the miserable wage of 50 centavos a day, a wage under no circumstances sufficient for the necessities of one person, and much less for a whole family. . . . In those cases where they have farmed hacienda land on shares . . . the contracts have been notoriously unfair, for they have been forced to surrender 33 per cent of their crops solely for the use of the land. . . . Is anything else necessary to justify the needs of these poor people for land? Is it fair that these *hacendados* should live in luxury in Mexico City, and that even their administrator should go about with his hands covered with diamonds—diamonds which are nothing less than the crystalized tears of the disinherited—while there are actually cases of people dying of hunger in the village of Remedios?"

The answers to these and other questions and considerations set forth by the *Delegado* for the benefit of the N.A.C. were shortly forthcoming, for on

November 4, 1922: A presidential decree was signed giving Remedios final and definitive possession of its ejido lands. (Actual possession followed some months later, on January 16, 1923.)

August 11, 1923: The proprietors of Santa Clara obtained one more injunction from the District Court—this time against the presidential decree of November 4, 1922. But to no avail. Remedios had its land and meant to keep it—injunctions or no injunctions. Eventually the Supreme Court recognized this fact by refusing to uphold the action of the lower court.

The Political Background

The developments in the social and economic life of Remedios during the decade and more that the village has had its land have been greatly influenced by and in large part have been a reflection of local state politics. The unraveling of the complicated web of these local politics is a job that need not be tackled here; it will be enough

for our purposes to note that the various contending political groups in the state have long been aware of the importance of obtaining the support of the agrarian communities. (Agrarian votes are useful; even more useful are agrarian guns—just in case there is any misunderstanding about who gets the most votes on election day!) In the jockeying for agrarian support, Remedios, because of its rapid growth and its dominance of surrounding ejido communities, has been one of the most coveted political prizes.

The chief political boss in Remedios, at the time the village was given possession of its land, was a certain Pablo Martínez—sometime member of Francisco Villa's famous band of cutthroats, leader in the long fight against the hacienda of Santa Clara, and chief of the *Defensa Social* (local militia). Early in the game an alliance was made between this gentleman and the powerful state politician and National Senator, Lucio Limas. Limas was on the make with ambitions to be governor. In return for Limas' assistance in maintaining him in power as the village *cacique* (boss), Martínez agreed to deliver to Limas and his friends the votes (and such other "moral" support as might lie within the power of a chief of militia) of Remedios and the surrounding agrarian communities.

For a few years the above mentioned alliance prospered and Martínez was able to conduct himself and the affairs of Remedios in the manner befitting a former associate of Villa. After a while, however, it appears that Martínez "overstepped the bounds of order and morality and used his position for his own benefit and for that of a few of his closest friends to the great disgust of a number of his subordinates." This was the opportunity for which the political rivals of Limas had been waiting. Led by National Congressman, José Ramos, they immediately set to work to create an opposition party in Remedios with a view to dethroning Martínez and thus robbing Limas of one of his most important sources of support. For this purpose they selected as the leader of the opposition party in Remedios an ejidatario by the name of Andrés Urbina—of whom more anon.

It is important to note that both parties—Lima and his henchman Martínez on the one hand and José Ramos with his local representative Urbina on the other hand—called themselves *agraristas* and fought under the same banner: "*Tierras por la Ley o por la Fuerza*" (Land by Law or by Force). In their struggle for power, however, both sides tended to place personal considerations above the best interest of the agrarian communities. The result, as one reporter observed, was: "The activities of the two groups have been disastrous . . . they have maintained things in a state of semirebellion

. . . brought about a complete division between the ejidatarios in the region . . . and have constantly propagated stories which have acted as obstacles in the way of the solution of the agrarian problem."

As evidence in support of the foregoing statement and as an illustration of the way that pesos, politics and personal ambitions sometimes operate to upset the best laid plans of agrarian reformers, let us consider first the quarrel between Remedios and Mescal.

In 1923 when Remedios received final possession of its ejido lands, the population was still scattered in a number of small settlements. The largest group of houses was concentrated near the *casco* (principal buildings) of the old hacienda. Another group was located at the railroad station about a kilometer away. And still a third group of 74 families was to be found some two kilometers distant in a little community known as Mescal. All of these settlements were included in the agrarian census used as the basis of the ejido grant and were regarded as collectively forming the village of Remedios.

Now, it was the idea of Pablo Martínez and others of the principal group living near the hacienda that a new town site should be laid out on the 200 hectares granted for this purpose by the state legislature and that the whole village population should be concentrated in one place. In due time such a site was staked off and the *casco* group and some of those living near the railroad station began to build their houses on the lots assigned them. The inhabitants of Mescal, although they had agreed to the new town project when it was first proposed, later decided that maybe they had better stay where they were. In taking this position the citizens of Mescal were led and supported by none other than Andrés Urbina, the man selected by Congressman José Ramos to lead the opposition against Pablo Martínez and incidentally against Martínez' big boss, Lucio Limas.

In the face of this situation it was obvious that Martínez could not afford to allow the Mescaltecans to remain in peace in their own back yard. Accordingly, he began to exercise moral and other pressures to make them move into "his" town. And this was the beginning of a controversy that has not to this day been completely settled.

As early as February, 1925, the quarrel had apparently reached a fairly serious stage, for we find the *Delegado* of the N.A.C. reporting that he had been out to Remedios to make an investigation and had found that:

At first all [of the Mescaltecans] agreed that only economic reasons prevented them from making the change [to the new town site]; but

later in our conversation it became clear that their negative attitude was really due to a fear of being subjected to a greater degree to the dominance of the Remedios group . . . led by the chief of the local militia, Pablo Martínez.

Nothing much came of the *Delegado's* investigation. The ejidatarios of Mescal continued to make complaints and finally in September, 1927, their spokesman, Andrés Urbina, took the matter to headquarters by addressing the following letter to the Minister of Agriculture:

Because of the grave difficulties in which my associates of the village of Mescal find themselves as the result of the corrupt maneuvers practiced daily by Pablo Martínez and other reactionaries and obstacles in the way of progress, my afore-mentioned poor friends in the above cited village have come to me as their only representative in order that I shall make valid their rights as citizens, rights which the eternal exploiters wish to usurp. . . . My companions petition you to prevent the people of Remedios from meddling with the lands around their community. . . . The President of the ejido Administrative Committee as well as the Bourgeois Martínez are giving their help to evilly intentioned individuals and doing everything in their power to antagonize and weaken the citizens of Mescal. . . . Martínez and the rest of the tyrants in order to get hold of the land occupied by my associates . . . have made all sorts of offers telling them that they should move to Remedios. But, as you know, we are free, thanks to our present leaders who have concerned themselves with helping the disinherited classes. With confidence in your unadulterated revolutionary principles, I trust . . . that you will concede to the citizens of Mescal the right to enjoy the lands which at the present time have been grabbed by Martínez and other reactionaries.

In response to Urbina's letter the People's Defender (*Procurador*), at the request of the Minister of Agriculture and the N.A.C., patched up a treaty between Mescal and Remedios in January, 1928. In a document signed by Martínez and Urbina, as representatives of the two conflicting groups, the following statement appears:

[We agree:]

1. To change the ejido parcels so that only residents of Mescal will be in possession of parcels immediately adjoining their community. Thus will be avoided the constant quarrels arising from damages caused by the cattle belonging to the Mescaltecans.

2. To make a road whereby the livestock belonging to the citizens of Mescal can be taken to pasture [without having to pass over land under cultivation].

Both parties also agree with reference to the question of whether or not the residents of Mescal should move their houses to Remedios to abide by the decision of the National Agrarian Commission in this matter.

On April 14, 1928, the Regional Organizer was instructed to inform the ejido Administrative Committee that the N.A.C., after due deliberation, had decided that "there was no reason either in law or in equity which obliged the residents of Mescal to move their houses to the urban zone of Remedios."

Had the quarrel between Remedios and Mescal been simply what it appeared to be on the surface, the foregoing agreements and decisions would probably have been enough to settle the question once and for all. But since at bottom political fortunes were at stake, not only in the village but in the state, the difficulties between the two groups continued to be agitated. Let us leave the matter for the moment and turn to the question of major interest in this case study.

Adventures in Agricultural Credit

It will be recalled that the government program for providing agrarian communities with capital involved (up to 1931) two principal procedures: (1) the setting aside of 15 per cent of the yearly produce of each ejidatario, one-third to be earmarked for the payment of taxes and the other two-thirds for the formation of a fund for the coöperative purchase of plows, machinery, work animals, and so forth; and (2) the extending of loans through village coöperative societies associated with Regional Ejido Banks. In this section we shall consider each of these interrelated methods of financing ejidos in terms of the concrete experience of Remedios.

The following paragraphs appear in one of the first reports made by the *Jefe de Zona* with reference to his efforts to organize the ejido of Remedios. (The report is dated May 18, 1925—a little over a year after Remedios had received final possession of its lands.)

> This village until the present year has been rebellious and insubordinate to the orders of every agrarian authority. Recently the Administrative Committee has been changed and the new one seems to be a little less antagonistic and more disposed to comply with Circulars 51 and A. E. 98.[1] . . . I [have] explained clearly and amply the contents and spirit of [these circulars] exhorting the ejidatarios to comply with them. . . . Although the general opinion, when the object of my visit was understood, was not very favorable, it would seem that there are some elements disposed to obey me and to back up my efforts and convince the discontented ones.

The *descontentos* apparently were not willing to be convinced, for

[1] These were Circulars issued by the National Agrarian Commission governing the internal organization and functioning of ejidos—including the matter of the collection of the 15 per cent quota.

a few weeks later (June 9, 1925) the *Jefe de Zona* was writing his chief:

As a result of the activities of two or three politicians,[3] the ejidatarios of Remedios, after having agreed to contribute the 5 per cent . . . are now refusing to make the payment. I called a meeting . . . to explain the reason for Circular A.E. 98 . . . but the above referred to politicians started a discussion in which they claimed that the orders of the N.A.C. were unconstitutional and against their interests. In view of the foregoing, I could do no more than leave written instructions that the 5 per cent be paid . . . and that those not paying would suffer the consequences [that is, lose their ejido parcels].

Confronted with this evidence of open rebellion, the state agent for the N.A.C. was at first disposed to make short shrift of the *políticos* and *agitadores* in Remedios by ordering the president of the Administrative Committee to take away their parcels. This, however, was not done, for upon investigation the *Delegado* found that, although "certain politicians were making terrible propaganda against Circular A.E. 98," the real difficulty lay in the fact that his subordinate, the *Jefe de Zona*, had been "a little too hasty." "The longer the Chief of the Zone," explained the *Delegado* to the N.A.C., "follows his present system of staying only one day in a village . . . the greater will be the number of complaints received."

The upshot of the matter was that the Delegate himself had an interview with the leader of the *descontentos*. In a few weeks a total of 880 pesos had been collected of which 760 pesos went to pay state and municipal taxes. Thus ended the "first round" between Remedios and the agrarian authorities over the question of the 15 per cent.

The second round began in the fall of 1925. On October 31, the *Jefe de Zona* reported that in a meeting held in Remedios the ejidatarios had agreed to pay the sum of four pesos per hectare (or about forty pesos for the average parcel of ten hectares) as representing in money the value of 15 per cent of the current harvests. This, according to the calculation of the *Jefe de Zona*, would have provided the ejido treasury with approximately 12,000 pesos.

But as the Spanish proverb has it—"*Del dicho al hecho hay gran trecho*" (Between the saying and the doing there is a great distance). When next the representative of the N.A.C. visited Remedios it was to find that a committee of ejidatarios had been to Mexico City and

[3] In a letter dated June 13, 1925, from the president of the Administrative Committee to the *Delegado* of the N.A.C., the following sentence appears: "The principal agitators who have been carrying on this work [of exciting the ejidatarios to rebel against the regulations of the N.A.C.] are Andrés Urbina and Eugenio Acuña."

in a personal interview with the Minister of Agriculture had obtained permission to reduce the quota per person under the 15 per cent regulation from forty to fifteen pesos! In the face of such enterprise and of an order from the Minister himself, there was nothing for the poor *Jefe de Zona* to do but acquiesce gracefully.

Before passing on to the next developments in the efforts of the N.A.C. to induct Remedios into the mysteries of coöperative procedure, it will be useful for purposes of later comparison to excerpt at this point a few of the data appearing in a rather extensive report on Remedios made in March 1926.

At the present time 3,020 hectares [out of the total of 4,000 hectares of cultivable land originally granted] are in cultivation, distributed among 342 ejidatarios. . . . There is great irregularity in the division of the land. . . . While some ejidatarios have from 7 to 10 hectares, others have only 2, 4 or 6 hectares . . . and 182 ejidatarios do not have any land at all, although they have every right to receive parcels and are anxious to cultivate them.

The raising of livestock is carried on in a small way; the stock is of the common variety, small and light-weight. There are 599 head of cattle, 438 mules, 272 horses, 352 burros, 2,442 goats, and 148 sheep.

In the ejido treasury there are 425 pesos; taxes are paid up until December 31, 1925.

During the last four years there has been a very notable progress and improvement. The population now numbers 2,278 inhabitants of which 587 are heads of families. [Compared with 1,918 inhabitants and 400 heads of families in 1920.] Forty-eight per cent of the population is literate.

The school census shows 176 boys and an equal number of girls. . . . The school for boys is in ruins and has an attendance of only 88; the girls' school is in even worse condition and is attended by only 22 students.

One hundred and forty-one of the 200 hectares in the urban zone have been divided into some 800 lots, of which 368 are now occupied. A whole block has been dedicated to a new school now under construction. Another block has been set aside for the public market and also one for the bull ring.

Coming back to our story: As the time approached for the harvesting of the 1926 crops, once again the Regional Organizer for the N.A.C. began his struggle to collect 15 per cent of the produce of the ejido and once again a large number of the ejidatarios were determined not to pay up. At a meeting held on January 9, 1927, the Regional Organizer finally convinced the majority present that they must comply with the law, but a number still held out, among them the recently elected president of the Ejido Administrative Committee. The Regional Organizer demanded that another

president be elected on the spot and then sat down and wrote a letter to the N.A.C. asking for permission, "with a view to establishing a precedent which will do away with the disorganization in this ejido," temporarily to retire from use the parcels belonging to the recalcitrant president and his supporters. This permission was granted and the *rebeldes* were prohibited from using their parcels until further notice.

Apparently the precedent established by the Regional Organizer did not have a very lasting effect, for when the time came to collect 15 per cent of the 1927 crops the contest was on once more. Indeed, if one may judge from the following letter to the president of the Republic from a group in Remedios calling themselves "The Martyrs of Chicago,"[4] the battle was extended to a new front:

The undersigned, members of the Syndicate "Martyrs of Chicago," hereby inform you that on the thirteenth day of the present month of February . . . the agent of the Ejido Bank in this state appeared in this village demanding that we give him 15 per cent of the adobe bricks which we were making in order to support life and obtain for our families a beggarly crust of bread. . . . As the majority of us have had the misfortune not to receive a piece of land, it is an injustice that he should want to snatch from us a piece of bread which our families lack and which neither the Ejido Bank nor its agent needs; wherefore . . . we believe that such cannot be an order of the higher authorities, because they should take into account that we are not going around making business but we are working; and, moreover, the adobe bricks we are making are in the urban zone of the village and of the hacienda, land which is not in the ejidos; in view of all of the foregoing, we petition in the name of the town and of justice . . . that our complaint be heard . . . and for this reason we present ourselves before the sanctuary of justice which will not shut its doors to the disinherited, robbing them of the only patrimony which gives them life. . . .

The agent of the Ejido Bank, a certain Anselmo Monreal, promptly denied collecting "a single penny" from the Martyrs of Chicago. On the other hand, as he informed the office of the Ejido Bank on April 16, 1928, he *had* made strenuous efforts to collect the 15 per cent quota due from the 1927 harvest:

Permit me to state that I have exhausted every means for convincing the following ejidatarios in Remedios that they should turn over to the

[4] So far as the present writer can discover, the use of the phrase *Los Mártires de Chicago* as a name for labor and agrarian unions, coöperative societies, etc., was introduced into Mexico by labor propagandists during the Carranza regime. The name is now found in many parts of the country and refers, of course, to the four anarchists executed in Chicago for their alleged responsibility for the Haymarket riot of 1886.

Administrative Committee the 15 per cent of their harvests required by law. . . . [There follows a list of 38 names.] As this ejido is one of the most important in the region . . . I respectfully ask for permission to retire from use the parcels of the above mentioned ejidatarios . . . with a view to establishing the precedent which this case demands. . . .

On May 2, 1929, the N.A.C. granted Monreal's request for power to engage in disciplinary action and he immediately instructed the president of the Administrative Committee to retire the parcels in question. Whereupon, as the saying goes, the fat was in the fire for fair. Wails of protest arose from all sides and letters to the president of the Republic, the Minister of Agriculture, the People's Defender and "to whom it may concern" flew thick and fast.

The first to make themselves heard were the Mescaltecans. In the convention of the Syndicates of Workers and Farmers[5] which met in the capital of the state on May 21, 1922, representatives from Mescal introduced the following resolution:

We petition this convention to help us defend ourselves against the President of the Administrative Committee in Remedios who in a most personal and direct manner is attempting in a thousand ways to injure us. . . . He has refused to give us any land to work and lately has taken the parcels away from three of our associates, claiming that they have not paid their 15 per cent quota. . . .

In a letter dated May 26, 1928, a similar complaint was made to the People's Defender by that prominent citizen of Mescal, Andrés Urbina.

Finally, the Mescaltecans tried still another tack. On June 14, the other prominent *líder* and associate of Urbina, Eugenio Acuña, with three of his friends addressed the following letter to General Guadalupe Rodríguez:[6]

Greatly Respected General: We are very sorry to bother you again and we address you now only to remind you that we have been despoiled of the inheritance which our Fatherland has given us; and solely because of bastardly ambitions they have taken away our parcels which by law belong to us; and we hope, as you have promised, that you can tell us something about this matter.

This letter was sent by General Rodríguez to the Minister of Agriculture with this interesting comment:

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[5] Organizations of this type are found in many states. Their purposes are usually political.

[6] General Rodríguez at the time was stationed near Remedios and, as is the custom of Mexican generals, took an active part in local and state politics.

The agent of the Ejido Bank in Remedios is completely under the influence of the *caciques* in that place [Pablo Martínez and associates?] who by reason of their [vested] interests under no circumstances can be on the side of the real agriculturalists as is shown by the fact that they have taken away the parcels from the persons indicated in the enclosed letter. . . . Permit me to suggest that you order the return of their parcels to these four ejidatarios. . . . The above mentioned agent, Anselmo Monreal, is associated with the rich . . . and can no longer represent the ejidatarios.

But the Mescaltecans were not the only letter writers in Remedios. The Martyrs of Chicago also had something to say, as may be seen from the following document addressed to the People's Defender and dated May 25, 1928:

The Syndicate Martyrs of Chicago of Remedios, authorized by over 100 ejidatarios, desires to make manifest the following: That the President of the Administrative Committee in this village, Manuel Galván, has announced that more than 30 ejidatarios have been dispossessed of their ejido parcels, some because said President has not been content with the 15 per cent tax which said ejidatarios have paid, others because they have not paid such contribution, and this due to the confusion that exists concerning the legal requirements in this matter, a confusion for which the President himself is largely responsible and which is the result of his underhanded propaganda during all last year against any compliance with the obligations of the Agrarian Law. The President himself was the ringleader in arousing the village against the organization of the Coöperative and against payment of the 15 per cent and we can prove that he came to this very Syndicate trying to get us to support him which naturally we did not do as this Syndicate has always and at all times stood for compliance with the demands of the law, while he now upholds the law solely because it suits his personal interest to do so and is the best way to cover up his past intriguing.

We'd like to have Citizen Manuel Galván tell us if it isn't true that he told Felipe Perales and Leoncio Torres, Secretary and President respectively of the old Administrative Committee, that they could advise the agrarian authorities, and sign his full name to the document, that he, Manuel Galván, and all the people with him, did not expect to pay one penny of the 15 per cent tax and if the authorities thought they could rob them of their parcels, they would find out there would be some shooting first. Such was the honorable work by which Manuel Galván won the sympathy of the authorities and of his fellow townsmen so that they elected him President of the Administrative Committee, and now that he is President he ignores the opinion of the very ejidatarios whose vote put him in that office and has even taken away the parcel of the Secretary to the Committee under the pretext that said Secretary no longer helps him with the office work. The Secretary, Francisco Silva, has explained

that as he is a poor man he has to earn his living and that the President failed not only to carry out his promise to cancel the Secretary's 15 per cent tax as a recompense for his labors, but, using the pretext that the Secretary, Silva, was spending his entire time in politics, hasn't kept any of his other promises to him. Further, he has treated as a scrap of paper the opinion of the *Procurador de Pueblos* and has dispossessed Lucina Contreras of her parcel.

For all of which this Union, in representation of over 100 ejidatarios, petitions that a delegate be sent so that the above mentioned accusations may be proved in a general meeting. We don't ask the President of the Committee to call this meeting for that would be useless, since he it is, with his propaganda of rebellion, who is responsible for the disrespect which reigns among the great majority of the villagers who are ignorant of the law. . . .

Having nothing more to say for the moment, we beg to remain,

Yours in the Cause of the Worker.

Despite the protests and attempts of various sorts to bring pressure to bear, the officials of the Ejido Bank backed up by the N.A.C. stuck by their guns. In August another batch of parcels was taken away from ejidatarios who, "notwithstanding all suggestions and even entreaties," still refused to pay their 15 per cent. Moreover, when the agent of the Bank reported that the ejidatarios who had lost their parcels "were simply going over to the old hacienda and getting land to work on shares, and thus making a joke out of the attempts to discipline them," the Regional Organizer for the N.A.C. began to plan to put the screws on still tighter and to take away parcels not just for one year, but permanently.

Matters dragged on for another six months and then suddenly, in June 1929, the Regional Organizer was forced to do an about-face. *Por orden superior* (that is, from the Minister of Agriculture) the parcels which had been retired, despite the fact that they had now been planted by other ejidatarios and despite the protests of the *Jefe de Zona*, Anselmo Monreal, were all returned to their original owners. Just why this was done is not very clear in the record. It may have been because there was a new Minister of Agriculture in Mexico City, or because of local politics, or for some other reason. What *is* clear is that once again the attempt to educate Remedios in the principles of coöperative procedure had failed. And it may not be without significance that on July 31, 1929, Anselmo Monreal was transferred to another state and that shortly thereafter the Regional Organizer also was moved on to more fruitful fields of labor. . . .

The new Regional Organizer and head of the Ejido Bank, Ab-

elardo Caldas, was a man of action. After only a few weeks in office he wrote (September 4, 1929) the Delegate for the N.A.C. that on a visit to Remedios he had discovered many "irregularities": that a number of the ejidatarios, in addition to their parcels, were also in possession of land bought from the neighboring hacienda or were working hacienda land on shares; that some ejido parcels were held by individuals who were not farmers but merchants; that over 16,000 pesos was owed to the Ejido Bank and the chances of collecting were very small "unless the ejido parcels are given to those who will work them and the local bosses who have been profiting from the situation are suppressed." Señor Caldas further stated that he had given orders for a "house cleaning," but that he was doubtful any final solution for these problems would be arrived at until the law of Ejido Patrimony could be applied.[7]

The new Regional Organizer was a better prophet than he knew; no sooner did he start his "house cleaning" in Remedios than the whole pack of *líderes* and *caciques* descended on him—as witness the following letter of September 17, 1929, signed by the President of the Administrative Committee, Manuel Galván, the President of the Coöperative Society, Rosalío Laredo, and the Chief of the Local Militia, Melchor Ocampo,[8] and sent to the President of the Republic, the Minister of War, the Minister of Agriculture, the Governor of the State, the Delegate of the N.A.C. and the Chief of Military Operations in the State:

Today Sr. Abelardo Caldas, Regional Organizer of the Ejido Bank, called a meeting of the ejidatarios of this place. . . . At the appointed hour, all of us without any objection obeyed the summons, for we take pride in being able to say that . . . we have always respected the dispositions of authority, a fact which no one can deny, for our actions are sufficiently well known throughout the region as well as in more distant

[7] The following paragraph from a letter written by the People's Defender to the N.A.C. on October 29, 1929, offers further evidence of the irregularities discovered by the Regional Organizer:

". . . the problem referred to . . . will be solved . . . only if the needs of the poor ejidatarios are taken into account. . . . If the voice of the 'bossism' which has done so much damage in this region is listened to, then a solution will never be possible. There are individuals in Remedios with capital to the amount of ten, fifteen, thirty, fifty and even eighty thousand pesos. And I can assure you that these individuals are not out to help the hard working farmers; on the contrary, by the renting of mules on half shares, the selling of seed on time and by other types of loans they have managed to keep the ejidatarios bound hand and foot. . . ."

[8] All these individuals were friends and allies of Pablo Martínez; the Manuel Galván here mentioned is the same Galván who was the subject of such bitter complaint by the Martyrs of Chicago in their letter of May 25, 1928, quoted above.

parts and we have the reputation of being strictly partisans of order and honest work. . . .

When we were all gathered together in the above mentioned meeting, Caldas, in the most high-handed and impolite manner, notified us that he was going to take away our parcels . . . and especially the parcels being worked by ejidatarios who have a capital of a thousand pesos or over. When we asked him to explain his reasons for this procedure, far from answering us in the manner that even the most elementary education would demand, his high-handedness broke all bounds and instead of directing the discussion along peaceful lines, his stupid and far-from-proper vocabulary, for one holding the high office he pretends to, degenerated to utter vulgarity, even to the extent of trying to deprive us of the right to express the views that we held and still hold for not agreeing with such procedure which we consider, judged from whatever point of view, unjust. . . . We are sure of what we say on this score, and even though we are poor, no one has the right to treat us in such a haughty manner, much less in questions which concern us directly, and for that reason we respectfully but firmly protest against the insolent attitude of the above mentioned engineer. . . .

We do not deny that possibly the majority of our comrades possess at the present time a thousand pesos; but this amount includes the humble house each one has sacrificed to build in this village, a few delapidated tools and a team of oxen for work—all acquired with the fruit of the parcels which from day to day give us the means to better our condition. . . . What other work can a farmer turn to if he is to continue his evolution toward the higher standard of living which is right, and especially when it is remembered that he knows no other work than that of rude labor in the field? Quite simply, the taking away of our parcels will mean a return to our former sad state, a thing which under no circumstances can we believe to be just.

We make bold to state that never has this village, always conscious of its duty, failed to put forth every effort . . . necessary to defend our Fatherland and sustain its dignity. . . . We protest our deepest allegiance to the present authorities because, conscious of their mission and duties they in turn are not sparing in their efforts, within the Laws which govern their actions, to orientate us in the true way of emancipation for which our brothers shed so much blood; and it will be sad indeed if the Government should permit a person who on every side reveals his crudeness and who has never known the rigors of misery, at one fell blow . . . to place us once more back in the terrible situation we knew only a few years ago.

In view of the nature of the charges made in the above quoted letter, naturally, it was not long before the Regional Organizer began to receive a number of requests for an explanation of his conduct. Caldas' answer to one such request made by the govenor[9] of the state will serve to give his side of the case:

[9] None other than Lucio Limas! (See above p. 416). Limas' first attempt at the gover-

I have the honor to inform you that in a meeting which I called of the ejidatarios [of Remedios] for the purpose of informing those who had rights to ejido parcels and who should be excluded from such possession (by reason of being owners of other land or possessors of more than 1,000 pesos of capital), Pablo Martínez started a scandal which broke up the meeting. The attitude assumed by this person was not only disrespectful but even degenerated into threats against me and the *Jefe de Zona* who accompanied me. . . . At the bottom of this matter, as it is easy to show, there is nothing but a desire to defend by very questionable means, the privileged position which Martínez and his associates have enjoyed—a position of unusual influence used to the notorious prejudice of those who, despite their perfectly accredited right to receive ejido parcels, do not have any land and are forced to work as peons. . . .

But Caldas was barking up the wrong tree—or, at least, so events would seem to indicate. He did get the N.A.C. to agree that the Law of Ejido Patrimony should be enforced and a new division of ejido parcels made in Remedios. But even this was only a paper accomplishment; for, although in the latter part of September a commission of N.A.C. engineers appeared and even started to work on the redistribution of the land, after a few weeks they packed up their bags and went back to Mexico City.

At the end of the year Caldas received notice that he had been transferred to another state.

In 1929, 1930, and 1931, the contest between the agrarian authorities and the ejidatarios in Remedios over the question of to pay or not to pay the 15 per cent quota was continued very much as in previous years. After each harvest the usual minority refused to turn over their quota; the agrarian authorities made their usual threats of disciplinary action; some parcels were taken away and, after the usual complaints, were returned. But perhaps enough attention has now been given to this particular scheme of agricultural credit. It remains only to remind the reader that the whole idea of forcing the ejidos to do their own saving was finally abandoned on December 27, 1932, when a law was passed repealing the 15 per cent clause of the Law of Ejido Patrimony.

Let us turn now to a consideration of other aspects of Remedios' experience with agricultural credit as represented by the government system of Ejido Banks and Coöperative Credit Societies.

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norship in the regular 1928 elections, failed when he was "prevailed upon" by General Guevara, the local Military Commandant, to withdraw his candidacy. Later, when the Guevara imposed governor joined the General in his ill-fated 1929 revolution and had to flee to the United States, Limas was appointed Provisional Governor. He held office from March 22, 1929, until September 1930, when, for reasons too complicated to go into here, he resigned.

The first Coöperative Credit Society in Remedios was organized by the ubiquitous Pablo Martínez in December, 1922, with an initial paid-up capital of 565 pesos and an enrollment of about 200 members. The society was not very successful. It was difficult to obtain even small loans[10] from local banks and after a little more than a year's existence the organization was dissolved.

In 1925 Martínez and some of his associates obtained a (personal?) loan directly from President Calles of some 2,000 pesos. Although this loan had interesting political implications,[11] it was unofficial and outside of any regular channel of agricultural credit.

When the *Ley de Bancos Ejidales* was enacted in March, 1926, and a month later one of the first Ejido Banks was established in the state where Remedios is located, a new coöperative was immediately formed by 126 citizens. The initial capital subscribed was 1,045 pesos and the President of the organization was, of course, Pablo Martínez. But somehow or other the new coöperative couldn't seem to get together with the Ejido Bank. On July 18, we find Martínez writing to the manager that, in view of the fact that the bank, despite repeated promises, had failed to send a representative to Remedios to approve the organization of the society, and since, in any case, the members of the society were not in agreement with the official statutes governing coöperatives, the money had been returned to the shareholders and the society dissolved.

The manager of the Ejido Bank got quite concerned over Martínez' letter and, after writing him that he (Martínez) had done very wrong in dissolving the coöperative ("thus sowing disorder and lack of confidence among the ejidatarios"), sent a special representative to fix matters up. The investigator reported back on August 23, 1926, that when he had interviewed Martínez, the latter in "a most disrespectful manner" had stated that there wasn't any

[10] As witness this letter from Pablo Martínez to the N.A.C. written on July 27, 1923:

". . . Up to the present time we have been able to obtain neither credit nor money from the . . . [local commercial bank] although we have complied with all the requirements this bank demands for loans. This is to be explained by the fact that the bank here is in the hands of . . . the Knights of Columbus who are enemies of agrarianism and of villages like ours."

[11] In a report in re the petition for this loan, a special investigator for the president, after explaining how he had been able to bring together the two contending groups in the village and "effect the beginning of a unification of the ejidatarios in this zone," stated:

"Martínez has suffered a loss of prestige and his opponents realize that they also, because of their excesses, are not entirely in the right. . . . It would seem that Martínez is looking for a parachute to save himself and the others are willing to retrace their steps. . . . For this reason, in my opinion, the accompanying petition [for the loan] which both groups have joined to make should be granted immediately as one step in the process of gradually gaining control of the ejidos in this area."

coöperative society in Remedios because he had returned the money to the shareholders. The president of the Committee also received the agent of the bank in a most incorrect manner and told him: "We are tired of being fooled the way we have been by him [the manager of the bank] and all the rest of the engineers who have been to this town; they have tried to make us believe that the bank has got 200,000 pesos, and it hasn't even got 200,000 centavos. . . ."

In view of this attitude on the part of Martínez and the president, the Regional Organizer decided that the only thing to do was to form a new coöperative. After considerable difficulty and a great many visits on the part of the officials of the bank, this was finally accomplished on May 23, 1927. The president of the new society was one Alvino Olvera (in the opinion of the *Jefe de Zona*, "a very conscientious man"); the initial capital 342 pesos, subscribed by 151 ejidatarios. Within a few weeks the society had received loans from the bank of 16 mules, 9,149 kilos of corn, 915 kilos of frijoles, and 3,720 pesos in cash.

There were a few complaints of one sort and another[12] made from time to time, but, on the whole, during the next twelve months relations between the Ejido Bank and the Coöperative Society in Remedios were fairly satisfactory. Along toward the middle of 1928, however, it began to be apparent that the ratio of repayments to loans was getting a little out of hand.[13] By the latter part of 1929 when the energetic Abelardo Caldas arrived on the scene as the new manager of the Ejido Bank and Regional Organizer for the zone, it will be recalled that he was considerably exercised because the coöperative in Remedios owed the bank over 16,000 pesos. As part of his "house cleaning," Caldas made strenuous efforts to increase collections. The officers of the society (at this time Manuel Galván—the bête noire of the Martyrs of Chicago—was president and Pablo Martínez was treasurer) offered to do their best to help the manager of the bank, although they seemed to be doubtful about their ability to collect some of the largest of the bad accounts

[12] For example, the following letter was addressed to the bank by a certain Tomás Rivera on July 29, 1927:

"I have the honor of placing before you the following complaints: A mule which was given to me was later taken away and given to a fellow who is not even a member of the Coöperative . . . When I asked for a loan of 7 pesos and three *bultos* of corn, I was given only one *bulto* and 2.85 pesos. . . . Three of us ejidatarios have wanted to put in a petition for plows but have not been able to do so because for a long time the President of the Coöperative has been going around drunk. Moreover, some members of the Coöperative do not live in this town and are not ejidatarios."

[13] Despite this fact an *avío* loan of 6,894 pesos was made on July 21, 1928. This was considerably in excess of the maximum for this type of loan allowed under the law.

including that of "Alvino Olvera, the former president of our Co-operative, who offers a thousand excuses to keep from paying his debts."

But worse was yet to come. In November, 1929, the governor, Lucio Limas, wired the Minister of Agriculture that all over the state (and especially in Remedios) the private grain buyers were trying to "break" the coöperative societies, and if the Ejido Bank did not make additional loans at once the ejidatarios would have to sell their crops at a great sacrifice. Whereupon the manager of the local Ejido Bank was instructed by the Minister of Agriculture to "go the limit"—and if more money was needed than the bank had on hand he would raise it.

The result of this procedure was that at the end of 1929 the coöperative in Remedios owed the Ejido Bank 32,300 pesos!

During 1930 matters improved very little. The efforts to collect back debts were continued, but met with almost no success even though a number of the delinquents were threatened with legal action. In July, 1930, the manager of the Ejido Bank discovered that over 1,000 pesos had been loaned to individuals who were not ejidatarios including, among others, the railway station master (who had bought an automobile with the money!). When the manager under whose regime these loans had been made was called upon for an explanation he held that the bank had been deceived by the then president of the Coöperative, Alvino Olvera, and led to believe that the individuals to whom the credits in question were extended were bona fide ejidatarios.

In January, 1931, about thirty-five of the principal debtors to the bank tried to get out of paying their debts by addressing a petition to the president of the Republic. Among other things these individuals claimed:

> We have had three years of bad harvests and for this reason we have not been able to meet our debts to the Coöperative Society. . . . The Ejido Bank is now threatening to seize our work animals . . . and if that is done we will be left in a state of the greatest misery and will be unable to sow our crops. . . . For these reasons, Mr. President, we beseech you in the most earnest manner *to remit our debts*, because we simply cannot pay them now. . . . We may add that the majority of our debts are for corn that was loaned us when this village was threatened by the unfaithful Escobaristas [that is, the followers of General Escobar in the 1929 revolution] . . . against whom we are happy to say we fought with our rifles . . . contributing in this way to the triumphs of the Constitutional Government.

It had been clear for some time to the officials of the Ejido Bank

that, if any progress was ever to be made in liquidating the capital "frozen" in the loans made to the Remedios coöperative, it would be necessary first of all to effect a thorough cleaning up of the society's books. As matters stood no one seemed to be quite sure who owed whom what. It was with this idea in mind that as early as the latter part of 1930 the manager of the Ejido Bank began to send frantic requests to the N.A.C. for the temporary loan of Anselmo Monreal. (This was the same Monreal who was for a number of years *Jefe de Zona* for the Remedios area and, according to the manager, the only person who could make heads or tails out of the accounts of the Remedios coöperative.) Finally, in June, 1931, Monreal arrived, but, after a few weeks, he was ordered away again by the N.A.C. although he had cleared up only about half of the individual accounts.

Thus matters remained until the latter part of 1932. In November of that year, after a considerable amount of urging on the part of the Ejido Bank, the officers of the coöperative in Remedios agreed to pay someone themselves to straighten out their accounts. The person hired for this purpose began work in December, 1932, and he is still (March, 1934) at his job—with the end not yet in sight. Meanwhile, business relations between the Ejido Bank and the Remedios coöperative are practically at a standstill. During the year 1933 the bank made no loans of any sort to the society, and collections on previous loans amounted to only 600 pesos. On December 31, 1933, the society owed the bank in round numbers 29,500 pesos distributed as follows: 1-year crop advances—19,800 pesos; 3-year individual loans—6,800 pesos; and 3-months warehouse loans—2,900 pesos. In the seven years ending December 31, 1933, the total credits extended to the society amounted to some 73,700 pesos; total collections were 44,100 pesos—that is, a liquidation ratio of a little less than 60 per cent.[14]

[14] The details of the operations of the Ejido Bank with the Remedios Coöperative Society are given in the following table in thousands of pesos:

Year	1 Yr. Crop Advances			3 Yr. Individual Loans			3 Mo. Warehouse Loans		
	Loaned	Repaid	Owed	Loaned	Repaid	Owed	Loaned	Repaid	Owed
1927	10.6	....	10.6	2.5	....	2.5	2.0	....	2.0
1928	13.6	10.8	13.4	10.4	4.0	8.9	9.4	4.9	6.5
1929	20.1	10.1	23.4	.6	3.1	6.4	.3	4.3	2.5
1930	1.0	3.5	20.9	.3	.4	6.3	.1	....	2.6
1931	....	2.1	18.8	....	.1	6.2	....	....	2.6
1932	1.9	.2	20.4	.6	....	6.8	.3	....	2.9
1933	....	.6	19.8	....	....	6.8	....	....	2.9
Total	47.2	27.3	....	14.4	7.6	....	12.1	9.2	....

If any further indication of the situation of Remedios from the point of view of agricultural credit be desired, it may be found in these paragraphs from a report written by the *Jefe de Zona* for the region in July, 1933:

Here no less than ten commission merchants (*acaparadores*) thrive and prosper. These birds of prey, year after year, convert the sweat of my ejidatarios into gold. . . . The ejidatorios allow themselves to be robbed to fatten these greedy hogs known as seed buyers. . . .

Up to the present time the official and private credit agencies have tried to intervene in this situation but their activities have been so feeble in contrast to the private buyers that they have been a joke.

Summary and Comment

It is clear that the various government schemes for extending agricultural credit and providing for coöperative procedure have not met with unqualified success in the ejido of Remedios. The reasons for this unhappy outcome to the undoubtedly well-intentioned efforts of the agrarian authorities may be read both within and between the lines of the foregoing pages.

The first and most important obstacle in the way of the successful carrying out of the government program has been, of course, village and state politics and the interrelation between the two. That there was a certain amount of local tradition[15] for this sort of thing, perhaps even stronger than in other parts of Mexico, serves to explain but not to mitigate its disastrous effects on the life of the community.

Yearly Totals

	Loaned	Repaid	Owed
1927	15.1	....	15.1
1928	33.4	19.7	18.8
1929	21.0	17.5	32.3
1930	1.4	3.9	29.8
1931	....	2.2	27.6
1932	2.8	.2	30.1
1933	....	.6	29.5
Totals	73.7	44.1	....

[15] A recent report on Remedios and the surrounding ejidos states:

"There are plenty of 'hard boys' in this area. Here was born Doroteo Arango, alias Pancho Villa . . . and from this region came the men who went forth with him on his adventures. Two of the individuals now functioning as Presidents of Ejido Administrative Committees were members of Villa's band and this whole area was a theater for almost unbelievable human butchery. The unleashed passions flew like the winds of these plains and anything could happen. . . . Now only the memory remains, and . . . the undeniable necessity to carry pistols—the atavistic pistol which all of us use, some because it is an integral part of us, and others by force of imitation."

Overweening and unsocial personal ambitions on the part of local leaders, especially when they are supported in the achievement of their ambitions by powerful state politicians, can play havoc with any attempt to educate a people in communal principles and coöperative procedure. As a case in point, Pablo Martínez, in addition to his ejido parcel, owns the hotel, the moving picture theatre, and the cock-fight ring in Remedios and in all is said to be worth about 100,000 pesos. Martínez' history makes a good success story—From Peonage to Riches—but it is a story which is the negation of the philosophy behind Mexico's agrarian reform.

A second reason for the failure of the program of agricultural credit in Remedios is found in the way the Ejido Bank and other governmental agencies are administered. By this it is not meant that those in official positions have been dishonest or lacking in ability. Certainly there is no evidence in the case under consideration here for believing that any of the managers of the bank or their subordinates were other than conscientious and hard-working folk. But, on the other hand, there seems to be considerable evidence that these men were constantly interfered with by local, state, and even national politicians. In less than seven years there were at least four different managers of the bank and a similar number of shifts in the local agents or *Jefes de Zona*. When so much depends upon an intimate acquaintance with the personalities and problems in each of the ejidos served by the bank, it is obvious that these constant shifts in the bank's personnel greatly prejudice the chances for success. Moreover, as has already been pointed out in a previous chapter, the government has been trying to carry out its program of ejido organization without adequate funds either for employing a sufficient number of agents or defraying their legitimate expenses. The present *Jefe de Zona*, for instance, in the zone of which Remedios is the center is expected to keep in intimate touch with thirty-three ejido villages scattered over a very large area. For this purpose he is supplied with neither horse nor automobile and is allowed the niggardly sum of fifteen pesos a month for ordinary traveling expenses.

Finally, a third factor which has operated to upset agrarian plans and calculations for Remedios has been its very rapid growth. Between 1922 and 1933 the population increased more than threefold, or from less than 2,000 to something over 6,000. Many of the newcomers have tried to get a share of the ejido land and in an appreciable number of cases have succeeded. The result has been a division and redivision of ejido parcels until some ejidatarios now have only half a hectare. The pressure of population against sub-

sistence in Remedios has already created a problem of Malthusian proportions. We have noted that Remedios is bankrupt, but worse things are in store unless more land can be obtained.

As a matter of fact, application for an extension of the ejido has been made. A recent letter (December 30, 1933) from the Administrative Committee to the N.A.C. contains so excellent a summary of the present situation in Remedios that it will be quoted at some length as a fitting conclusion to the present case history.

On February 14, of the current year [1933] we presented to the State Agrarian Commission a petition for the extension of our ejido on the grounds that a considerable number of the residents of this village do not have any land.

In view of the fact that up to the present time the State Commission has not reached any decision . . . we are hereby addressing this superior authority to request most earnestly that you instruct the State Commission . . . to grant us the extension for which we have petitioned. . . .

One of the most important reasons which has forced us to petition for this favor, allowed under the law, is that our associates who have tried to buy small parcels of the land subdivided [and offered for sale by neighboring private landowners], far from having solved the problem of their need for land, consider that they have put themselves in a still worse position due to the fact that the harvests have been small and the grain merchants have run the prices down—sometimes as low as twenty pesos or less for a ton of frijoles or corn. Since the little we produce is to buy clothes and extras like medicine . . . the result is that in a very short time we have sold our harvests and are forced later to buy [seed] from the monopolizers at the prices they are pleased to ask. . . .

Under these conditions the poor folks who have undertaken to buy small sections of land are placed in the dilemma of either not making the payments on the land for which they have contracted, or of paying and thus exposing themselves and their families to the possibility of dying of hunger. As the first necessity is to preserve life, they do not make these payments and the *hacendados* therefore take away their parcels and give them to other purchasers who are also unable to make their payments and hence for the same reasons, in turn, the land is taken away from them and thus no one can keep it. For these reasons, it is preferable that our fellow townsmen should obtain this land by processes allowed under the ejido laws. . . .

The reasons we have presented here could not be clearer or more just and the Government is offered a beautiful opportunity to give a demonstration of its interest in helping the rural proletariat.

The rich owners of subdivided land in this place have openly declared themselves our enemies and headed by our Congressman, Pablo Martínez,[16] are blocking us. When it was a question of dividing up property

[16] Martínez was elected state congressman on June 26, 1932.

which did not belong to Martínez, he was one of the most exalted agrarian leaders, but now that he owns a great deal of land . . . he has become more reactionary than the old landlords themselves. . . . Martínez is supported by his friend the Municipal President in his efforts to place obstacles in our way, but in spite of the intrigues and outrages of which we are the victims . . . we are going to stand united in the defense of our rights.

PART THREE

THE FUTURE OF THE EJIDO

The Hope of the Fatherland
Upon the Surrender of Villa

Pancho Villa has surrendered
In a town called Torreón;
Says he's tired of fighting now,
And fields of cotton must be sown.

Everyone is content
With Villa's surrender;
They hope the question of a President
Will no wars engender.

Carranza is already dead;
May God his plea for pardon hear—
Only because of his own caprice
Has he had to pay so dear.

Las Esperanzas de la Patria
Por la Rendición de Villa

Pancho Villa se rindió
En la ciudad de Torreón.
Ya se cansó de pelear,
Se va a sembrar algodón.

Todo el mundo está contento
Con la rendición de Villa
Y espera que no haya guerra
Por la cuestión de la silla.

Carranza ya se murió,
Que Dios la haya perdonado,
Nada más por su capricho,
Muy caro le ha costado.

The people and the armed forces
Are of one opinion foregone:
They wish the presidential chair
Filled by General Obregón.

All belong to a single party;
There is none with whom to fight.
Comrades, there is war no longer,
Let us work with all our might.

Guarantees have now been given
To every class of man,
The same to the proprietor
As for the artisan.

Just as of soldiers
For war, there was no dearth,
So must they give fruit to the nation
And cultivate the earth.

Gold is worth nothing,
If of food there is none;
It is the spring of the clock
Of our own generation.

I should like to be a great man
With much learning to display;
But, better than that, I want
Something to eat every day.

The maize field is maturing,
The ear of corn is tight;
It is the sustenance of man
And sacred in his sight.

The very best well-being
To which the Mexican aspires,
Is that he be free to work
For the happiness he desires.

Pardon my bad verses;
My learning has not the scope,
For making other better ones
To my country and its hope.

El pueblo y la fuerza armada
Son de la misma opinión,
Quieren que suba a la silla
El general Obregón.

Todo es un mismo partido,
Ya no hay con quién pelear,
Compañeros, ya no hay guerra,
Vámonos a trabajar.

Ya se dieron garantías
A todo el género humano,
Lo mismo que al propietario
Como para el artesano.

Así como los soldados
Han servido para la guerra,
Que den fruto a la Nación
Y que cultiven la tierra.

El oro no vale nada,
Si no hay alimentación,
Es la cuerda del reloj
De nuestra generación.

Quisiera ser hombre grande,
Con muchas sabidurías,
Más mejor quiero tener
Que comer todos los días.

Ya la milpa gilotea,
La mazorca está apretada;
Es el sustento del hombre
Y la cosa más sagrada.

Es el mejor bienestar
Que el mexicano desea,
Que le dejen trabajar
Para que feliz se vea.

Perdonen mis malos versos,
Mi sabiduría no alcanza
Para hacer otros mejores
A la Patria y su esperanza.

—José Guerrero.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PRESENT CRISIS IN THE AGRARIAN REFORM

As LONG as the distribution of land to villages was, despite the plethora of laws and the constant public agitation of the matter, a relatively small affair it made no great difference whether there was any clear understanding of the implications of the ejido program or not. But as time went on, as the effects of the program began to be felt in production, as the problems of the organization and control of the ejido became more complicated—in a word, as the proportions of the possible role of the ejido in the life of the nation became more patent, it was no longer possible to evade the issue. Some sort of answers had to be found for questions daily becoming more insistent: Just how far was this ejido business to be carried? What was the ejido, anyway—one method among several for redistributing landholdings, a transitory political device for rectifying social injustice, or was it something more—an end in itself, a novel and significant type of agrarian institution and a new and important instrument of agricultural production? If the ejido was to be conceived as a permanent structure, then what kind of a structure, and what part was it to play in the scheme of the social and economic life of the country?

We have seen how these questions in anything approaching the form in which they have been stated here were first posed on the occasion of the enactment of the Law of Ejido Patrimony in 1925. At that time the group within the revolutionary family which we have designated by the name *veteranos* swept away the feeble and unorganized opposition of the barely nascent *agrarista* party and, abandoning the "naíve communism" of Circular 51, started the ejidatarios on the road to rugged individualism. This action, however, by no means settled once and for all the question of the future of the ejido. On the contrary, it brought the question out into the open. The Law of Ejido Patrimony served in increasing measure to formalize doctrines and theories. It became a bone of contention, a matter for attack and defense and in the succeeding years the whole question was constantly agitated by declarations, interviews, and articles from both sides of the fence. As the result, by 1933, the alignment of two schools of thought was fairly clear. In that year, stimulated by the Ortiz Rubio "stop-laws" and the steady decline in the

curve of ejido distribution, for the first time the *agraristas* emerged with something in the nature of an organized point of view with which to oppose the *veteranos*. The present crisis in the agrarian reform lies, then, in this conflict between the right and left wings of the revolutionary family. The agrarian reform stands at the crossroads precisely because this conflict has not yet been resolved.

The "Veteranos" and the Road to the Right

The *veterano* school of thought, represented by such men as ex-President Calles, Luis Leòn (Calles' some time Minister of Agriculture and more recently editor of the National Revolutionary Party organ, the daily newspaper, *El Nacional*), Ezequiel Padilla (ex-Minister of Education), Terrones Benítez (some time Governor of the state of Durango and member of the National Agrarian Commission), and Manuel Pérez Treviño (Minister of Agriculture under Ortiz Rubio), was given what may be termed its classic expression in a much publicized and widely heralded interview celebrated by ex-President Calles on May 30, 1933. Because of the political importance of the speaker and because the interview as a whole serves to confirm previous statements declared apocryphal by Calles' friends,[1] it is worth quoting at some length.[2]

Question: In September, 1925 . . . in your message to Congress . . . you presented the outlines of a coherent program of action: the dotation of [ejido] lands and of agricultural implements; [a system of] credit for ejidos; irrigation; and agricultural schools. After eight years do you feel satisfied with the results that have been obtained?

Answer: Quite the contrary. . . . I believe that we have seen our strongest constructive proposals deferred and defeated. On the one hand the human material has failed us. . . . The men charged with these high functions [of reconstruction] have lacked love for the undertaking, capacity to understand it and the disinterested spirit to manage it. Moreover, we have not had a coherent plan of action. We have worked without any coördination whatsoever. . . .

Question: The reality of the agrarian problem [reform?] . . . as a contribution to the agricultural exploitation of the nation can be reduced, up to date [May, 1933], to this formula: 1,800,000 hectares of cultivable land distributed among 600,000 heads of families—that is, three hectares per head of family. This is a poor showing and many feel discouraged with it who do not remember that the dividing up of the *latifundia* by means of

[1] See footnote 15 on p. 114.

[2] In this interview, which was in the nature of a series of ex-cathedra pronouncements covering all aspects of the state of the nation, the interlocutor, interpreter and stage-manager for the national oracle was the above mentioned Ezequiel Padilla. The quotation here is a translation of the interview as reprinted in *Proyecto de Plan Sexenal*, pp. 97-111.

ejido dotations does not have solely economic ends in view, but at bottom is a response to the necessity for destroying the absolute power which the possession of the land gave to the landlord, and ending the servitude of the peon.

Answer: That is true; the ejido by itself will not solve the whole problem of agricultural organization. Generally speaking little properties do not lend themselves to modern techniques of agricultural exploitation. What I saw in France is revealing and illustrative: the little parcels are cultivated by old people and children because the young ones go to the cities looking for wider fields of activity and better returns than can be obtained from the insignificant patches of land. . . . Nevertheless, the dotation of ejidos is one of the most solemn promises of the Revolution; it destroys peonage; the family patrimony, once it has been established, can be an active sector in the agricultural system. It is, therefore, urgent to end . . . [the distribution of ejido lands] as quickly as possible. It is urgent, also, to constitute the new small property, by forcing the landlords to divide up their lands and to sell them in sections. . . . In this way there will be formed small properties, not of three or four hectares, but of areas which will encourage and stimulate men of ambition and developed ability to cultivate them. . . . Thus we will be able to build up rapidly small farms larger in area than the ejido [parcels]. Our ejidatarios, by purchasing these subdivisions of the large estates will be able to ascend [in the economic scale] and become small farmers. . . .[3]

Question: . . . Do you not believe that it will be of great advantage to the nation if in all of the states the final division of the ejidos [as required by the Law of Ejido Patrimony] should be carried out?

Answer: The time has come . . . to establish in our program a plan for completing the dotation of ejido lands as quickly as possible. In short, it is urgent that every one in Mexico know what he has a right to exploit: ejidatario, small farmer (*ranchero*), big landlord, and agricultural company. I believe that all of the active forces of the nation demand this security and this guarantee. The ejido patrimony . . . will give to the ejidatarios a feeling of assured property rights which will allow them to make improvements and to construct permanent works. . . . We must devote the greatest care to giving, in accordance with modern economic doctrines, an opportunity to all cultivators of the land to work without worry.

. . . . . .

It is my opinion that the hour has come to formulate a detailed program of action for the period covered by the next six-year presidential term; a

[3] This idea was first stated by Calles as early as 1924:

"Ejidos as the common property of the inhabitants of small communities, to my mind, signify the first step toward the creation of small rural landholdings. . . . Community operation of ejidos, in my opinion, will not stimulate industry. Oftener than not it is apt to give rise to disputes among the villagers. But this system . . . is . . . merely a transitory condition in preparation for the advent of the small proprietor in Mexico." Interview with Calles in *El Demócrata*, April 18, 1924, reprinted in *Mexico Before the World*, pp. 37-38.

program that must be based on reason, statistics, and the lessons of experience. . . . Thus, for example, in the case of the agrarian problem we must tackle at once the question of the dotation of ejidos; the program of distributing ejido lands to villages must be carefully planned within the law . . . with the aim of achieving its complete realization during the next six years. The breaking up of the large estates will take care of itself. The Government has only to provide the facilities. Since the landlords cannot reëstablish the exploitation of the peon—for, if not in its entirety, surely 80 per cent of this [peonage system] will disappear—they will not be able to revive the old methods of agriculture. In irrigation . . . the Federal Government must plan the works which it will be able to construct . . . the States also . . . must make their plans for the building of small irrigation projects. . . . The Ministry of National Economy should set forth, in its turn, plans for the progressive development of national production and exploitation, the establishing of coöperatives, etc. Thus, with each department of the Government coöperating . . . a minimum program of action [will be formulated] scaled to the six-year period and based on concrete facts and our ample experience.

If one may presume on the basis of the foregoing declarations to summarize in somewhat more informal style what was going on in the mind of the leader of the *veterano* section of the revolutionary group, one would probably come out with some such statement as this:

Balancing the books after almost eighteen years of experiment and experience, it seems to be pretty clear that the agrarian reform has failed in practically every respect to achieve the results hoped for. This has been due partly to the lack of leadership and capable administration, and partly to the failure to develop any coherent plan of action. In particular the ejido program has not worked out very well: the amount of land distributed per family has been too small to allow the ejidatarios to take advantage of modern methods in agriculture; and the process of giving land to villages has been dragged out for too long a period with the result that confidence has been undermined and the feeling of security necessary for stable production lost.

There are several facts about the ejido that might as well be faced: the giving of land to villages is not the only and, in the long run, not the best way of redistributing the agricultural resources of the nation; the ejido conceived as a system of collective or communal landholding cannot be regarded as a desirable system of land tenure or as a suitable basis for the organization of agricultural production; in a word, the ejido is only one aspect of the agrarian reform and a transitory aspect at that.

If, then, production is to be increased, if prosperity is to be restored

and if the country's agriculture is to be constituted along modern lines, the following steps should be taken: In the first place, the distribution of ejidos must be finished as soon as possible. All the villages that have a right to receive lands under the law as it now stands[4] must be given land (for, of course, the "solemn promises of the Revolution" should be respected!), but as quickly as may be these village lands must be divided into individually held parcels and the ejidatarios started on the road to becoming independent small farmers. In the second place, emphasis in the agrarian reform must be placed at once on forcing a redistribution of land by limiting the amount that any one individual may own and requiring the excess to be divided up and sold on easy terms. This will not only help the ejidatario to graduate into the *ranchero* class, but will immediately create a large body of small property owners out of the peasants who have not benefited under the ejido program. Once this has been accomplished then all classes must be guaranteed in their rights: big landlords and small landowners alike. Finally, a coördinated plan must be worked out for accomplishing the redistribution of land and achieving the fundamental desideratum of creating a large group of middle class independent farmers and for organizing and improving the whole system of agricultural production through irrigation projects, good roads, banks, and coöperatives.

The "Agraristas" and the Road to the Left

The point of view of the group that we have identified as the *agraristas* is not so easy to describe as that of the *veteranos*. The group is not well organized either in the sense of being a political bloc with a recognized leadership and constituency, or in the sense that the ideology of the group has been formulated into a generally accepted body of doctrine. The *agraristas* until quite recently have performed

[4] Although not clearly stated in the Padilla interview, it was well known to be the opinion of Calles and his associates that the ejido laws should not be changed to extend the rights of villages to petition for land beyond the limits set in the then (May, 1933) existing laws. Specifically, the inclusion of the *acasillado* communities or of communities of less than twenty heads of agrarian families was frowned upon by Calles as unnecessarily prolonging the distribution of land under the ejido program and thus delaying the return of stability and confidence. Moreover, a further argument offered by the *veteranos* against granting *acasillado* communities the right to petition for land was that the restoration of agricultural prosperity would depend upon the revival of the enterprises in the hands of the industrialists (i.e., *hacendados*) and that such revival would naturally depend, in turn, upon the *industriales* having a supply of farm labor. This did not mean, said the *veteranos*, that the *acasillado* peons were being abandoned. On the contrary, the Federal Labor Law fully guaranteed their rights. See *Síntesis de los debates . . . de la Gran Comisión Agraria*, pp. 39-49.

more the negative functions of voicing popular discontent rather than those of a party with a positive, clear-cut program. Lacking, on the one hand, the political power and prestige of the *veteranos* and, on the other hand, the sense of direction that comes from crystallized doctrines and commonly conceived purposes, they have engaged in a kind of guerrilla warfare with each man operating more or less independently and taking pot shots whenever the opportunity offered. Nevertheless, a careful study of the records reveals that there has slowly been developing a theory and a collection of principles concerning the methods, aims and implications of the agrarian reform which differ in marked respects from those of the older and more conservative group.[5]

The *agraristas* have yielded nothing to the *veteranos* in the matter of pointing to the failures of the agrarian reform and more particularly of the ejido program as these have been conceived and carried out out up to the present time. Indeed, they have been among the first to raise the cry of alarm and shout the shortcomings of the reform from the housetops. Where the *agraristas* part company with the *veteranos* is on the question of what should be done to remedy this dismal state of affairs and rescue the reform from ruin.

The first move that must be made, say the *agraristas*, if the reform is to be saved and the revolution to run its logical course, is for men of good-will and revolutionaries of good standing to accept once and for all the principle of the socialization of the land. This does not mean a regression to "primitive communism" in the sense of a situation in which, "independent of any concept of the differentiation" of property rights, from "the sum of labor of individuals is derived the sum of the products necessary for the physical life of the collective entity." It does mean: (a) "the decentralization of large properties in such fashion that there shall be no person . . . who shall not be able to use the land"; (b) a system of land tenure

[5] The outstanding proponents and defenders of the *agrarista* point of view are: Gilberto Fabila (Congressman and some time Secretary of Agrarian Action of the National Revolutionary Party), Marte R. Gómez (ex-Minister of Public Finance), Narciso Bassols (ex-Minister of Education), and Graciano Sánchez (some time Congressman from the Federal District and President of the *Confederación Campesina Mexicana*). The most articulate, as well as the most extreme "left," of the persons just mentioned is Gilberto Fabila and it is mainly on his utterances that the summary given in the following pages is based. In December, 1932, the Chamber of Deputies of Congress appointed Fabila to the chairmanship of a commission to suggest reforms in the agrarian laws then in force. In the debates and reports of this commission (October 13 to October 25, 1933) will be found the best and most recent expression of the *agrarista* principles. See *Síntesis de los debates . . . de la Gran Comisión Agraria. . . .*; and Fabila "Ponencia del Diputado Ing. Gilberto Fabila . . . sobre la reforma de las leyes vigentes"; and "Memorandum relativo a la cuestión agraria en México."

"so arranged that it will not give rise to unearned income" (*renta no trabajada*); (c) "changes in law which will guarantee that the phenomena of concentration and [unearned] income will not be produced anew." All of which the *agraristas* are careful to point out, involves nothing more than the exercise of those rights and powers inherent in the sections of the Constitution of 1917 relating to the "nationalization of land," the "faculty of the state to grant or retire" the right to the use of property "when the public interest demands such steps for the better utilization or distribution of the public resources," and to the prohibition against "lands revindicated under the agrarian laws . . . ever becoming again private property of the Roman type."[6] A failure to accept wholeheartedly and completely the principle of the socialization of land, and unwillingness to be "realistic" and "to surmount all conventionalism" can only mean "the same vicious system" which Mexico "has followed since 1810 up to the present time; that is to say, the sustaining of a principle . . . , and, yet, at the same time, acting in reality in a fashion differing from and . . . often antagonistic to this principle."[7]

Although Article 27 of the constitution clearly provides the bases for the socialization of the land, none of the agrarian legislation has been founded squarely and fairly on this principle. "The fundamental juridical basis for the transformation of the rights of property has been established since 1917, but the derived legislation has advanced little or not at all." It is "notorious" that the laws on colonization, the division of large estates, irrigation, and so forth, "are not frankly designed to impose forms which affect profoundly the right of [private] property." And what is true of these (in fact) subsidiary aspects of the agrarian reform is also true in large measure of the ejido program. Notably the Law of Ejido Patrimony may be regarded as "the beginning of a future reversion of ejido lands to . . . individual, absolute private property." It should be clear to all concerned that "if the agrarian reform is to achieve a formula by virtue of which the right of private property is to be supplanted by socialized procedures, then whatever continues to conserve an individualistic character will block and make difficult the attainment of an integral objective."[8]

Not only must private property as a juridical right go by the boards, but so, also, must those other characteristic features of the capitalistic system whereby the control of the circulation and distri-

[6] *Síntesis de los debates. . . .*, pp. 52-53.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[8] Fabila, "Memorandum relativo a la cuestión agraria in México," pp. 70, 71-72 and 73-74.

bution of agricultural products is vested in the hands of private individuals be thrown into the discard. This means, among other things, the supplanting of the wasteful and discordant "false capitalistic concept of free competition" by the "concept of social necessity, and the concept of a minimum social force for the satisfaction of maximum necessities" of the collectivity. It means, too, the national planning of agriculture: laws determining the areas to be cultivated in each region; the conservation of natural resources; and the socialization of credit and transportation. In a word, agriculture in all of its phases must be under the control of and in the interest of the collectivity.[9]

The second plank in the *agrarista* platform states that a new understanding must be attained of the role of the ejido in the agrarian reform. It is time to recognize that the ejido, the giving of land to villages, *is* the agrarian reform in so far as that movement is concerned with the more equitable distribution of the nation's agricultural resources. It follows, therefore, that all other schemes —limitation of the size of properties and forced sales of excess holdings, colonization projects, large scale reclamation and irrigation works, and so forth—for the redemption of the rural proletariat must be subordinated, if not entirely abandoned. Not only has experience shown that these schemes, under the present conditions in Mexico, are expensive and difficult to make succeed, but they are completely out of harmony with and even a definite threat to the ejido program.[10]

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[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 76-84.

[10] "A subdivided hacienda or a system of colonization or irrigation demands a peasant with implements, with capital for subsistence, and with technical and commercial experience; it is essentially a system of agriculture designed for commercial purposes. . . .

"Colonization as reorganized by the law of 1925 with a view to the division of large estates [by sale] to agriculturists superior in capacity to the ejidatarios . . . in 1930 was dangerously perverted, for it was held that it should take the place of the ejido program. . . .

"What would have happened if this campaign had produced results? The peasants of the ejidatario type, that is to say, the absolutely dispossessed, would not have been able to become colonists and in their place the small and middle class peasants would have extended their property to all the land available for ejidos. The problem of those peasants who make up 90 per cent of the active rural population . . . would have remained unsolved and another revolution would have been gestating. . . .

"In Zacatecas, in San Luis Potosí and in other states are the proofs . . . of the ineffectiveness of the division of *latifundia* as a means of satisfying the aspirations of the rural proletariat. . . . The peasants who took up those lands could not consolidate their situation and have abandoned them, or have solicited ejidos on the same lands which they occupied as colonists. At the present time the most serious agrarian conflicts are those

The acceptance of the ejido as the permanent method for carrying out the land reform inevitably carries with it the conclusion that the machinery for the distribution of land to villages must be simplified, strengthened, and speeded up. The red tape which heretofore has bound the ejido program hand and foot with the result that unresolved petitions are piled mountain high in the offices of the State and National Agrarian Commissions,[11] and, that on the average it takes five years[12] for a petition to go through the mill, must be cut and the program freed from its shackles.[13] Moreover, steps must be taken to do away with the lack of personnel and the overlapping of functions as between the State and National Commissions.[14] Similarly, the "irreconcilable antagonisms" between the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Commission[15] and the "constant

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. . . between these dispossessed poor peasants who want ejidos and the bourgeois peasants who wish to maintain their superior position. . . .

"All of these things are unequivocal symptoms of . . . the lack of [sufficient] land for ejidos and at the same time proofs that in the general agrarian policy everything must revolve around the ejido; for a diversion or change of tendencies with regard to the ejido will mean a retardation of an integral solution of the [agrarian] problem. . . ." Fabila, "La producción ejidal frente a la producción agrícola privada," *El Nacional*, August 4, 1934. See also *Síntesis de los debates*. . . , p. 3.

[11] See p. 193.

[12] *Síntesis de los debates*. . . , p. 33.

[13] Fabila, "Memorandum relativo a la cuestión agraria en México," pp. 9-13.

[14] "The scarcity of material elements in the State Commissions means that their capacity for handling agrarian petitions is always greatly inferior to the number of petitions presented.

"For the same reason the procedures in the State Commission are always defective and incomplete. . . .

"At present the functioning of the State Commissions and the National Commissions is practically independent and without unity. For this reason there is a very costly duplication." *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 24-25.

[15] The National Agrarian Commission was technically a department in the Ministry of Agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture was the president of the Commission and no action could be taken without his approval. The antagonisms here in question, according to the *agraristas*, arose because: (a) the Minister of Agriculture in his role of "protector and fomenter of national agriculture in its entirety" often allowed his conception of what was "good" for the country as a whole (i.e., for the *hacendados*, *rancheros* and other private property enterprises) to prevent the carrying out of the ejido program affecting (in his opinion) only one sector of the farming population; (b) the lack of personnel and funds in the Ministry often meant that the Commission came out at the small end of the budget and its work was sacrificed in order that some pet idea (such as colonization, schemes for the private exploitation of forestry resources, etc.) of the Ministry might prosper; and (c) the Minister, like all Ministers, jealous of his power and prerogatives, tended (especially from 1925 on) to deprive the Commission of all autonomy and to turn the Commissioners into "rubber stamps." See *ibid.*, pp. 56-68.

conflicts" between the state and national agrarian authorities[16] must be resolved. The National Commission must be released, on the one hand, from the illogical tutelage of and subordination to the Ministry of Agriculture, and, on the other hand, relieved of the embarrassment of having to operate at cross-purposes with the State Commissions. Moreover, as a special emergency measure for breaking the log-jam of petitions in the offices of the agrarian authorities, a law must be enacted whereby all provisional grants now pending against which protests have not been made, or concerning which only minor questions are at issue, should forthwith be declared final grants.[17]

Again, it is obvious, if the ejido is to take its place as the "*método predilecto*" of land distribution, the rights of villages to petition for land must be greatly extended. This means, first and foremost, that the provisions excluding the *acasillados* from the privileges of the ejido program must immediately be stricken from the law. The inhabitants of these communities of farm laborers resident on private properties are the "forgotten men" of the revolution, the "true pariahs of the land"; the fact that they have been debarred from the right to obtain land is one of the "fundamental errors" and "gravest contradictions" of the agrarian reform and is in harmony with neither the spirit nor the law of the Revolution. The idea that those sections of the Labor Law referring to agricultural workers have served to protect the interests of the *acasillado* peons is a tragic misconception, for this law has not been, and, in the nature of the case, cannot be enforced in the isolated rural districts of Mexico. The truth is that "the *acasillado* peon at the present time is nothing more than the *encomendado* Indian[18] of the Colonial period." The exclusion of the *acasillados* is one of the chief reasons for the failure of the agrarian reform to destroy the hacienda. Just as the "*enco-*

[16] "Experience has demonstrated that the intervention of the Governors [in the ejido program] has been of very little utility for the villages and has produced very serious results for the Federation. There are advanced Governors . . . who have dealt with the ejido problem according to the law. These Governors create a difficult situation because the villages, believing themselves to be the owners of the land, when the National Agrarian Commission appears for the purpose . . . [of completing the] application of the law by rectifying the agrarian censuses, etc., . . . accuse the Commission of being reactionary and an enemy of the peasants. On the other hand, we have conservative Governors who, in order to safeguard private interests, conceal petitions for land . . . and favor the *hacendados* by permitting them to divide up the titles to their holdings thus making their properties appear in the official records as small [i.e. nonaffectable under the ejido laws] properties. . . ." *Síntesis de los debates*. . . , p. 33.

[17] Fabila, "Memorandum relativo a la cuestión agraria en México," pp. 34-35.

[18] See p. 16.

mienda system subjected the Indian to slavery during the three centuries following the Conquest and for many years after Independence," so does the barring of the *acasillado* peon from the ejido program "establish the bases . . . of the new slavery of the present epoch."[19]

If there is no good reason why the *acasillado* communities should be excluded from the benefits of the ejido program, then, neither (claim the *agraristas*) are there any defensible grounds in economics or in morals for debarring, as the law does, communities with a population of less than twenty heads of agrarian families from the right to petition for land. On the contrary, the setting of twenty heads of families as the limit beyond which the ejido program cannot go is a "purely empirical procedure" without "any scientific justification whatsoever." If this provision of the law is maintained it will mean that some 49,000 communities,[20] and, be it noted, precisely those communities which "are undoubtedly the poorest, most backward and . . . most urgently in need of being taken into consideration in the redistribution of lands," will be forever denied the benefits of the reform.[21]

Moreover, in connection with this matter of the extension of rights to petition for land, is there any reason why the many communities with no formal political organization should be, as they are at present, excluded from the ejido program? And the answer is—none at all: "dotations of land must be made independent of the location or political character of the nucleus of population and on the basis of social and economic" need. Similarly, private properties should not be subject to expropriation one by one, separately and discretely; rather a system of ejido zones or regions should be established and all properties, whether one or many, in the zone should contribute to the needs of whatever villages are located there. This, on occasion, will undoubtedly mean that the limits of nonaffectable properties will have to be reduced or that communities will have to

[19] *Síntesis de los debates. . . .*, pp. 39-40, 45-49, 53-54.

No one knows exactly how many *acasillado* communities there are in Mexico or what the aggregate population of these communities may be. Tannenbaum (*The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 321-22) states that in 1921 approximately 75 per cent of the communities in the Republic embracing over 37 per cent (3.8 million) of the rural population were located on haciendas. (However, see footnote 24 on p. 36.) Fabila ("La producción ejidal. . . ," *El Nacional*, August 4, 1934) states: "It is very probable that at the present time [August, 1934] there are not more than 300,000 *acasillado* peons in the Republic." Assuming that heads of families are meant, this would give a total *acasillado* population of around 1.5 million.

[20] Appendix A, Table 34.

[21] Fabila, "Memorandum relativo a la cuestión agraria en México," pp. 7, 14-22.

be moved from one region to another. If so, then these problems must be faced, for "the right of the ejido is always above any other consideration."[22]

Finally, say the *agraristas*, not only is it imperative that the Revolution accept the principle of the socialization of the land with all that this implies, not only do past experience and the realities of the present situation demand that the ejido be recognized as the principal if not the sole agency in the reallocation of agricultural resources, but also, if the agrarian reform is to succeed, it behooves its leaders to achieve a new conception of the future role of the ejido in the social and economic organization of the nation. And the first step in this direction is an agreement that the ejido is not a transition, or a stepping stone, or a bridge to anything; it is an end in itself and an institution in its own right. If Mexico is to be saved "from a new cycle of the concentration of rural property, from returning to the medieval epoch of the Colonial period or to that of *porfirismo* [that is, of the time of Porfirio Díaz]," then the fact must be faced that with the ejido "there is being constructed a new agricultural system . . . totally distinct from that which is being destroyed." In this new system the ejido must be the fundamental basis, the cells out of which and around which the whole agricultural life of the country must be organized—economically, politically and socially. The conception some have held of the ejido as a mere subsistence unit, a primary school from which the ejidatario may be expected to graduate to bigger and better things[23] is untenable.[24] With the profound modifications in the life of the nation which inevitably must follow the carrying out to its logical conclusion of the ejido program the ejido will become something to graduate into rather than out of, a completion and a fulfillment of life rather than a mere temporary refuge from misery and slavery.

From the point of view of the agraristas, briefly sketched in the foregoing paragraphs, all talk of "getting this ejido business over with as quickly as possible" and all such sentiments as "each one of the state governments should fix a relatively short period within which the communities still having a right to petition for lands can

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27.

[23] One more example: "The Revolution has never considered the ejido as the enemy of small [private] property. On the contrary the ejido is the nursery which will produce the small proprietors of the future. . . . The ejido gives little parcels of land to the lowest of the peasant class. . . . The ejido provides them with enough to eat, but not with enough to permit them to prosper unduly; its primary function is to feed the ex-peons, thus liberating them from the yoke of the old landlord." León, "La cuestión ejidal," *El Nacional*, November 28, 1931.

[24] Fabila, "La producción ejidal. . . ," *El Nacional*, August 4, 1934.

do so, and once this period has passed, not another word on the subject,"[25] are as futile as they are vicious. "It may be peremptorily affirmed that the distribution of ejido lands will have to continue indefinitely and that the frequent aspirations of agrarian authorities and private individuals to the effect that it is urgent and indispensable to complete in a few years the delivery of ejido lands has no sense of reality whatsoever."[26] Far from approaching its end, the ejido program has just started, for not only are there thousands of villages that have not yet even received land, but the question of the social and economic development of the ejido communities has barely been touched. Indeed, the whole problem of the present and possible future role of the ejido in the life of the country has hardly been sensed, much less solved. On such subjects as how many villages are yet to receive land, what effect on production the ejido is having, what its relations are to other economic and political institutions in the nation—on all these and many other matters there is a "profound ignorance," or at best "mere conjectures, estimates and suppositions." The one clear and indisputable fact is: "If tomorrow there should not be a single ejido petition pending resolution, not a single community with the right to solicit ejidos, this would not mean that the *hacendado* . . . or . . . the investor in agriculture could proceed as in 1910. Conditions have definitely changed never again to be the same. . . ." To be sure, the solution of the ejido problem should be hastened, "but not in order to return to the economic forms for which the landlords so ingenuously sigh, but rather to accelerate . . . the transformation of the [nation's] economy, sociology, and politics . . . which are linked in their very heart with those of the peasants. . . ."[27]

"Agrarista" Gains in Doctrine—the "Plan Sexenal"

So much for lines in battle array drawn, gauntlets thrown down and bugles blown. But in this fray of words and declarations has any blood been shed? Has the ejido been rescued; has the reform been saved? The answer is: a little on paper; and to a certain degree in practice. Let us consider the paper gains first.

The Calles-Padilla interview of June, 1933, was the fuse that set off a carefully planted bureaucratic bomb. The thing that did the trick was Calles' statement: "The time has come to formulate a detailed plan of action for the period covered by the next six-year presidential term." Overnight the magic phrase, "*el Plan Sexenal*"

[25] See p. 144.

[26] Fabila, "Memorandum relativo a la cuestión agraria en México," p. 22.

[27] Fabila, "Ponencia. . . ," pp. 38-39, 47-48.

(the Six-Year Plan), was on everyone's lips. The National Revolutionary Party to the accompaniment of salvos in the press appointed a Program Commission to draw up the plan; President Rodríguez designated a Collaborating Technical Commission to assist the National Revolutionary Party's commission; and everyone from the president down began to make suggestions and recommendations. If the Mexicans went the Bolsheviks one better in the matter of the number of years covered by their plan, so also did they surpass them in the rapidity with which the master blue print of the nation's future was drawn up. In less than six months the plan was signed, sealed, and presented at the convention of the National Revolutionary Party which met in the historical city of Querétaro in December, 1933.[28]

But when the pie was opened the birds did not begin to sing—or, at any rate, not in a manner pleasing to the *agraristas*. For the chapters of the *Plan* devoted to the subject of the agrarian reform not only displayed a distressing lack of comprehension of that "brave new world" of renascent ejidos envisioned by the *agraristas*, but repeated and reaffirmed many of the old reactionary and conservative measures and the conflicting and antagonistic programs of which they had so bitterly complained.

Opening with a statement that the National Revolutionary Party (P.N.R.) pledges itself "most solemnly and energetically" to liberate the peasants and to continue its struggle to "convert them into free agriculturists [and] owners (*dueños*)[29] of the land," the chapter on

[28] As this statement suggests, the *Plan Sexenal* in any other part of the world would be recognized for what it really is—a party platform. It may be observed in passing that the *Plan* undoubtedly has had and will continue to have considerable value: (a) anything which stimulates politicians to think and act in terms of the whole country is obviously a contribution to the solution of Mexico's problem of national integration; and (b) a Six-Year Plan (or, for that matter, a six-months' plan) publicly sponsored by a political party and solemnly accepted by the president of the nation, even though such a plan be mainly a series of more or less glittering generalities by no means always in accord one with the other, nevertheless represents, in a country not noted for the orderliness of its political procedures, one more instrument of social control in the sense that it will serve as a standard against which achievement, or the lack of it, can be measured and hence open the way for shifting the emphasis in the Mexican political process from personalities to principles and from men to methods. These considerations, however, should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the *Plan Sexenal* is hardly homologous to the Soviet Five-Year Plan; and this for the sufficient reason that no one knows enough, the basic and indispensable statistical information is not available, for the formulation of a program for the economic and social development of Mexico in other but the most general terms. This would still be true even if the sundry and various commissions had spent three times the five months or so they did spend in drawing up their plan.

[29] From this word and other statements in the *Plan* it would appear that private individual ownership is meant.

the Agrarian Problem then goes on to say that the Party proposes to see to it that land shall be given "to all centers of population in need of lands." In order that this may be done "as soon as possible" and that "a situation of confidence shall be established," the *Plan* states that the formalities attendant on ejido distribution shall be simplified by reforms in the law, and that administrative machinery shall be bolstered up by an annual appropriation for the National Agrarian Commission of not less than 4 million pesos. The *Plan* is careful to point out, however, that none of the foregoing is to be interpreted as a new threat to small private properties. On the contrary, the "National Revolutionary Party declares emphatically that a strict respect for small [private] property" as such properties are defined in the laws in force "is fundamental" and those laws "will continue to be complied with in the most scrupulous manner."

In view of the fact that "the dotation of ejidos is not an adequate means by itself of solving the problem of a more equitable distribution of the land" since in some cases there is not enough immediately available for all the villages in a given region; and since, in any case, the law does not grant the right to petition for land to certain classes of communities (notably the *acasillados*), the *Plan* proposes that the "incomplete and restricted" ejido program must be complemented by three other measures designed to take care of the classes now excluded from ejidos. These measures are: (a) the forced subdivision and sale of landed estates over and above certain areas; (b) the redistribution of the rural population; and (c) colonization. To protect further the rural proletariat (presumably those who under any circumstances, will not get land) the *Plan* advocates a strict enforcement of the sections of the Labor Law referring to agricultural labor and the enactment of laws regulating share-cropping and tenant farming. Finally, in the interest of "organizing the agricultural life of the nation," and increasing production, the *Plan* suggests that coöperatives be founded, scientific studies be made, agricultural experiment stations be established, and so forth. As a concrete contribution to the realization of these proposals the P.N.R. pledges that during the next six years not less than 50 million pesos shall be invested in the government system of agricultural credit. Still another specific proposal in the same general connection is that of spending an additional 50 million pesos on the completion of the large scale irrigation projects which the government has been constructing since 1926.[30]

The agrarian chapters of the Six-Year Plan in their original form,

[30] *Proyecto de Plan Sexenal*, pp. 23-31.

then, were simply a restatement of the Calles-Padilla interview. It is obvious that in the drafting rooms of the planning commission the *veteranos* were in the ascendancy and that no opportunity was lost to stack the cards in support of their point of view.

To insure that *veterano* principles and doctrines on the subject of the agrarian reform would stay put as stated, Luis León, next to Calles perhaps the most prominent of the *veteranos*, presented the agrarian sections of the *Plan* to the P.N.R. convention and undertook in one of the speeches for which he is justly famous to lure the opposition into camp. But the *agraristas*, represented in the convention by Graciano Sánchez and Gilberto Fabila, refused to play follow-the-leader. Indeed, the first mentioned, no mean orator himself, treated the assembled politicians to some plain speaking. The theory that the "agrarian reform since 1910 had gone from triumph to triumph," he pointed out, was palpably untrue. On the contrary, "despite the boasting of the revolutionists, the peasants were still in the same situation they had always been" and unless the *acasillados* were given the same rights as any other type of community to petition for land, unless more and better land was given to all the villages and unless, in a word, "every restriction to the prejudice of the peasants" be removed from the law and such ideas as the distribution of land by the fractionizing of large estates be abandoned, the ejido program and with it the whole revolutionary movement was doomed.[31]

The upshot of Sánchez's speech and the formal petition for a more liberal statement of agrarian aims which accompanied it, was, to make a long story short, the beating of a hasty retreat on the part of the *veteranos*. The agrarian section of the *Plan* was recast and although the *agraristas* did not succeed in getting all of their ideas adopted, they did manage to drive in a wedge here and there. Sections were introduced in the *Plan* calling for the creation of an autonomous Agrarian Department in place of the old subservient and subordinate Agrarian Commission, the suppression of State Commissions and their replacement by a new type of agency bringing the local into closer relation with the national authorities, and for more liberal provisions in the law governing the amplification of ejidos. The *agraristas* were even successful in forcing the insertion of a paragraph stating that under certain conditions the *acasillados* could obtain land by the restitution and dotation routes. Aside from these changes (to be discussed in greater detail shortly), the Six-Year Plan stands essentially as it was originally formulated by the *veteranos*—contradictory

[31] See the reports on the P.N.R. convention in *El Nacional*, December 6, 1933.

and antagonistic proposals, and inadequate comprehension of the future role of the ejido to the contrary notwithstanding.

Gains in Law

The *agraristas* lost no time in transferring the doctrinal advances given recognition in the *Plan Sexenal* to the safer keeping of laws duly enacted. Indeed, most of the planks they succeeded in nailing into the P.N.R. platform were already incorporated in four laws which had been drafted as the result of the hearings before the *Gran Comisión Agraria*—the Congressional Commission, it will be recalled, which sat during the month of October, 1933, presided over by Gilberto Fabila. These laws were enacted in rapid fire order between December, 1933, and March, 1934.

On December 28, 1933, a decree was promulgated under the title: "Decree naming a period for the presentation of allegations against provisional agrarian resolutions."[32] Designed to speed up action on agrarian petitions, this decree provided that a period of thirty days beginning January 1, 1934, should be allowed during which objections could be offered by landlords whose property had been affected by provisional grants of ejido lands then outstanding. At the end of the period in question all provisional grants against which no objections had been offered and with which the ejidatarios declared themselves satisfied, were forthwith to become definitive grants and decrees to this effect were to be signed by the president as rapidly as they could be prepared by the National Agrarian Commission. Provisional possessions against which some objection was raised were to be dealt with by the federal agrarian authorities solely with reference to the points in dispute. As soon as these questions could be settled, these possessions, also, were to be declared definitive.

The purpose of the decree of December 30, 1933,[33] was to redraft Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917 with a view to incorporating into that article the essential features of the original agrarian decree of January 6, 1915, of ironing out the conflicts[34] between these two basic laws of the reform, and of bringing Article 27 into line with the forthcoming Agrarian Code. In view of the fact that Article 27 as it now stands is reprinted in full in Appendix C of this book and of the fact that the principal innovations therein over the original

[32] Appendix B, II, 33.

[33] Appendix B, II, 3.

[34] See Chap.V. For a detailed discussion of the contradiction between Article 27 and the decree of January 6, 1933, see Martínez Carillo, *Apuntamientos sobre las leyes agrarias de México*, pp. 98-113.

article will be presented in connection with the discussion in the present chapter of the Agrarian Code, no further comment will be necessary at this point.[35]

A third decree (January 15, 1934)[36] marked the attainment of another objective in the *agrarista* platform—the conversion of the National Agrarian Commission into an autonomous Agrarian Department directly responsible to the president of the Republic.[37] This law was hailed by the official party organ of the P.N.R. as a "fundamental contribution" to the revolution and a measure that would "go far in doing away with the delays, equivocations and the defects in general" which had marked the application of the ejido laws.[38]

The high point and culmination of the reform in agrarian legislation growing out of the *veterano-agrarista* polemics of 1933 was the enactment on March 22, 1934, of the *Código Agrario de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*. As this is the most recent of the several successors of the original ejido law of January 6, 1915, so, also, is it the most important. It represents the most determined effort in the history of the agrarian reform to gather together and weld into a single unified and coherent instrument all the sundry decrees and laws governing the ejidos. One of the sections of this Code—that referring to the parcelization of lands, the constitution of the family patrimony and the economic and political organization of ejido communities—has already been discussed in Chapter XVIII; it now remains to review briefly its other divisions. Since a translation of the complete Code is given in Appendix D, we will restrict ourselves here to noting only important innovations and changes as compared with previous laws.[39]

On the administrative side the demands of the *agraristas* for the simplification and closer coördination of the machinery and procedures for granting land to rural communities were acceded to apparently without question. The old State Agrarian Commissions under the new Code are shorn in large degree of their autonomy by

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[35] It may be noted, however, that the individuals principally responsible for redrafting Article 27 were Marte R. Gómez, Narciso Bassols, Gilberto Fabila and Francisco Javier Gaxiola—all, with the possible exception of the last mentioned, members of the *agrarista* "party."

[36] Appendix B, II, 34.

[37] The decree of January 15, 1934, was later confirmed by a decree of March 22, 1934 (B, II, 36), recognizing the status of the Agrarian Department in the hierarchy of government departments and administrative dependencies.

[38] "El Departamento Agrario," *El Nacional*, December 14, 1933.

[39] I.e., mainly the Law of the Dotation and Restitution of Lands and Waters of March 21, 1929 and its several reforms (Appendix B, II, 27).

placing on each one of these commissions two representatives of the federal authority. To make assurance doubly sure that this move would bring about the "unification of criteria" and weaken, if not completely destroy, the "active and passive resistance to the enforcement of the ejido laws" which had previously characterized an appreciable number of the state governors, the Code provides that the presiding officer of each of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions (as the new agencies are called) shall in all cases be the federal Delegate. In order that the voice of the peasants shall be heard, the law states that one of the five members of the Mixed Commissions shall be an ejidatario.

With these changes it is hoped that the duplication of effort and the working at cross-purposes which in the past have slowed up the ejido program, will be done away with. Under the new system the law creates within the Agrarian Department a body known as an Advisory Board whose duty it is to review and pass on to the president of the Republic for final resolution the decisions in agrarian cases and the orders for provisional possession issued by the governors upon the recommendation of the local Mixed Commissions. It is expected that the functions of the Advisory Board will be largely formal and legalistic—those of an extra safeguard rather than an investigating body. Another change introduced by the new Code in this same connection is a considerable reduction all along the line in the time allowed the various agrarian authorities for handling petitions. In theory, at any rate, under the new law it will be possible for a village to obtain a provisional ejido grant within a period of 150 days; definitive grants are supposed to follow as closely as may be on the heels of the provisional possessions. That this may actually turn out to be the case in practice the Code includes provisions whereby, if any of the authorities fail to take action within the time limits set, the next higher authorities may proceed independently. Moreover, failure to meet time requirements without good and sufficient reasons lays the authorities open to liability under the sanctions established by the Code (six months to two years in prison).

Under the heading of "communities having legal rights to petition for and obtain ejidos" several novel features appear in the new law. First, the ejido legislation is finally purged of the last trace of the concept of political category which caused so much trouble in the early days of the reform.[40] In the Code rural communities are referred to as centers of population (*núcleos de población*) and almost never by

[40] See above pp. 58 and 83.

such specific, traditional political designations as *pueblos*, *rancherías*, *congregaciones*, and so forth.[41] In the second place, the *acasillados* are at last recognized as having some rights to participation in the agrarian reform. The Code, to be sure, does not adopt the direct course of simply removing the *acasillado* settlements from the list of types of communities (state capitals, seaports, and so forth) which may not obtain ejido lands, but, still, it does greatly extend their rights over any previous law.

Specifically, the Code, after redefining the *acasillados* as the "permanent resident laborers . . . on agricultural properties who occupy a house without paying rent and who depend for their living on the wages which they receive for their services,"[42] then offers five "outs" to the *acasillados*: (1) they may apply as individuals to have themselves included in the agrarian census of any community within a radius of ten kilometers from the property on which they are employed and which is in the process of obtaining an ejido grant; (2) within the same territorial limits they may petition to have their names registered for parcels in any community in the process of obtaining an extension of its ejido lands; (3) should there be any vacant parcels in already existing ejido communities located within a radius of seven kilometers they may put in a request for such parcels; (4) they can, as a group, ask the government to obtain land for them under the provisions of the Code governing the establishing of new centers of agricultural population; and (5) if no one of the first four methods of obtaining a parcel is feasible, they shall be entitled to receive land free of charge on one of the government irrigation or colonization projects.

The new centers of agricultural population mentioned in the foregoing paragraph are an innovation in ejido legislation of considerable importance. Colonization schemes of various types have been the subject of a number of laws in the course of the agrarian reform, and in 1932 a law under the specific title of the Law of New Centers of Agricultural Population[43] was enacted. The provisions of the Agrarian Code, however, differ in marked degree from all previous colonization laws in that for the first time colonization is definitely cut to the pattern and made an integral part of the ejido program rather than being conceived as a substitute for it. The

[41] Similarly the concept of *núcleos de población* appears in the reformed version of Article 27 except for one curious slip. See Article 27, fr. VIII, in Appendix C.

[42] In other words, the new definition leaves out the rigamarole about a "previous contract which determines their status" introduced in the ejido legislation by the decree of December 26, 1930. See above p., 115 and Appendix B, II, 29.

[43] See footnote 42 on p. 124.

possibility opened up in the Code for the establishing of new rural centers is designed to solve the difficult problems presented by the peculiarities in Mexico of the distribution of population in relation to agricultural resources and the distortions of the "man-land ratio" discussed in Chapter IX. In other words, experience has shown that there are some areas so overcrowded that it is impossible to give everyone land entitled to it under the ejido laws and at the same time "enforce in the most scrupulous manner" (to use the language of the Six-Year Plan) the sections of those laws relating to the inviolability of small private properties. To meet this situation the Code provides that new agricultural communities shall be established when there is not sufficient land in near-by (affectable) properties to supply all of the heads of agrarian families with standard parcels whether such heads of families be members of ejido communities already in possession of (inadequate) lands, or of communities with rights to receive lands which have not yet exercised these rights, or simply landless peasants (including the *acasillados*) who desire to take advantage of the reform. Proceedings for the establishment of a new center may be initiated either by the agrarian authorities or by the persons directly concerned. In any case at least twenty heads of families must be involved and the interested parties must agree to settle on the land decided upon. In all other respects the procedure for founding a new center and the rights pertaining to the owners of properties that may be affected are the same as in a regular dotation. Communities already in existence which have made, or which may make, petitions for land in any given region are to be given preference over new centers.[44]

Closely related to the matter of new centers of agricultural population are the sections in the Code concerning ejido districts or zones. Here, again, is a new feature in ejido legislation arising out of the exigencies created by the man-land ratio in certain parts of the country in conjunction with the self-denying provisions of the Code referring to nonaffectable properties.[45] Briefly, the law states that wherever by reason of special "farming techniques, contingencies, or requirements of organization" crops cannot be grown so as to "insure positive profits under the ejido agricultural regimen," then by mutual understanding and agreements between the petitioners for land, the landowners, and the several agrarian authorities,

[44] The law has nothing to say on the subject of how the expense of establishing new centers is to be met other than that the Agrarian Department shall "appoint the necessary technical personnel" to "study the cost of moving and installing the parties benefited."

[45] See below pp. 460-61.

the needs of the peasants may be met by a kind of pooling of the demand for land, on the one hand, and the supply on the other. Such an arrangement, usually involving several villages and known as an ejido district, is an attempt to prevent conflicts between communities in thickly settled areas and at the same time allow the landlords to make the process of dotation as painless as may be under the circumstances.[46]

In the sections of the Code devoted to the amounts and kinds of grants to be made in dotations, the principal novelty is found in the abandonment of the attempt of all previous laws to work out elaborate tables of equivalences for the various types of crop land in favor of the simple statement that each head of an agrarian family shall receive four hectares of cultivable irrigated (moist) land or eight hectares of cultivable seasonal lands.[47] With reference to all other types of land, as in the decree of December 27, 1932, amending the ejido law of March 21, 1929, no limits are set. The Code covers the matter with the statement: "Ejido dotations shall include . . . pastures, woodlands, or land of any other class which may be required to meet the necessities of the respective centers of population."

The new Code means that in practice the average ejido parcel will be greatly improved both in quantity and quality of land as compared with grants made under previous laws. It also implies a realistic facing of the fact that ejidatarios *must* be given a certain minimum area of cultivable crop lands and that, unless this is possible in one way or another, then it is better to move the communities than to try to construct ejido parcels out of barren deserts or mountain slopes. This last mentioned principle is further borne out by other sections in the Code providing for the automatic extensions of ejidos wherever it is found (upon the application of the sections of the Code governing the parcelization of the crop lands) that there is insufficient cultivable land to give every ejidatario a parcel of the standard size and quality.[48]

In the case of the properties, plantings, and works that may be affected by ejido grants the new Code represents, from the point of

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[46] For further discussion of this point see p. 519.

[47] Irrigated land equals: "land which has sufficient water to grow the crops proper to the region, or which receives sufficient humidity by inundation or any other means."

Seasonal (*temporal*) land equals: "all [cultivable] lands not covered by the foregoing paragraph."

The limits of four and eight hectares are both minimum and maximum.

[48] But in connection with this new precept whereby every ejidatario is to receive a parcel of the standard size and quality see footnote 15 on p. 326.

view of the ejidatarios actual and potential, a considerable advance over the previously existing law. The limits defining exempted small properties are reduced to the two classes of 150 hectares of irrigated land, or 300 hectares of seasonal land[49] as compared with areas varying from 150 hectares of irrigated land up to 1,040 hectares of brush and mountain lands allowed under the old law. Lands planted in "cultivations of a cyclical life of greater than two years when such products may be benefited by means of installations of industrial machinery" which under the previous law could be held in unlimited quantities subject only to review by the National Agrarian Commission, under the new Code are much more definitely restricted. Thus, nonaffectable "regular plantations of banana, coffee, cacao and fruit trees" as well as "lands planted in alfalfa, henequen, maguey and other industrial agaves" may not exceed 300 hectares except the landlord be willing in case his property is subject to ejido dotations to provide an equally satisfactory area within a radius of seven kilometers of the petitioning community. Similar restrictions are laid down with regard to lands planted in sugar cane.

In contrast to the additional limitations the new Code places on small properties and special types of plantings, certain other provisions make it possible for small property owners to guarantee the inviolability of their lands in a manner not allowed under previous laws. Notable in this connection are the articles of the Code stating that owners of properties subject to expropriation for ejido dotations may choose within their lands an area meeting the requirements of the definition of a small property and obtain from the agrarian authorities a decree of nonaffectability which shall (presumably) forever place the property in question outside the operation of the ejido laws.

Probably one of the smartest of all the strategical moves made by the *agraristas* in the drafting of the Agrarian Code was the framing of the section referring to the extension or amplification of ejidos. The amendment to the basic ejido law of March 21, 1929, introduced with such fanfare during the Ortiz Rubio administration whereby no extensions were to be allowed during a period of ten years following the original grants and then only after payment in cash by

[49] As in the previous law, these limits are subject to reduction to 100 and 200 hectares respectively when within a radius of seven kilometers from a petitioning village sufficient affectable lands are not available for any given ejido dotation. A further possible restriction on the rights of small properties would appear to be implied by the frequent appearance in the various sections of the Code referring to the nonaffectability of small properties of the phrase "small agricultural properties *in operation*." (Italics inserted.)

the government for any private properties expropriated in the process,[50] was quietly dropped. The new Code states that petitions for ejido extensions may be presented whenever and wherever it can be proved that the community has made "efficient use of its lands" and at least twenty heads of families have no parcels.[51]

Gains in Practice

At the time of the present writing definitive ejido statistics are not available beyond the year 1933. Preliminary reports for the year 1934, however, would seem to indicate that the paper and legal gains made in the *Plan Sexenal* and the new Agrarian Code have been in appreciable degree reflected in actual practice. In the period from February 20, to July 31, 1934, it was reported that 904 communities received definitive grants of close to 1.1 million hectares of land to the benefit of 81,928 ejidatarios.[52] In other words, in less than six months, approximately 6.7 times as many villages and 5.3 times as much land was definitively granted to 5.1 times as many ejidatarios as during the whole of the year 1933. If the rate of distribution up to the end of July was maintained throughout the rest of the year, then 1934 represents, to date, the high water mark and all time record in the agrarian reform.[53]

As further evidence of the gains in practice following the "revolt" of the *agraristas* in 1933 it may be noted again that the budget of the Agrarian Department in 1934 was 4.3 million pesos as compared with the 2.8 million pesos spent by the National Agrarian Commission in 1933. Also, according to official reports, the government actually kept its promise of turning over to the National Bank of Agricultural Credit the first installment of 20 million pesos of the total of 50 million pesos which the Six-Year Plan pledges the federal government to invest in this field during the course of the present presidential term.

Summary and Comment

Captious indeed would be anyone undertaking to argue that the gains made in the carrying out of the ejido program during recent months have not been both real and important. And yet, how far the present status of the ejido falls short of even that (for the present writer) fairly limited vision of the proper role of the ejido in the life

[50] See above p. 116.

[51] This type of extension is not to be confused with the automatic extension by which grants of inadequate parcels made under previous ejido laws are to be brought up to standard.

[52] *El Nacional*, August 22, 1934.

[53] Compare Appendix A, Tables 17 and 18.

of the nation set forth by the *agraristas*, is apparent from even the most cursory survey of the facts. The ejido program has been given a shot of strychnine when what is needed is a major operation. The *agraristas* labored mightily, but what they have brought forth is, at most, only a good sized rat.

The Code offers next to nothing to those 49,000 communities in Mexico with less than twenty heads of families. By adopting, as it does, the backhanded and indirect methods of trying to bring the *acasillados* under the wing of the ejido program, the Code grants rights which are quite likely to turn out more apparent than real. Few Mexican rural communities are going to stand idly by and see what they regard as their ejido parcels go to strangers and outsiders (for thus the *acasillados* are regarded in most parts of the country), whatever may be the law and however much they may be assured that the *acasillados* are their brothers in need. Moreover, unless a very considerable amount of money is forthcoming from some source—and in the nature of the case this source must be the federal government—new centers of agricultural population for the *acasillados* are likely to be few and far between.

But more important than any of these or other similar criticisms which might be made of the new Code, is the almost complete absence therein (as well as in the revised and reformed Article 27 of the constitution on which the Code is based) of any convincing evidence of a new emphasis on the idea of the socialization of property advanced with such fervor by the more forward-looking of the *agraristas*. The importance of the ejido is measurably raised by provisions in Article 27 and in the Code giving preference to the ejido as a method of land distribution over other methods.[54] But the notion that small private properties are the ultimate objective of the agrarian reform is still the basic assumption of the legislation. The Law of Ejido Patrimony is incorporated in the code essentially unchanged. Repeated assurances are given that the rights of small private properties are to be inviolable. In short, private property, albeit small private property, is still the goal and ideal of the agrarian reform.

[54] Article 27, for example, states in the section referring to the redistribution of land by limitation of the size of properties and the forced sale of excess holdings: "No subdivision of property will be allowed unless all agrarian requirements of adjacent communities have been satisfied."

CHAPTER XXV

CASE VI: CACIQUES AND COMMUNISM

> . . . When a wave of European communism hit Java and the people were urged to have no traffic with such dangerous practices, an item of gorgeous irony appeared in the minutes of one village: "No member of the village may join a Communist party; if he does, he shall lose his communal rights in the village."
>
> —Edwin R. Embree, *Island India Goes to School.*

THE VILLAGE of Zacapan is in the Tarascan country.

The theories about the origins of the Tarascans are varied and somewhat conflicting. The majority of the religious chroniclers and historians, however, are more or less in agreement that the Tarascans were originally Aztecs who separated from the main body of that race in its long migration from the "north" to the Valley of Mexico.

It is hard to resist the temptation to review here the long and interesting history of the development of the Tarascan people under kings with jaw-breaking names like Ziranzirancamaro or of their conquest by the Spaniards under the leadership first of Cristóbal de Olid and later of the cruel and rapacious Nuño de Guzmán. One would like to tell also some of the story of the labors among the Tarascans of that early missionary and great and good man, Vasco de Quiroga. But we must get along to other matters.

Not more than two days' horseback ride from that "calm and crystalline lake" on the banks of which, according to the historian Nicolas León, the Tarascans first settled, there is a valley we shall call the Valley of Quiroga in honor of the good bishop. When the Tarascans first came to this region, the lower end of the Valley of Quiroga, on account of numerous springs and the lack of any adequate outlet for the heavy summer rains, was one vast swamp. And a swamp it remained until the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

In 1886, the Mexican government made a contract with a gentleman by the name of Guillermo Cantú in which Cantú agreed to survey and drain the Quiroga swamp providing that he should receive one-third of the land reclaimed. The other two-thirds were

to be colonized and sold at three pesos a hectare. But Cantú was not able to carry out the project in the time stipulated in his contract with the government. Some years passed and the concession was transferred by the heirs of Cantú to a certain prominent *hacendado* and friend of Porfirio Díaz by the name of Lorenzo Garza. Shortly thereafter a company was formed by Garza and eight other landlords in the region; some three million pesos were spent on an elaborate system of canals; and by the turn of the century over 12,000 hectares of rich swamp land had been reclaimed. Almost 4,000 hectares of this land went to Garza, some 7,800 hectares to the other *hacendados* and about 400 hectares were left for the 3,000 inhabitants of a number of little villages located in the valley. One of these villages was Zacapan.

Now, as has just been stated, the reclaiming of the lower end of the valley of Quiroga opened up an agricultural area of unusual richness. In addition to soil of exceptional fertility and an embarrassment of riches in the matter of water supply, the valley, located 6,000 feet above sea level, is blessed with a temperate climate and a long growing season. Finally, in modern times, ease of access to markets has been still another attraction, for a railroad connecting with the main lines in central Mexico skirts the edge of the valley. Except for occasional heavy frosts and hail storms, the region offered an opportunity for successful agricultural exploitation such as may be found in only a few sections of the Mesa Central. The *hacendados* were well aware of this fact and for over a decade they waxed rich and prosperous.[1]

Then came the revolution of 1910 and eventually Carranza's agrarian decree of January 6, 1915.

"Tierra y Libertad"

Among the very first of the agrarian communities to take advantage of Carranza's famous decree was Zacapan. On August 17, 1915, a petition was addressed by the citizens of Zacapan to the governor of the state which held: (a) that from time immemorial the village had been in pacific and uninterrupted possession of its lands; (b) but that for over forty years the owners of the hacienda of Manantiales had been persecuting the village "even to the extent of starting armed combats" and that, during the Díaz regime, supported by the "dictatorial government of the time," the hacienda succeeded in absorbing most of the village land; (c) that the old Quiroga

[1] One official report states: "It is estimated that the value of each harvest in the Quiroga area [before 1910] was two million pesos."

swamp was the property of Zacapan and neighboring villages and when the swamp was drained by Lorenzo Garza and his associates Zacapan was thus further despoiled; and (d) that, therefore, the village, encouraged by the promises of the revolution, hereby petitioned the government to restore to it the lands unlawfully taken away.

Unfortunately, when the time came for Zacapan to present its titles and other documents proving its ownership to the property claimed, the most that the village could do was to produce a map whereon were marked the lands which "according to the memory of the oldest inhabitant" had once belonged to the community. The *hacendados*, on the other hand, were able to bring forward all sorts of *testimonios*, *contratos*, *escrituras* and other legal documents to show their right to the land in dispute. Although some of the agrarian authorities believed there were grounds for "reasonable presumption that in truth the lands of the village had been invaded" by the *hacendados*, in the absence of documentary proof, there was nothing to do but declare Zacapan's petition for restitution *no procedente*.

But this did not mean that the show was over, for, as the reader will recall, the Decree of 1915 and the Constitution of 1917 (which had gone into effect in the meantime) both provided that in those cases where the right to restitution could not be sustained a village might claim land by means of the process of dotation. On September 24, 1917, accordingly, the State Agrarian Commission agreed to consider Zacapan's petition as a petition for dotation. The village was so notified and after the usual procedures (and the usual delays), on February 22, 1922, a decree was signed granting Zacapan provisional possession of 450 hectares as follows: from the hacienda of Manantiales, 200 hectares; from Veracruz (Garza's property), 200 hectares and from a third hacienda, El Pelón, 50 hectares.

The owners of the various properties affected promptly obtained injunctions in the District Courts against the acts of the State Agrarian Commission, on the grounds: (a) that by a decree of 1899, the draining of the Quiroga swamp had been declared a work of public utility and the land reclaimed "formed an agricultural unit dependent upon and included within artificial constructions" and hence was not subject to expropriation under the agrarian laws; and (b) that the drainage system could not be made to function successfully without its control being centralized and hence if part of this control should be vested in the hands of the villages "lacking in organization and in pecuniary resources" the whole system would be ruined.

It will not be necessary to trace the legal fortunes of the above

mentioned injunctions or to review the arguments by reason of which they were eventually denied by the higher courts. It will be sufficient to note that the *hacendados* by their legal maneuvers succeeded only in increasing their losses; for when the presidential decree confirming Zacapan in final and definitive possession of its ejido was signed on February 20, 1924, the 316 heads of families listed in the official agrarian census were given 632 hectares, or 182 hectares more than they had received in provisional possession.

COMMUNISM—TARASCAN STYLE

During the first year or so of its existence, the ejido of Zacapan was confronted with many and difficult problems.

In the first place the *hacendados* (and more especially Lorenzo Garza, the owner of the hacienda of Veracruz) refused to admit the new order of things and sought in every way possible to make life unpleasant for the Zacapanecans. On July 27, 1924, for example, the local representative of the National Agrarian Commission reported as follows:

> The hacienda of Veracruz is sufficiently rich to be able to "buy" all of the local authorities, civil as well as military, from the President of the Municipality[2] to the last policeman, and from the lieutenant in charge of the local garrison down to the last soldier—as indeed it has done in times past and is doing now. Lately the owners of this hacienda have been attempting to form a "bloc" of the other *hacendados*, merchants and capitalists [in this region] . . . with the object of refusing to buy from the ejido communities any of their products so that these villages will not be able to work the land which has been given them or at least will be shown to have more land than they really need. . . .

Later, in December, 1924, Garza even went so far, according to a letter from the president of the Administrative Committee in Zacapan, as to invade the ejido lands with a detachment of federal troops and harvest a large part of the village corn crop.

It was not only with the *hacendados* that the village had to contend. It also appears that the social conditions of the community left much to be desired—as may be seen from the following paragraphs from a report written a few months after the village received its ejido lands:

> Alcoholism in this place reaches a maximum. . . . Properly speaking, there is no religion; the people were Roman Catholics, but not even they themselves know what their religion is since they ran the priest out of town. The only diversions they have are dances. These take place with

[2] The seat of the government of the municipality of which Zacapan is a part is located about 10 kilometers away in the town of San Carlos.

considerable frequency, lasting several days and usually ending up with some scandal and a phenomenal drunken orgy in which both men and women take part. . . .

The scholastic census shows 85 boys and girls and there is a school for each sex. . . . The teachers are of the very worst type; and if by chance a good teacher is sent here, he is immediately removed by the Municipal President [in San Carlos]. For several years there hasn't been a single teacher who wasn't a besotted drunkard and a leader in the dances and other scandalous affairs in this place.

But even in these first difficult months there was some evidence of the qualities that later were to make Zacapan one of the model ejidos of the state. From the very beginning, the ejido was characterized by a strong spirit of coöperation,[3] and one of the earliest acts of the community, even before it had received final possession of its land, was to set aside from the first crop raised 1,439 hectoliters of corn for the purpose of starting a coöperative society. Moreover, one of the first decisions of this society was to buy a tractor and a thrasher for the use of the whole community. And thereby hangs a saga, which, did space permit the telling in all its detail, would stand as a monument to bureaucratic red tape and inefficiency. Briefly what happened was this:

On May 3, 1924, the president of the Ejido Administrative Committee addressed a petition to the National Agrarian Commission stating that the village was in urgent need of a tractor and a thrasher with which to harvest its spring crops lest they be forced to pay over a thousand pesos rent for the use of the machinery owned by the neighboring *hacendados*. On May 10, the N.A.C. replied that it would be glad to sell Zacapan a tractor and a harvester on easy terms, but that first the village coöperative society would have to be legally organized and for that purpose a special agent was being sent at once. On May 21, the Ministry of Agriculture instructed the N.A.C. to go ahead and let Zacapan have a tractor and a harvester. The agent sent by the N.A.C. arrived in Zacapan and realizing the urgency of the case fixed up some temporary documents whereby Zacapan could purchase its machinery. On May 22, however, the documents in question were returned by the N.A.C. to its agent with the statement that they were illegal since they had not been signed

[3] A report from an agent of the N.A.C. written in December 1923 states:

"I was very agreeably surprised at the spirit of association and the intuitive ideas of coöperation which are so manifest here. And this confirms once more the fact that coöperative societies are not born from the studies and theorizings of economists or intellectuals, but they germinate in the soil of the laboring masses as one means of defense against social injustice. . . ."

PERFORMERS IN THE DANCE "MALINCHE," JUQUILA, OAXACA

by the proper village authorities and, moreover, did not have any government stamps on them. These matters were rectified and the papers again sent to the N.A.C. Still nothing happened. On June 12, the agent for the N.A.C. sent a telegram to his superiors which stated: "I beg you with the greatest urgency to send a tractor and a mechanic to Zacapan as the rains are damaging the wheat." This was the third telegram in as many weeks but no tractor was forthcoming. More telegrams and letters were exchanged. Finally, a great day arrived and with it the tractor and thrasher.

On June 19, 1924, with the assistance of a large and enthusiastic delegation from Zacapan the machinery was unloaded at the railway station in San Carlos. The tractor was a "Moline Plow" and not an "Avery" as had been requested. But no matter—this was no time for quibbling over details. Gasoline was procured, the motor was started and the triumphal procession began to the village some ten kilometers away.

Now, the road to Zacapan passes right by the principal buildings of the hacienda of Veracruz and it was precisely at this point—oh shame and disgrace!—that the tractor went dead. Levers were pulled, wheels were turned and gadgets were twisted, but the tractor remained quite definitely and completely dead. Well, *no hay remedio* (there is nothing that can be done): the triumphal procession was transformed into a funeral march trudging slowly behind a clanking "corpse" pulled by four sweating oxen. Thus unhappily did the modern machine age come to Zacapan!

Some hours later when the Ejido Committee tried to find out what was the matter with the tractor (a very difficult undertaking since no tools had been sent), it was discovered that one of the cylinders was cracked and two of the valves were broken. More letters and telegrams were exchanged with the N.A.C. in an effort to get these broken parts replaced, but to no avail. In order to save what was left of the wheat (by now already rotting in the fields), the village was forced to pay one of the neighboring *hacendados* eight hundred pesos for the use of his tractor.

In view of the foregoing, it would not have been a matter for surprise if the citizens of Zacapan had decided to return to the ways of their forefathers and let those who would traffic with mechanical gadgets. And, indeed, this very nearly happened as may be seen from the following report by one of the local representatives of the N.A.C.:

After all these difficulties [with the tractor] the farmers here have become most discouraged and are ready, whatever may be the cost, to

return the tractor and the thrasher. They say that it is better to use the old wooden plows; that these never get out of order and don't cost so much to run. It has taken a lot of work on my part to keep them from doing this and even though I have promised to get the necessary pieces for the tractor . . . and put it in good working condition, they are very pessimistic.

The counsels of the pessimists, however, did not prevail, for before the next harvest the Ejido Committee had plucked up enough courage to buy a "Fordson" (without the assistance of the N.A.C!) from a private dealer. This machine, fortunately, worked very well and Zacapan's waning faith in modern science was restored. But even to this day if you suddenly say the word "tractor" in the presence of a Zacapanecan you are very likely to get the same kind of a reaction that the word "war" produces when sprung on a shell-shocked soldier.

(Epilogue: After some two years of negotiations and the exchange of innumerable letters, Zacapan finally succeeded in getting the N.A.C. to take back its tractor—cracked piston and all.)

What with vengeful *hacendados*, drunken school teachers and balky tractors, the ejido of Zacapan really got off to a bad start. By the spring of 1926, however, not only had the village recovered from its early trials and tribulations, but it had begun to make very distinct progress,[4] the most interesting aspect of which was an ingenious and, for the time being at any rate, successful system for the purely communal exploitation of the ejido.

Under this system, instead of dividing the land up into a number of small parcels, the whole ejido was worked as one big farm under the direction of the Administrative Committee. The unit of labor was an eight-hour day. Each ejidatario, for every such unit worked, was given one credit in the ejido books. No distinction was made between work in the fields and any other work duly approved by the Administrative Committee as being in the interest of the whole community. Moreover, a credit was given to the owners of a team of oxen for each eight hours of work whether the owner used the oxen himself or

[4] The following paragraphs appear in a report by the *Jefe de Zona* written in April, 1926:

"The ejidatarios of Zacapan are hard working, very devoted to agriculture, and completely progressive in their spirit. . . . Due to the intensity of their activity—for all of them are thorough workers, temperate in their habits and ambitious to make their ejido a success—they have obtained most creditable results. . . . I have had occasion to appreciate the work they are carrying on for I was there at the time when they were beginning to fallow their fields, and I saw how those in charge of the matter did not have to be constantly directing or urging the men in their tasks. . . . All of the officials are conscientious, capable, full of enthusiasm and sufficiently honorable for the rest of the citizens to respect and trust them."

allowed some other ejidatario to use them. At harvest time, after the deduction of the 15 per cent required by law for taxes and the ejido coöperative fund, the crop was divided and each ejidatario received the amount corresponding to the number of credits he had accumulated during the year.

For example, in the case of the corn crop planted in 1929 and harvested in January, 1930, the total product of the harvest was 7,043 hectoliters. Of this amount 918 (sic.) hectoliters were set aside for the 15 per cent quota. This left 6,125 hectoliters for division among the 195 ejidatarios who the books showed were credited with a total of 18,375 units of labor. In other words, the "profits" of each ejidatario were one-third of a hectoliter of corn for every unit of labor that he (or his animals) had worked.

Nothing could be simpler than this communism—Tarascan style. No one was forced to work, but only those who worked had any claim on the community and each man's claim was exactly equivalent to the amount of work done.

A Fly in the Ointment

But there was a fly in Zacapan's communal ointment. Indeed, as we shall see, there were some sixty flies. And these sixty flies (although, curiously enough, they called themselves "communists"!) did not at all like being in Zacapan's communal ointment. Wherefore, they proceeded to shoot their way out. And that was why the president of the Administrative Committee, Miguel Domínguez, wrote the following letter to the N.A.C.:

The village that I so unworthily represent has never had any trouble of any sort even during the revolutionary times, because it has always known how to defend itself and aided by the government it has never [had] to perpetrate a single assassination.

[But] on April 1, 1926, certain bad elements in the vicinity, protected by the Municipal Authorities in San Carlos, for purely political reasons and because my associates would not support their candidate for state Congressman in the recent elections . . . managed to place in office . . . as the representative of the Municipal government in Zacapan a man by the name of Rafael Enríquez, an antiagrarian and the President of the "Society of Catholic Workers." This Rafael Enríquez and a certain David Gallegos, who call themselves the representatives of the Rancho de Aguacate,[5] proceeded to arm with rifles seventy-six men in Aguacate. . . . This was done with the open and barefaced protection of the owners of the hacienda of Veracruz who planned by thus controlling this repre-

[5] As will shortly be made clear, the Rancho de Aguacate was a *barrio* (roughly, "ward" or "suburb") of Zacapan.

sentative of the Municipal authority in Zacapan . . . to seize by violent methods the property of this village [Zacapan]. . . .

On April 1, Rafael Enríquez and David Gallegos . . . sent some of their henchmen to assassinate the undersigned, the President of the Ejido Committee . . . and they shot at me where I was working in the fields . . . but the bullet fell to one side. . . .

During the following days these same armed ones engaged in all sorts of scandalous activities and in a state of drunkenness launched filthy insults at any one they could find and sowed panic in the night by shooting off their guns right and left. . . . The Municipal Authorities were informed of these matters, but paid no attention. . . . On April 5, some of the Enríquez and Gallegos group appeared in the fields where the ejidatarios of Zacapan were working . . . and began to shoot at them and since they were unprepared the ejidatarios had to run. . . .

On the following day [April 6], in the same place, at eleven o'clock in the morning, they [the followers of Enríquez and Gallegos] returned to their work [that is, shooting the ejidatarios] and killed Ireneo Reyes, the father of one of those in the attacking party. . . .

At 2:30 in the afternoon, the Municipal Authorities of San Carlos accompanied by the police and the garrison of federal soldiers in that place, came out in automobiles and joining forces . . . [with the Enríquez and Gallegos group] entered the village of Zacapan from all sides. . . . The ejidatarios who were working in the fields, unable to defend themselves or to return to their houses . . . fled to the nearby villages where they had to stay for ten days until the Governor of the state . . . sent an investigator . . . who arranged for them to return to their homes. . . . During all this time, the village remained in the hands of these bandits who . . . broke down the doors . . . and robbed various houses. . . . [There follows a detailed list of the thefts committed, including those from the offices and warehouses of the Ejido Committee.]

And moreover, damage was done to . . . some wheat which we had planted. . . . Forty-five loads of wheat were lost and the lives of two ejidatarios. The last mentioned who in life bore the names of Gerardo Gutiérrez and Victor Mora were assassinated and their bodies were not recovered until four days later when they were already putrefied. And two horses that were stolen and used by the Municipal Authorities were returned twelve days later and they are trying to collect fifty pesos for the cost of maintaining these horses which we have not paid because we do not think it just.

For all of the foregoing, up to the present time, the village has not received justice—neither for the robberies nor for the assassinations. . . .

Shortly before the above quoted letter was written, the N.A.C. received a long document signed by David Gallegos and setting forth the complaints of the residents of Aguacate. On their side the Aguacatecans claimed that they lived in a separate community and numbered 131 families; that they had been systematically excluded

from their legal rights in the ejido; and that, in any case, they did not wish to participate in the communal system of Zacapan, but wanted their own individual parcels to work as they saw fit.

On April 28, 1926, in order to have some sort of unbiased facts on which to proceed, the N.A.C. sent the *Procurador de Pueblos* to Zacapan to make an investigation. About a month later the *Procurador* reported: (a) that Aguacate was not a separate community, but, on the contrary, was less than 200 meters distant and shared in every way in the political, economic and social life of Zacapan; (b) that there were 61 families (*not* 131) associated with David Gallegos and not even all of these lived in the *barrio* of Aguacate; (c) that it was true these 61 families as well as certain other families had been excluded from full participation in their legal rights in the ejido and that the Administrative Committee had refused to give them individual parcels.

The *Procurador* further reported that, although he had been unable to interview the leaders of the communal group (because they were still in hiding as the result of the *magnos escandalos* of April 6 *et seq.*), it was his personal opinion, "that this so-called communal system in Zacapan has not benefited the community in the way that it would have if those in charge of its management had been more just and less influenced by their passions and personal interests." It was also the opinion of the *Procurador* that the troubles of Zacapan should be settled by ordering the Administrative Committee to give David Gallegos and his associates individual parcels near their *barrio*, "leaving the rest of the ejidatarios at liberty to continue with their communal system."

In accordance with the recommendations of the *Procurador*, on May 26, 1926, "after a long and angry discussion . . . in which David Gallegos and Rafael Enríquez raised all sorts of difficulties," it was agreed in the presence of the *Procurador* and the *Jefe de Zona* that the residents of Aguacate should be given their parcels after the crops then planted should be harvested, and a "pact of honor" was signed pledging all parties in the meantime "to maintain and to cause to be maintained the public order."[6]

[6] In reporting to the Regional Organizer this settlement of the differences between Aguacate and Zacapan, the *Jefe de Zona* added this interesting comment:

"I think it would be a good thing for the future of this community, which up to the present time has worked very well, if all official status and recognition should be denied to David Gallegos and Rafael Enríquez, for both of those men are bent on disorganizing this community. Moreover, Gallegos is undoubtedly being managed by other hands; he is an ignorant and foolish person and it is impossible to believe that he is working by himself. The second named was the president of a society of Catholic workers and for this reason I do not think he is in sympathy with the agrarian idea so violently attacked by

Hardly had the ink dried on this gentleman's agreement than the Aguacatecans were once more threatening to go on the war-path. Or, at any rate, this is what the president of the Administrative Committee claimed in a letter to the N.A.C. dated June 18:

Again, four days ago, the village was threatened by these malefactors [David Gallegos, *et al.*] who have not been accused, punished, and much less disarmed. And since they have not been punished they are now planning new robberies. . . .

Other "scandalous acts" on the part of the Aguacate group were reported in August and September,[7] but for one reason or another the agrarian authorities did not see fit to intervene. When, in October, however, the Aguacatecans, after shooting up the town, rode off into the mountains and declared themselves in rebellion against the federal government, the authorities were forced to take action. Although previously the Regional Organizer had recommended the application of the Law of Ejido Patrimony as the "only solution" of the problem, in the face of this new emergency it was agreed that the best way to deal with the matter would be to get rid of David Gallegos and his associates once and for all by the simple (if rather unorthodox and illegal) procedure of buying them out. In due time this was done: the rugged individualists of Aguacate in return for a bag full of pesos surrendered all their rights in the ejido and moved to parts unknown; the Zacapanecans returned to the communal exploitation of their ejido; and once more order and quiet reigned in the valley of Quiroga.

Peace and Progress

During the three years 1927 to 1929, only peace and progress mark the annals of the village of Zacapan.[8] Indeed, so notable was

them; also he is the possesser of more than 1,000 pesos capital. But even if this were not true, the root of an evil which can prejudice this whole village should be cut, for otherwise this community, up to the present time a model, may be a failure."

[7] On August 16, in a gun fight in which the Aguacatecans claimed they had been attacked by the Zacapanecans, two Zacapanecans were wounded.

On September 27, the president of the Ejido Committee in Zacapan reported that the day before David Gallegos and other Aguacatecans had entered the plaza "yelling, shooting off their guns, insulting and threatening with death the people in the streets."

[8] To the United States is due some credit for the progress of this little Tarascan village. One of the most interesting facts observed by the present writer on the occasion of his visit to Zacapan in March, 1934, was that there was hardly an able-bodied man in the village who had not worked in the United States. Upon inquiry, the even more interesting fact came out that in the early years of the ejido, the leaders of the community deliberately adopted the policy of sending the most energetic young men to the United States. The idea was that with the money saved from the high wages then being paid in the neighboring

the advancement and general prosperity of the community that in 1927 it was judged one of the best ejidos in the country and was awarded a prize (an electric light plant) by the president of the Republic.

In 1928, the Regional Organizer for the N.A.C., in recommending that the National Bank of Agricultural Credit extend a rather large loan to the ejido, stated that the Zacapanecans were "the hardest workers and had the best references of any community in the whole region."

Again, in a comprehensive report written on July 30, 1929, the *Jefe de Zona* in charge of Zacapan said:

Practically all of the ejidatarios in this village are members of the coöperative society. . . . The money loaned to the society has been expended in accordance with the needs of the members and the society in general. . . . They now have two thrashers (one for wheat and one for corn) both in very good condition, a Fordson tractor and a ten-disc Oliver plow, an Avery harvester in perfect condition, and about eighty steel plows. . . . This is one of the best organized of the coöperatives. . . . The members are well disciplined and obey the orders of the Administrative Committee precisely as they are given. . . .

At the present time they are constructing an irrigation canal . . . and one notes how all of the members are working on this job with an interest and a will worthy of the highest praise. . . .

They work their lands themselves and only employ day laborers when some of the ejidatarios are sick. . . . They are *hard and enthusiastic workers.* They are prompt to obey the orders of the agrarian authorities. The desire of all of them for prosperity is notable. . . . They are pacific and orderly . . . and there are no quarrels between the members.

Some of their houses are not clean, but they all have the most necessary [furnishings]. . . . They are clean in their persons . . . and the vice of alcoholism has practically been abolished.

Even the women in Zacapan were bitten with the coöperative bug. As early as 1923, about two hundred women organized a society known as the "Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez[9] Woman's Agrarian Society." So well did this society invest the funds accumulated from monthly dues that it was able to spend over a thousand pesos for a motor to run a *molino de nixtamal* (mill for grinding corn for tortillas) and to contribute more than five hundred pesos toward the installation of the electric light system in the village.

country, the community could buy the agricultural implements it so badly needed. Undoubtedly this extra supply of capital plus the "spiritual baggage" the young men brought back with them on their return, played an important part in the community's advancement.

[9] A famous character in the Hidalgo revolutionary movement of 1810.

Trouble in Paradise

If we may judge from the official reports made at the time, by the end of 1929 it would have been hard to find in the whole Republic a better case in point in support of the ideas and ideals of "simple collectivism" than the ejido of Zacapan. Here was a village in which apparently the communal principles envisaged in the National Agrarian Commission's Circular 51 were actually working. The village was progressing by leaps and bounds; the leaders were honest; and the people were contented.

Unfortunately the story does not end here. There was trouble in paradise and a cancer in the commune.

On February 5, 1930, the Regional Organizer received the following letter from the state *Federación Agraria Forestal:*

We transmit herewith for your information the following letter directed to this organization by Tomás Hernández, Eduardo Mendoza, Carlos Hernández . . . [plus some 30 other names] all ejidatarios of the village of Zacapan:

"The undersigned hereby allege . . . that ever since the government gave us our ejido we have been persecuted by those who pass themselves off as our leaders . . . [and force us] to cultivate our land in common. . . . We are worse off than when we were in the power of the gachupín, Garza.[10] We do not receive the fruits of our labor because Jesús Roca[11] and the others associated with him do not work the land; we work it for them. [Therefore] in order that each one should reap the benefits of his his own labor and in order to do away with this 'bossism,' we want some one sent to divide up our land [that is, apply the Law of Ejido Patrimony]. . . ."

In reply to the above letter, the Regional Organizer stated that to his certain knowledge the great majority of the ejidatarios in Zacapan were satisfied with and wanted to continue the communal system, and that, therefore, the Regional Organizer's office would consider it a favor if the *Federación Agraria Forestal* would cease to give aid and comfort to such "ridiculous minorities" as that represented by Tomás Hernández and his associates.[12]

"Ridiculous minority" or not, Tomás Hernández and company

[10] *Gachupín* (*cachupín*)—a term of opprobrium applied to Spaniards in Mexico. Garza, it will be recalled, was the owner of the hacienda, Veracruz.

[11] Jesús Roca was the individual most responsible for obtaining Zacapan's ejido from the government in the long fight with the *hacendados* from 1915 to 1924 and was the recognized *líder máximo* or *cacique* of the village.

[12] In reporting this matter to the N.A.C., the Regional Organizer referred to Tomás Hernández as an "eternal agitator" whose only purpose was to use the support of the *Federación Agraria* to divide the community.

continued to press their case and demand the parcelization of the ejido. Long and eloquent pleas were sent to the governor, the N.A.C. and to the Minister of Agriculture in which it was claimed that they were nothing more than "slaves of the President of the Ejido Committee" (Jesús Roca), that they were being "exploited" and "treated worse than by the old *hacendados*," and that they were in "imminent danger of being assassinated."

In the end Hernández got his wish: On May 7, 1930, the National Agrarian Commission instructed one of its engineers, Salvador Vega, to proceed at once to Zacapan and apply the Law of Ejido Patrimony. And this was the beginning of the end of communism—Tarascan style. The *beginning* of the end, be it noted, for the "communists" did not give in without a fight. Limitations of space do not allow us to follow here the ins and outs of this struggle. The documents quoted below represent a fair sample of the numerous pleas and petitions, charges and countercharges advanced by the two contending parties. The reader will have to determine for himself where lay truth and right.

Exhibit A: Report from the N.A.C. engineer, Salvador Vega:

On July 15, [1930], I arrived in Zacapan and forthwith explained to the President of the Administrative Committee, Jesús Roca, and several other citizens that the object of my presence in the village was to apply the Law of Family Patrimony. . . . Jesús Roca stated that they had not solicited the application of the law in question; that such action would not in any way suit them; that they were working their land communally and [believed] they could obtain better results that way than by each man working his individual parcel; and that, although they would not oppose parcelization, neither would they help carry it out, nor would they respect it. . . . Shortly [after this declaration] . . . the members of the Committee left the village on their way to the capital of the State to protest against the application of the law.

After talking with several of the ejidatarios, I arrived at the conclusion that this Jesús Roca is a *cacique* who, supported by a few of his friends, is exploiting . . . the village. He is forcing the poor to work from sun to sun at the hardest kind of labor and is paying them a wage of three liters of wheat a day. On the other hand, for doing a little work in the office, or going for the mail, or acting as foreman over the other ejidatarios, he credits his favorites with from six to nine liters of wheat for each job. . . . In other words, the Committee and its "gang" are living off the work of the rest of the people.

In the original agrarian census in this village there were included 107 persons living in the *ranchería* of Acate [sic.] adjacent to and a part of Zacapan. But after definitive possession had been granted, the Committee in Zacapan . . . refused to recognize those of Acate, and would not give

them any of the ejido land. Because of this there arose serious difficulties which culminated in various armed encounters. Finally, the Zacapanecans forced the citizens of Acate to flee and . . . burnt their houses and fields. The government intervened, punishing the Zacapanecans, forcing them to indemnify the proprietors of the houses that had been burnt, and obliging them to sign a pact whereby they promised to give them [the Aguacatecans] ejido lands—a promise never carried out. . . .[13]

From the information I have, it appears that the majority of the ejidatarios are in favor of the application of the Law of Ejido Patrimony . . . but they are afraid to state their desires frankly because of their fear of the guns of the Committee and its supporters. . . .

Exhibit B: Letter from the members of the Ejido Administrative Committee to the president of the Republic (December 31, 1930):

The undersigned, members of the *Comité Agrario*, and the recognized representatives of this community, respectfully and courteously do hereby allege and affirm the following:

Since the year 1924 we have been working without rancor or envy under the direction and the excellent system which Jesús Roca has organized for the carrying on of the social and agricultural activities and for the collective progress of this village.

This Roca is a man who carries in his mind the most sublime ideas of unification and these ideas, which on various occasions he has revealed, have always resulted in union, peace and tranquility and have united us in strong bonds of fraternity.

We have observed the bad results attained in those ejidos in which the land has been divided into individual parcels. And we have seen how these ejidos are poorly administered and are filled with rancor and envy and troubles. We [therefore], guided by the excellent counsels of Jesús Roca and with the noble ideal of being useful and contributing our grain of sand to the advancement and prosperity of this village and to that of the nation as a whole, have adopted the coöperative system where each works for one and one for all, and where we divide fruits of the land in a just and equitable manner in accordance with the work done by each ejidatario. And by this system we have prospered and improved our methods of agricultural exploitation by the acquisition of machinery. . . .

Many of the agrarian communities of this region, in spite of the fact that they possess lands of a very good class, are relatively impoverished and have been forced year after year to the humiliating pass of petitioning for the return of their taxes. . . . These failures are solely the result of bad administration, bad organization and the lack of experience and in our judgment they redound not only to the prejudice of the ejidatarios,

[13] The reader will note that this version of the quarrel between Zacapan and Aguacate, given by one representative of the N.A.C. is the direct antithesis of the story as told by another representative of the N.A.C.—see above p. 473.

but to that of the government itself. . . . Casting our eyes on these communities which have failed, we tremble with terror and our souls are frozen within us when we think that in a few days we also will have our lands divided up and thus irremissibly will be headed for the same kind of calamity—a calamity that will be all the greater in our case because our ejido is so small and the number of ejidatarios is so large that the parcels we will receive . . . will hardly provide for the most insufficient personal needs.

Wherefore, Mr. President: we most humbly and respectfully petition that we be allowed to continue exploiting our ejido in common as we have been doing. . . . If this is not possible, we ask that our ejido be enlarged and that the work of parcelization now being carried on be stopped until such amplification of our lands has been granted.

We now have before us the two sides of the case. Was Jesús Roca a prophet leading his people out of the wilderness into a communal paradise (as some of the agrarian authorities and the members of the Ejido Committee would have us believe); or was he a petty tyrant grinding the people in the mud and fattening himself and his friends on their sweat and blood (as reported by Tomás Hernández and Salvador Vega)? The question will have to remain rhetorical in several senses of the word.[14]

Whatever may have been (or is) the true character of Jesús Roca, or whatever may have been the merits or demerits of his "sublime ideas of unification," the law took its course. On February 25, 1931, the ejido of Zacapan was divided into 226 parcels and the one big farm became 226 little farms of 1.9 hectares each. Communism, Tarascan style, was at an end.

"COMMUNISTS" INTO INDIVIDUALISTS

The rest of the story is shortly told.

Jesús Roca is still the *líder máximo* and the fountain of wisdom in

[14] The author not so long ago spent the best part of a morning talking to Jesús Roca and can testify that he found him to be a dignified old gentleman with a certain air of authority and power. Wrapped in a red *sarape* which reached from his sparse grey whiskers to his *huarache* clad feet, he certainly did not have the appearance of a rich man. As one listened to his salty stories of his experience as a day laborer in the United States, of how he led the fight against the *hacendados*, or of how he taught the boys to run the village tractor, one got the impression that he was a canny old Indian—perhaps even cunning; but hardly a tyrant and assuredly not a blood-thirsty one. Also, it is perhaps worth recording that when the writer asked Roca why Hernández and his friends were dissatisfied with the communal system, he replied that the real trouble lay in the fact that these men were a "bunch of lazy *borrachitos* (little drunkards)" and that it was only when the village authorities, in an effort to deal with the prevalent vice of alcoholism, enacted a local prohibition law that Hernández and his supporters suddenly decided that the communal system was all wrong and that they were being subjected to intolerable tyranny.

Zacapan. But, with this difference: thanks to the Law of Ejido Patrimony, Roca and his associates are no longer "communists." This does not mean that Zacapan has completely abandoned cooperative procedure. The village still owns in common its thrashers, tractors, and other machinery, and the Coöperative Credit Society is still a going concern. But there is considerable evidence of a change in the temper of the principal leaders. They are less and less disposed to look to the government for help and support, and more and more they are moving in the direction of self-reliance. They are thinking less and less in terms of the quondam ideals of the agrarian reform, of a coöperative and semicommunal village organization, and more and more in terms of independence and individualism. In a word, one gets the feeling that a large number of the Zacapanecans have been disillusioned. "One for all and all for one" may be all right, but there is also something to be said for "each tub sitting on its own bottom" and "God helps them that help themselves" (or the Spanish equivalents thereof).

Consider, for example, the answer the writer received when he asked Jesús Roca how much help to Zacapan the local Ejido Bank had been:

> Well, my good friend, perhaps you have heard the story of that *ranchero* (small farmer) who went to Mexico City for the first time. While he was there, some of his city friends took him to the opera. Knowing that he had never been to the opera before, the city folk during the intermission with considerable curiosity asked their country friend how he liked it. "Well," said the *ranchero*, "*a mí me parece que hay mucho canto y poca ópera* (it seems to me that there is a lot of singing and very little opera)." And that's the way we feel about the Ejido Bank—they've talked a lot but they haven't done much. And besides, there's too much red tape about getting a loan. What we are going to do as soon as we can, is establish our own bank right here in our village and then when we want to borrow money we won't have to wait six months to get it.

Nor do the Zacapanecans have much confidence in the federal rural school program.

> These teachers they send out here spend too much time on basket-ball and games. What we want our kids to be taught is reading and writing—we'll see that they get plenty of exercise outside of school hours. . . . Most of the teachers have been very bad. And once when we did have a teacher that we liked, the school inspector for some political reason took him away. As soon as we can afford it we are going to employ our own teacher—and then we can get the kind of teacher we want and have our kids taught what we want them taught.

Even more important as an indication of the way the winds of doctrines are blowing in Zacapan is the following: On February 14, 1933, Jesús Roca and one hundred other ejidatarios signed a twenty-year contract by which they agreed to buy for the sum of 20,000 pesos 404 hectares of land belonging to the hacienda of Veracruz. This operation was strictly a private affair between the *hacendado* and the individuals concerned and has nothing to do with the ejido as such.

Full circle turns the wheel. Peons into communists—peasants into ejidatarios; communists into individualists—ejidatarios into capitalists.

CHAPTER XXVI

DISPUTED POINTS AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

WITH THIS chapter I propose to begin the exercise of that inalienable right with which it appears all foreigners are endowed: the giving of advice to Mexico. Or, put in a somewhat more propitiatory manner, I intend to indulge the undeniable privilege of all men of good-will to dream a dream, to conjure up a vision of what the future of Mexico could be if only I were allowed—"To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire . . . and then remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire."

To some the dream will undoubtedly appear a nightmare divorced from all reality, the vision an illusion compounded of moonshine and shadows. Be that as it may, it is time for the analyst to become the advocate, for the "professor" posing problems to step down off the platform and prepare to take some of his own medicine. It is for this reason that I deem it proper and fitting to withdraw from the kindly protection of the third person and the pleasant seclusion of the editorial "we" and take my stand out in the open in plain sight—a fair target for the brickbats which, often not without justice and reason, are the reward of presumptuous outsiders who undertake to give Mexico counsels of perfection.

As my first essay in the role of a dispenser of gratuitous advice and an uninvited diviner of Mexico's future, I wish to lay down the following propositions:

Mexico has been in the past and to a marked degree is at the present time a country organized along essentially feudal lines with all that this suggests of inequality and injustice in the distribution of landholdings and control over the basic agricultural resources of the nation.

Mexico, agriculturally speaking, is an underproduction country, still, for the most part, in what Lewis Mumford has called the "eotechnic phase" of technological development with all that this connotes of a lack of effective use of natural forces and a bitter and unremitting struggle for existence.

Mexico, in common with many other raw material countries, is face to face with the industrial revolution and all that this implies of social and economic disorganization, accommodation, and reorganization.

Mexico shares with other nations the problem of how to work out a way of life which will insure the greatest good for the greatest number with all that this involves of difficult and knotty problems of education, cultural integration and the control of the powerful and the protection of the weak.

A score and more of years ago Mexico embarked with high hopes and good faith upon a revolution which promised to right ancient wrongs and to create new and enduring rights. Out of that revolution there gradually developed a movement for agrarian reform that undertook to turn promise into reality and to reward aspiration with achievement. Up to the present time, however, the reality has fallen short of the goal set by high hope and the achievement has failed to measure up to the ideal conceived in good faith.

For problems so basic and questions so fundamental there can, of course, be no single simple solution. One cannot determine the future of a country and resurrect a revolution by uttering a magic phrase. But this does not mean that the future must be abandoned to the inscrutable workings of time and casual circumstance or that revolution and reform must needs be unavailing against the immutable operations of putative "natural law." It may not be written that Mexico shall master her destiny, but this does not mean that drift need be king. There is a way out for Mexico. There is a sword which, wielded with strength and skill, will cut the knot of many a Mexican problem; there is a key which, fitted with care and turned with cunning, will unlock many a door now closed; there is a road which, followed with courage and traversed with wisdom will, I believe, lead Mexico out from many a morass of the past and present and enable her to escape many a pitfall in the future. I repeat, there is a way out for Mexico—and that way is the ejido!

Having thus nailed the bare bones of my thesis alongside those of the *agraristas* to the front door of the office of the National Revolutionary Party (if that be the proper place), I now beg leave to clothe the skeleton in such flesh as reason and fact appear to dictate. As a first step in this undertaking it will be useful in the remaining pages of this chapter to state my position with regard to certain aspects of the ejido program at present confused by controversy.

The Ejido and "Communism"

As has been pointed out in a number of places in this book, one of the most bitterly contested points in the whole agrarian reform has been the question of what kind of a system of property tenure, if any, the ejido should represent. In the course of this contest one has a feeling that there has been a good deal of wishful thinking, and a

corresponding disregard of facts. Moreover, the waters of the argument have been repeatedly and unnecessarily muddied by a failure to differentiate the legalistic, sociological, and economic aspects of the problem.

COLLECTIVE TENURE—NATURAL OR IMPOSED?

From the sociological point of view the principal question in issue has been: can a communal or, if that term be malodorous, a collective system of land tenure in Mexico be regarded as natural in the sense that it is an institutional form with which by use and wont the majority of the people are familiar; or, is it something cooked up and imposed from the top by well-meaning but undiscerning theorists?

In my opinion the burden of proof seems to lie with those who hold that collectivism is the normal and natural procedure for the Mexican folk and that all that needs to be done for Mexico to enter forthwith into a communal promised land is to give the villages a free rein and let them follow their noses.[1] Those who argue in this fashion are usually content to rest their case by pointing to what they assume to have been the situation among the Aztecs and then, by a kind of historical hop-scotch, jumping to the conclusion that the assumed conditions are essentially unchanged at the present time. There are, however, grounds for questioning both their assumptions and the conclusions which either by implication or direct statement they draw from them.

It is pertinent to recall that the Aztec system of land tenure was by no means common to all of the peoples inhabiting what is now known as Mexico. At the very height of their power the Aztecs did not dominate even for the purposes of exacting tribute and military service more than a fraction of Mexico's territory[2] and it is extremely doubtful if within this area such complicated institutions as the

[1] As an illustration of this point of view consider, for example, the following:

"Worst of all . . . Díaz ruthlessly sought to break down the conception of communal property and community responsibility which the villages had inherited. . . . He tried to make each villager stake off his own land, trade in it, buy and sell it, irrespective of the needs and desires of the community about him. Individualism in this sense was—and thank God still is—incomprehensible to the [Mexican] Indian. . . .

"[Here were] . . . thousands of villages ripe and ready for cooperation. It was the only way they knew how to live. They had been taking it in with their mother's milk for 1,000 years. And Díaz tried to shatter it. . . . Fortunately he did not succeed. . . .

"The unconquered tribal village is . . . profoundly communistic in its economic habits. . . . The free village, so-called, . . . more directly descended from the Aztec and Maya cultures . . . is also strongly communistic in its land habits." Stuart Chase and Marian Tyler, *Mexico—A Study of Two Americas*, pp. 119-20, 210. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

[2] Priestley, *The Mexican Nation*, p. 22.

calpulli were adopted by all the tribes acknowledging Aztec supremacy. Outside the Aztec sphere of influence pre-Conquest Mexico was, with the exception of the relatively isolated Mayas, occupied by tribes more or less nomadic and having only the vaguest conceptions of real property rights of a communal or of any other variety.

In the second place, it must be remembered that within the area of strongest Aztec hegemony such communal institutions of landholding as did exist were already in the process of dissolution by the time the Spaniards arrived. The idea that aboriginal (Aztec) Mexico was a communal paradise of share and share alike, "a land where . . . civilized men walked free, fearless and masters of their destiny," a "garden . . . where the trees gave forth each its own sweet odour, the roses bloomed, and the birds sang,"[3] is, largely a myth—one of the many manifestations of that persistent Rousseauan literary fiction: the noble savage.

Finally, I beg to recall,[4] that in the 400 years following the Conquest, despite the founding by the Spaniards of scores of new landholding pueblos and the many attempts, from the earliest Viceroys down to the well-intentioned but misguided Laws of the Reform, to bolster up and strengthen already existing settlements characterized by collective forms of land tenure, the trend of development in Mexico was away from collectivism and in the direction of individual private property. In a word, the ejidos and the institutional concepts and corresponding individual attitudes that went along with them were, except in a relatively few villages off the beaten track, sapped of vitality when they were not smothered out of existence. The net effect of the interaction between indigenous and imported institutions of land tenure plus the "accidents of history" (if one may so refer to such diverse phenomena as the Laws of the Reform and Porfirio Díaz) was the eventual triumph of individualism over communism, of private property over property held and exploited by and in the interest of the collectivity.

The conclusions I am forced to draw in view of the foregoing considerations are: (1) The statement, "agrarian communism is natural in Mexico," in the sense that throughout the country there exist collective forms of landholding enshrined in custom and hallowed by tradition, must be greatly qualified. (2) In *some* parts of the country (notably the Mesa Central and Mesa del Sur regions), in *some* villages, communal traditions and collective practices of land tenure still persist, but such traditions and practices are by no means

[3] Chase and Tyler, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[4] See Chapters I, II, and III.

universal. In point of fact it is possible to find in Mexico almost every conceivable form of property holding from primitive communism to capitalistic private ownership and control. It is a moot question whether in as many as 5,000 of the total of some 72,000 rural communities of Mexico[5] collectivism exists in any more vital or realistic sense than it may be said to be present in an ordinary community in the United States or England which holds its park system, playgrounds, and perhaps forest reserves in its corporate capacity.

COLLECTIVISM AND THE LAW

On the legalistic side the argument concerning the ejido as a form of property tenure has eddied back and forth around questions of interpretation of the letter and the spirit of the Constitution of 1917 and more particularly of Article 27. I have already pointed out in this study[6] that the Constitution of 1917 is a hybrid, begotten partly in an effort to straddle the fence between traditional notions of laissez faire and modern functional conceptions and partly in an attempt to be realistic and give legal sanction to the great variety of property concepts coexisting in Mexico and at the same time leave the way open for the development of new and presumably more "socialistic" forms of land tenure. It is this fact which gives the Constitution the appearance of a patch-work quilt—a background of rugged individualism on which there have been sewn here and there bright red scraps of collectivistic principles. And what is true of property concepts in general is also true of the ejido viewed as a form of land tenure; for by giving the status of constitutional law to the original agrarian decree of January, 1915, elements of confusion were injected into the situation which to this day, despite the recent revision of Article 27, have not been clarified.

In a word, without undertaking at this point any further exegesis, so far as the fundamental law of the land is concerned, Mexico is free to develop any kind of a doctrine of property rights she may see fit. It is yet to be determined whether Mexico will choose so to interpret or alter her constitution as to take the road toward the socialization of her agricultural resources or whether she will elect to follow the tried, if not trusted, path of private property. The constitution leaves both ways open. Mexico, to change the figure, may still call her own tune. She can elect to join once more in the chorus—"the old fashioned religion, it was good enough for father (Díaz) and it's good enough for me"; or, daring do, she can go on

[5] Compare Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 68.

[6] See Chapter V.

with her efforts to compose new music and sing a new song worthy of the theme *Tierra y Libertad.* But what Mexico may not do, on pain of the penalties sooner or later visited upon houses divided against themselves, is to continue to sing both songs at once. If confusion be not confounded, if all harmony and unity of purpose be not reduced to cacaphony and disorder, a choice must be made.

COLLECTIVE TENURE VS. COÖPERATIVE PRODUCTION

There is still a third element involved in any discussion of the ejido and "communism." Those who have argued that there is present in Mexico a strong tradition of collective forms of property tenure have assumed that this "fact" is warrant for the further assumption that coöperative forms of economic organization and practices of production are therefore natural to the Mexican peasant.[7] In my opinion there is just enough truth in this position to lead the unwary into the kind of difficulties, already encountered to their great sorrow and disappointment, by the officials of the Agrarian Department and the National Bank of Agricultural Credit. For the truth of the matter is that neither in those villages where there has never existed a tradition of agrarian communism, nor in those villages where some appreciable measure of simple communism has survived, can it be said that there is an enduring foundation on which to erect the kind of coöperative system of agricultural production called for in a country rapidly changing from a congeries of isolated, self-sufficient folk communities to a collection of specialized and interdependent economies. In short, an agricultural system, such as has been envisaged by some of the agrarian leaders, organized on the basis of coöperative village units is not something which in Mexico may be assumed as given; rather it is something to be worked toward, something to be achieved. If there be those who have any doubts on this subject, then let them reread the case materials presented in this book.[8]

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[7] If I understand him correctly this is what Tannenbaum, for example, has in mind when he states:

"The Mexican agricultural laborer instead of being an isolated individual naturally belongs to a group and can with comparative ease act through a group. The Mexican village tends for traditional reasons to act with a great deal of unanimity. It has therefore been comparatively easy to organize these villages, as it has not involved the problem of the organization of individuals but of groups." *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 414. Reprinted by permission of the Brookings Institution.

[8] In this connection the following comparative data from Soviet Russia are perhaps not without pertinence:

"The romantic revolutionaries of two generations ago, and the Social Revolutionists, who took over many of their ideas, hailed the peasant as the natural communist, who

I do not mean to imply that there is no basis at all in Mexican tradition for communal ideals and coöperative practice. It may well be that Mexico has a running start in these matters. Certainly I do not wish by attacking the easy and romantic assumption that Mexican peasants are "just naturally coöperative," to leave the impression that Mexico should hitch her destiny to the star of absolute private property and become a nation of tame bourgeoisie. My intention is merely to call attention to the fact that in Mexico, as in any other country, it is a contradiction of logic and experience to assume that a coöperative form of agricultural production requires less organization and management than a system based on caveat emptor and laissez faire. In the very nature of the case, capitalistic production with its traditional assumptions of free competition and private property, even though ownership be equitably distributed, implies the absence of just those regulations and just that unified direction—if you like, of that planned economy—which lie at the very heart of a collectivistic system.

I repeat: agrarian coöperation and effective collective effort of the type which the Mexican agrarian reform in my opinion presupposes and which the exigencies of modern economic life demand, will require long years of education, statesmanlike leadership of the highest type and the exercise of unceasing vigilance and social control. Moreover—and this is the crux of the matter—this education, leadership, and control will be just as necessary, albeit for different reasons, for those relatively few units in the proposed new system which have preserved a modicum of the primitive patriarchal communism characteristic of the discrete, self-contained villages of pre-Conquest and Colonial days as it will be for those relatively numerous communities where the institution of private property is paramount and the attitudes of individualism dominant.

The Traditional Structure of Mexican Rural Economy

A second topic around which the winds of controversy have blown without surcease is that of the role of the ejido in agricultural pro-

needed only to be freed from the oppression of the Tsar and landlord to set an example to the world in spontaneous coöperative farming. . . .

"[An] . . . exploded fallacy about the peasants is the belief that they are naturally inclined to communism. They were thoroughgoing revolutionaries so long as it was a question of sacking the large estates and dividing up the land among themselves. Once this process was completed they became, for the most part, zealous upholders of the rights of individualist private property; and after twelve years of mingled economic pressure and economic persuasion . . . less than 5 per cent of the peasants were induced to try their fortunes in collective farms." W. H. Chamberlain, *Soviet Russia*, pp. 184-85. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown and Co.

duction. My discussion of this question will be divided into two lines of inquiry: first, a brief survey of the elements and some of the characteristic features of the traditional structure of Mexico's rural economy; and, second, a review of the statistics of Mexican agricultural production with especial reference to the ejido as an agency of production.

THE HACIENDA, THE RANCHO, AND THE FREE VILLAGE

Of the three principal units in the Mexican system of agricultural economy—the hacienda, the *rancho* and the agrarian communal or semicommunal village—the hacienda in Colonial days became the dominant element and has so continued down to the present time. The hacienda typically and traditionally has been distinguished by the following characteristics:[9]

(1) Relatively large areas under the ownership and control of a single landlord. Mexican haciendas seldom contain less than 1,000 hectares; often embrace as much as 10,000 hectares; and in a very appreciable number of cases vary between 20,000 and 100,000 hectares in size. Typical, in the sense of median, are haciendas of around 3,000 hectares.

(2) Relative self-sufficiency. Ordinarily an hacienda controls many kinds of land and resources—crop land, pasture, brushland, forests, and so forth, and an effort is made to produce on the estate not only consumption goods, but capital goods as well, not only crops, but also tools, plows, building materials, and anything else needed in farming operations.

(3) A permanent resident labor force. Most haciendas have a resident population of at least several score and on many haciendas the *acasillados* vary anywhere from 200 up to 1,000.[10]

For the most part resident laborers are not paid in money, but in kind from the products of the estate. In all cases this means the cheapest type of labor supply and in many cases it has meant a system of debt bondage and virtual slavery.[11]

(4) Absentee ownership, hired management, and indirect tillage. Very few haciendas are actually cultivated by their owners. Usually

[9] Readers desiring to fill out the bare outlines of the hacienda given here will find ample material in: Molina Enríquez, *Los grandes problemas nacionales*, pp. 80-107; McBride, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-81; and Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 102-33. The present tense is used in describing the traditional system by way of emphasizing the fact of the persistence of many of its essential features.

[10] However, some haciendas—notably those raising coffee, henequen, sugar, and other tropical and semitropical products—follow the system of supplementing a relatively small resident labor force by gangs (*cuadrillas*) brought in at special seasons of the year.

[11] See above pp. 38-39.

the *hacendado* spends only a few months each year on his property and the rest of the time the estate is under the direction of a *mayordomo* or manager. Typically, also, large areas of the haciendas are rented out in small parcels on shares to croppers drawn either from the resident population or from neighboring villages. Only the best lands are cultivated by the hacienda itself and usually only in commercial crops. It is these facts which led one student to remark: "Mexico has been a land of large estates, but not a nation of large-scale agriculture."[12]

(5) Security and safety. The economic criterion of the *hacendado* in the vast majority of cases is safety first. An assured income, even though it is small and bears little relation to the capital investment represented by the hacienda, is prized above any venturing into attempts at increased production and preferred to any trafficking with profits as this term would be understood by a businessman. "In . . . [Mexico] to be an *hacendado* means that one holds title to a high position of solvency and social consideration, a position which is permanent and assured; but it does not signify that one is the owner of a productive undertaking. An hacienda . . . is not a business."[13]

(6) Backward methods of production. In a situation where, with rare exceptions, management is left to a hired administrator, where income is derived primarily from the exploitation of labor rather than land and capital, and where the prestige of ownership is valued more than a workmanlike exercise of professional agronomical talent, it is but natural that farming techniques are backward when they are not completely primitive. The hacienda is almost always superior to the *rancho* and the agrarian village in the amount of land controlled; but the *hacendado* does not always surpass the *ranchero* and the peasant in methods of production.

The second unit in the Mexican agricultural economy—the *rancho*—is usually a small property of less than 1,000 hectares and typically much nearer 300 hectares, worked by the owner himself with the assistance of his family and a few hired laborers or crop sharers.[14] The *ranchero*, it is clear, is a middle-class farmer standing between the *hacendado* and the peasant (ejidatario or small independent) farmer. "The primary aim of the *ranchero* is to produce the

[12] Martínez de Alba, "La economía agrícola nacional," *El Universal*, January 12, 1933.

[13] Molina Enríquez, *Los grandes problemas nacionales*, p. 90.

[14] It is the *rancho* which the Law of Agricultural Credit has in mind in its definition of *medianos agricultores* as those who do not possess more than 150 hectares of moist land or 300 hectares of seasonal land and who do not employ in the exploitation of their properties more than ten agricultural laborers. See footnote 24, p. 403.

necessities of life for his family, and only secondarily does he attempt to raise either stock or crops for market."[15] Although the fact that the *ranchero*, in contrast to the *hacendado*, usually lives on his property and works it himself means a more personal interest in and generally a more intensive use of the land, in all other respects the *rancho* tends to be a small replica of the hacienda.

Since the last unit in Mexico's agricultural economy, the agrarian community, has been the principal preoccupation of this book, little need be added at this point to the delineation of its characteristic features. I may merely remind the reader that the communities here in question are the so-called free villages that manage to escape the steam roller of the hacienda and retain a little land, and more recently the newly created ejido centers. Before the agrarian reform these villages played a very small role in Mexican agriculture. For the most part they were mere subsistence units in which the population of anywhere from a half dozen up to several hundred families eked out a miserable living by the practice of a primitive stick and hoe agriculture. Rarely were the *parcelas* cultivated by the individual peasants larger than 10 hectares and usually they were around 4 hectares or less. Viewed as elements in the productive system the distinguishing marks of these communities were self-sufficiency, isolation, and poverty.[16]

As has been regretted on more than one occasion in these pages, no trustworthy statistics are available on which to base a statement of the relative importance of the hacienda, the *rancho*, and the agrarian community in prerevolutionary Mexico.[17] Some light may be thrown on the question, however, by an examination of the figures of the 1923 land census. If an hacienda be defined as a property of more than 1,000 hectares, a *rancho* as between 11 and 1,000 hectares, and a peasant *parcela* as 10 hectares or less, then the the several varieties of producing units in terms of the number of properties in each class of unit were distributed in 1923 as follows:

Type of Unit	*Number of Units*	*As Per Cent of All Units*
Parcela	433,374	69.6
Rancho	176,057	28.3
Hacienda	12,782	2.1
	622,213	100.0

For a proper appreciation of these figures it should be added that

[15] McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[16] See pp. 40-41.

[17] Compare pp. 31 ff.

the 12,782 properties listed as containing more than 1,000 hectares, although constituting only 2.1 per cent of the total number of all properties, nevertheless comprised well over half the total area of the privately-owned agricultural land in Mexico. In other words, at approximately the beginning of the land reform a little more than 2 per cent of the total number of all individual property holdings embracing more than half of the total area of such holdings was in production units of the hacienda type, while approximately 98 per cent of the total number of farms comprising less than half of the total area in all farms was in *rancho* and peasant *parcela* producing units.[18]

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE TRADITIONAL RURAL ECONOMY

In addition to the disproportionate distribution of landholdings and the general lopsidedness of the productive system, there are a number of other aspects of the traditional scheme of agriculture in Mexico which must receive at least passing mention. One of the most interesting facts for the student of Mexican economics is the curious distorting and unbalancing effect on the national economy of certain industries of an essentially aleatory type. Mining, oil, and the raising of exportable tropical products are the chief cases in point.

From the earliest days of the Colonial period down to the present time there has been a marked tendency for mining and plantations dedicated to the production of exportable tropical products to absorb a very large share of the available capital resources. In more recent years oil has taken its place in this select capital-attracting company. The constant injections of capital into these industries has meant that, generally speaking, they have been the most active and remunerative of Mexican economic undertakings. They have dominated the economic life of the country and throughout most of Mexico's history they have been either directly or indirectly the chief source of government income.[19]

The net results more or less clearly attributable to the economic preëminence of what, for short, we will call the mining industries are many and diverse. To take the most far-reaching of these results first, it would appear that much of the backwardness, the general

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[18] Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, pp. 53-55.

In interpreting these figures it must be remembered that properties in the hacienda class were rarely farmed as single units; on the other hand, some of the properties in the *parcela* class may have been combined and farmed collectively.

[19] Directly through the imposition of a variety of production and export taxes; indirectly through import duties a large share of which were levied on materials and supplies used in the industries in question and much of the remainder on products paid for out of salaries, wages, and profits derived from the same industries.

neglect, and subordination of consumption agriculture (as opposed to tropical export agriculture) is to be charged up to its failure to compete successfully with the mining industries in the market for capital and business leadership.[20] The *hacendado* who could have obtained capital and who might have assumed leadership, because of his "pride and prejudice," would not do so; the *ranchero* and the peasants who would have sought assistance and would have been farmers and producers, because of their ignorance and lack of land, could not do so. Thus the *hacendado* sat, a dog in the manger, holding land which he himself would not put, nor allow anyone else to put, to productive uses. Under these circumstances it was but natural that capital and men seeking employment[21] should be attracted elsewhere. And where more naturally than to the glittering mining industries with their promises of quick riches and little work.

But how was it possible for the *hacendados* to hold land out of production, or, at the most, engage in a kind of gentlemanly, week-end farming? The answer is twofold. In the first place, since the government derived its main support from the mining industries and the related import duties, it was easy for the powerful *hacendados* to see to it that this (for them) happy state of affairs should not be altered and that no undue pressure should be brought to bear to interrupt their joy of ownership. In a word, they paid no taxes worthy of the name.[22] In the second place, to make their position as lords of the land doubly secure and to insure that they would not be forced to get out and make way for those who would till the soil,

[20] "By reason of the circumstances under which our large properties were formed . . . these properties for the most part have the character of impositions of vanity and pride . . . that is, they have been created more in the spirit of domination than with a view to cultivation. . . . That these properties are not true business undertakings is demonstrated by the fact that they do not attract foreign capital; the investments of American capital in cereal producing haciendas are practically nil." Molina Enríquez, *Los grandes problemas nacionales*, p. 85.

[21] The distorting effect of the metal mining industry on the distribution of Mexico's population may be recalled in the present connection by the following quotation:

"In the economic evolution of the nation . . . the *latifundia* system . . . and the Colonial period were fundamentally concerned with the exploitation of mineral products and considered agriculture as a simple auxiliary to mining; thus was created the problem of the location of the rural population in a few regions of the nation and the uneven distribution of people which has not permitted the establishing of a balance between agriculture and the other aspects of the economic life of the nation." Posada, "El código agrario de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos," *El Nacional*, May 23, 1934.

[22] Typical cases at the end of the Díaz regime were: the hacienda La Gavia in the state of México valued at 6 million pesos paid taxes on a valuation of 363,000 pesos; the hacienda San Nicolás Peralta in the same state valued at 2 million pesos paid taxes on 418,000 pesos; the hacienda of Arroyozarco worth 1.5 million pesos, for tax purposes was valued at 379,000 pesos. Molina Enríquez, *Los grandes problemas nacionales*, p. 95.

the *hacendados* so manipulated the import duties on basic food products as effectively to conceal the essential unproductiveness of their agronomic dalliance.[23]

The fact that the government depended upon the mining industries for its principal source of income and the fact that most of the Mexicans of wealth preferred to spend their money in the unproductive satisfaction of their desire for conspicuous land hogging, meant that eventually the mining industries fell into the hands of foreigners. Indeed, one might almost say that, in its zeal to insure and increase its major source of income, the government forced these industries into the hands of the foreigners. The nation was directly enriched by the returns from taxes and indirectly from the wages earned by Mexican workmen. But the price—whether the products were oil, minerals, or exportable tropical crops—was the effective alienation of appreciable quantities of the national wealth. For, as is usual in such cases, the "board" paid by the foreign capitalist in the country of his adoption is rarely in just proportion to the profits he sends home.

Finally, although the Mexicans have in recent years seldom been directly involved in the ownership and management of the mining industries, they have not been immune to still another influence which these industries have apparently exercised to the detriment of the country's basic subsistence agriculture. I have in mind here that attitude toward life which José Vasconcelos has termed the "bonanza sentiment":

> Our forefathers, after completing the conquest, devoted themselves to the extraction of the ore from the vein . . . under the same risky, bold circumstances with which they had carried on the conquest of the land. . . . Conquerors, discoverers, explorers of the unknown surfaces of the continent, and later miners . . . in search of Aladdin's wealth—all of them were adventurous heroes with uncertain tasks to fulfil. . . . People that get into the habit of adventure necessarily develop traits of imagination and occasional daring followed by long periods of relaxation. . . . Our psychology as a rule is the psychology of the gambler; we gamble with our wealth and with our chances in life; in fact, we even gamble with our lives.[24]

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[23] "[In Mexico] the high protective tariff impeded that the country in general should reap the benefits of competition. . . . We entered the lists of the world's commerce with every disadvantage and no advantages. Due to the customs duties on corn the land's rent in the Bajio region went up eighty pesos per hectare . . . in other words, maize was artificially endeared for the benefit of the landlords." González Roa, *The Mexican People and Their Detractors*, p. 40.

[24] "Similarity and Contrast," in *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*, p. 27. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

For Vasconcelos the bonanza psychology is illustrated in the phrase to which Mexicans are wont to resort when they are faced by unknown and possibly unexpected developments: *A ver que sale.* Literally these words mean: "Let us see what comes of it." But over and above their literal meaning they are charged with the significance: "Man is weak; let us submit our cause to fate—we may win! And if we lose—well, fate, not man is responsible."

It may be that a more careful analysis would discover additional origins for the pervasive spirit of the lottery in Mexico, but, whatever may be its genesis, there can be no doubt of its existence as an integral part of the Mexican character. Now, the pertinence of all this in the present connection is: the spirit of adventure, the "occasional daring" of the gambler and the get-rick-quick, devil-take-the-hindmost attitudes traditionally associated with the miner[12] are poor equipment for a farmer. Indeed, the irregular and random efforts, the sudden rewards, often having no relation to technical ability, of the prospector, whether the prize sought be the ancient treasure of gold and silver or the more modern "black gold" of the oil field or the "green gold" of the tropical plantation, are exactly opposite to the forethought, the sober, steady plodding, the long range calculations necessary to the success of the ordinary farmer. "The rewards of agriculture are limited by known qualities of soil and seed and stock; cows do not calve more quickly one year than another, nor do they have fifteen calves instead of one. . . ."[26] Anyone who does not recognize these facts, anyone who is unable or unwilling to work within the limitations set by nature, either is a very poor farmer or no farmer at all. Mexican agriculturalists—notably the *hacendados*, but also to an appreciable extent the *rancheros* and the peasants—partly by reason of the bonanza sentiment, have followed both courses. On the one hand, they have refused to become farmers at all, or, what practically amounts to the same thing, have been only part-time farmers tilling the soil in a halfhearted routine fashion—the *hacendado* in the interest of maintaining his gentlemanly status as a lord of the land; the *ranchero* and the peasant in order to keep body and soul together. On the other hand, being farmers by force of habit or circumstance, they have applied to agriculture the

[25] The fact that mining as carried on at the present time has largely been reduced to a prosaic business undertaking subject to the impersonal "laws" of economics and the discipline of technological processes, has by no means robbed this industry of its traditional associations in the minds of the public at large. Similarly there is an aura of sudden wealth for which one neither toils nor spins surrounding the oil industry and what are usually referred to as the "untapped riches of the tropics."

[26] Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* pp. 66-67.

methods of the miner rather than those of the husband of the soil; they have robbed, stripped, and abandoned the land instead of protecting and guarding it as an enduring agency of reproduction.

THE FAILURE OF THE TRADITIONAL RURAL ECONOMY

The scheme of agricultural organization I have set forth here as the traditional Mexican one has had its defenders just as the plantation system of slave-holding days in the United States has had its apologists. But not even the hardiest of the die-hards has ever been successful in making out a case for the prerevolutionary Mexican rural economy on the grounds of its efficiency in agricultural production. The old system was an excellent hot-house for turning out that precious product, the Mexican *caballero*; it was fertile ground for raising cultured *charros* and urban as well as urbane lords of the land; it was not to be surpassed as a source of an unending supply of poverty-stricken peons; but when it came to producing such prosaic things as self-respecting farmers devoted to their craft and dedicated to the tilling of the soil the system left something to be desired. The old set-up was a reasonably satisfactory arrangement for producing such primarily exportable plantation products as sugar, henequen and other hard fibers, coffee and garbanzos with which some of the *hacendado's* pocketbooks were swelled year after year.[27] But of those basic products with which the people were clothed and fed there was a constant and increasing deficiency. With three-fourths of the population nominally engaged in agriculture in the hey-day of the Díaz regime (1901-1907) Mexico was importing on the average each year 1.7 million pesos worth of corn, wheat and flour, just under 3 million pesos worth of lard and lard compound, meats, eggs and dairy products, and a little over 1.8 million pesos worth of cotton.[28] To be sure, the quantities of basic agricultural products imported were in practically all cases only a small fraction of the quantities of the same products produced within the borders of the country. But this fact is somewhat beside the main point: the old system did not produce enough to feed and clothe the population even on the level of bare subsistence on which the vast majority of the people lived. Import statistics are only one evidence of a fact attested by misery and proved by poverty.

In sum, the fundamental failure of the traditional Mexican agricultural economy was not only that it was politically unjust and

[27] Of the products just mentioned around 45 million pesos a year were exported during the seven-year period 1901-1907. See Appendix A, Tables 66 and 68.

[28] Appendix A, Tables 64, 65, and 68.

socially unfair, but also that it was technologically inadequate and agronomically inefficient. Prerevolutionary Mexico was, agriculturally speaking, in that static, nonmechanical, nonpecuniary, essentially sedentary state which Zimmermann has described as a "vegetable civilization."[29] Mexico was still, despite the long ages it had been settled, a pioneer country in the sense of a country characterized by a "low degree of control . . . over the instruments of power."[30] "We are," exclaimed the Mexican labor leader, Lombardo Toledano, in 1925, "slaves to the foreign market; we are slaves in order to obtain indispensable food to eat, indispensable clothing to wear, and indispensable means of transportation. In a word, in order to maintain our vegetable life we are absolutely dependent on the international balance [of trade] and our exiguous production barely suffices to support us in poverty. . . ."[31]

Production and the Performance of the Ejido

"All right, suppose all you say about the organization of Mexican agriculture is true. Suppose, for the sake of the argument, that the old system was a failure. Does it follow that a reform and reconstruction of Mexican agriculture along the lines you propose will insure any better results? More specifically, what makes you think that this ejido upon which you are apparently disposed to pin your faith will actually produce? On the contrary, isn't it true that under the agrarian reform production has greatly decreased and that the very shortcomings about which you complain with reference to the traditional system are, after almost twenty years of your ejido program, just as glaringly apparent as ever?"

Such questions as these, in one form or another, the enemies of the ejido in Mexico have lost no opportunity to raise and answer to their own satisfaction on the average of about once a month during all the years since it first became apparent that the agrarian decree promulgated in 1915 by the hard-pressed and befuddled Carranza might become something more than a pious promise. The friends of the ejido, on the other hand, have not been slow to refute the position taken by those who view the ejido "as the only reason . . . for the lack of production" and "the only cause for the disaster that has fallen upon Mexican agriculture."[32] The result has been as nice a little pen and paper war as one might find on a long summer's day of searching in a country where wars— pen and paper

[29] *World Resources and Industries*, pp. 144-46.

[30] Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[31] *Recopilación de las principales leyes. . . .*, p. 469.

[32] "Nuestra riqueza," *El Excelsior*, May 18, 1928.

and otherwise—are as common as generals in cabarets or as burros on a country road.

Because of the lack of adequate statistics, the controversy over agricultural production under the agrarian reform has produced more heat than light. However, although still far from knowing all we should like to know, during the last few years data have been accumulating which for the first time make it possible to give at least the appearance of tackling the problem on other than purely a priori grounds. Of the several obviously indicated types of statistical enquiry which theoretically should throw some light on the mooted point of production, two will be selected here: (1) a comparison of production under the agrarian reform with production in some previous period of Mexican history; and (2) a study of the trend of production covered by the period of the reform. A careful weighing of the value of the data available would seem to indicate that the best periods for analysis and comparison are those from 1901 to 1907 and from 1927 to 1933.[33]

PRE- AND POST-REVOLUTIONARY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

On the basis of production and foreign trade statistics, the following statements can be made with reference to Mexican agriculture

[33] The seven-year period from 1927 to 1933 is chosen because: (1) the previous statistics of production in the postrevolutionary period are erratic and undependable (it was only with the establishing of the present *Dirección de Economía Rural* in 1925 that some sort of order was introduced into the gathering and reporting of agricultural data); (2) the amount of land distributed in ejidos (and hence the part played by the ejido in production) did not attain significant proportions until the latter part of Calles' term of office; (3) before 1927 agriculture was still suffering from the effects of the armed strife and disorder of the years from 1910 to 1921 and of the several minor outbreaks thereafter; (4) the period in question is the most recent for which definitive statistics are available.

For the prerevolutionary era, the best seven-year period for comparison with recent developments is that from 1901 to 1907 because: (1) 1907 was the last year of the regular publication of the long series of *Anuarios* prepared under the direction of the famous statistician, Antonio Peñafiel (after 1907, although Peñafiel continued in office, publication was sporadic and statistics of all sorts were little short of chaotic); and (2) during the years immediately following 1907, it is quite possible that the strained situation which finally resulted in the debacle of 1910 was already beginning to affect agricultural production thus making these years "abnormal" years in somewhat the same sense as those immediately succeeding the revolution.

Export and import statistics, generally speaking, are much more accurate and dependable than production statistics. Wherever appropriate, they are used to throw additional light on the two periods.

For a history and critique of Mexican agricultural statistics supporting the foregoing arguments, see Fernández y Fernández, *Historia de la estadística agrícola en México.*

in the agrarian reform years of 1927-1933 as compared and contrasted with the prerevolutionary period of 1901-1907.

(1) The official figures for the volume of production[34] of two of the fundamental food crops, corn and frijoles, show a definite

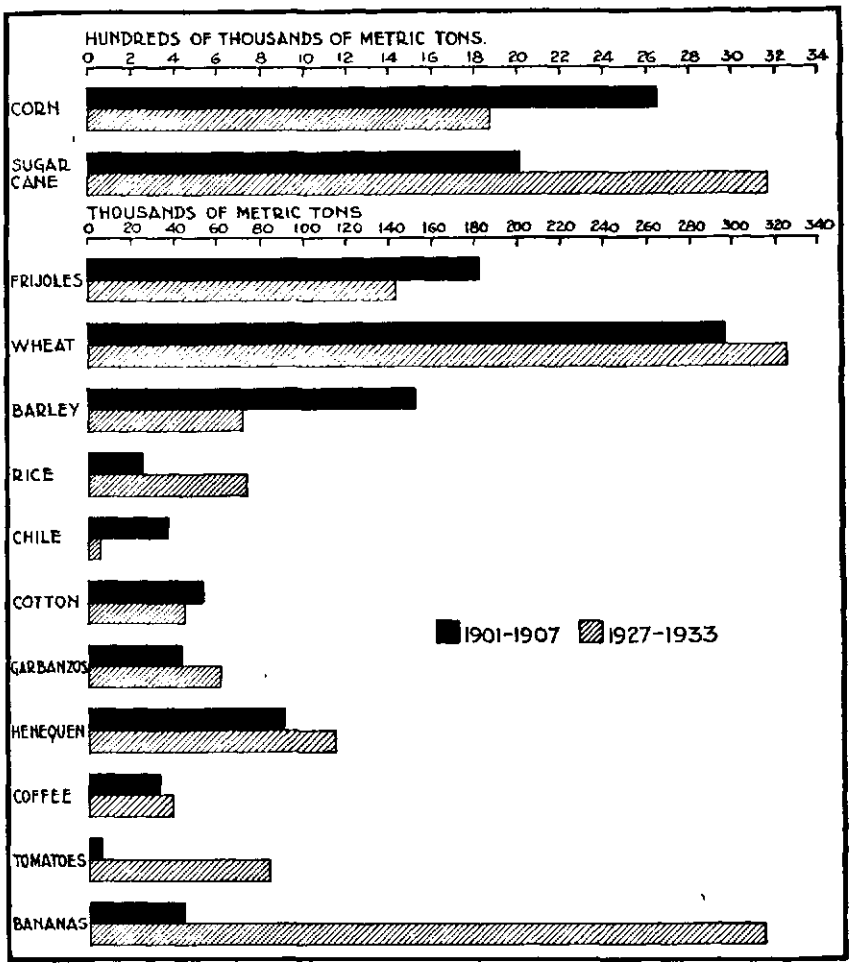

FIG. 37.—Average annual volume of production of sundry crops, 1901-1907 and 1927-1933. (See Appendix A, Tables 57 and 58.)

decrease in the later as compared with the earlier period. Specifically, the average yearly production of corn for the seven-year period 1927-

[34] No data are available for areas under cultivation for the period 1901-1907 and hence no comparison of the two periods can be made in this respect.

1933 was 29.4 per cent lower and frijoles 21.9 per cent lower than the average yearly production for the period 1901-1907. (Fig. 37.)

The average yearly production of a third basic food crop, wheat, on the other hand, increased 10.4 per cent in the period 1927-1933 over the period 1901-1907.

For two of three other food crops of considerable importance, barley, dried chile and rice, the average annual production was lower in 1927-1933 as compared with 1901-1907 by 53.2 and 83.6 per cent respectively; the production of rice, on the other hand, increased by 193.4 per cent.[35]

The primarily commercial and export crops, with the exception of cotton which declined 16.3 per cent, all show considerable increases in the average yearly volumes of production in the second period as compared with the years 1901-1907, to wit: garbanzos 45.9 per cent; henequen 26.5 per cent; coffee 19.4 per cent; tomatoes 1,386.4 per cent; bananas 614.2 per cent; and sugar cane 57.0 per cent.

(2) Imports of corn during the postrevolutionary period were on the average 16.3 per cent less than imports in the prerevolutionary period. (Fig. 38.) However, as will be shown shortly, import figures on corn are not as revealing as they might be because of the effects of the manipulation of import duties for speculative purposes.[36] Although the amount of corn imported in Mexico is usually only a small fraction of the amount produced in the country, it is perhaps not without significance that this fraction increased from 0.9 per cent for the period 1901-1907 to 1.1 per cent from 1927-1933.

It is important to note with reference to the increase of 10.4 per cent in the average annual production of wheat in the period 1927-1933 as compared with 1901-1907 that there was also an increase in the average annual imports of wheat in 1927-1933 of 86.6 per cent and of flour, 4.6 per cent as compared with 1901-1907.

Imports of wheat, unlike those for corn, made up an appreciable percentage of the total apparent consumption in both periods, but more notably in the second period—that is, the average annual imports of wheat for the period 1901-1907 were 7.3 per cent of the average annual production, while in 1927-1933 they were 12.4 per cent.

The figures on the increased production and import of wheat and flour are of significance as possibly indicating a tendency toward a

[35] But see footnote 3 of Table 57.

[36] Also in evaluating corn import statistics, it should be held in mind that an appreciable portion of the imports are due to cheaper transportation rates in international (e.g., the United States to Yucatán) than in intranational trade.

shift in food habits and tastes. The apparent average per capita consumption of wheat, however, is still far below that of corn.

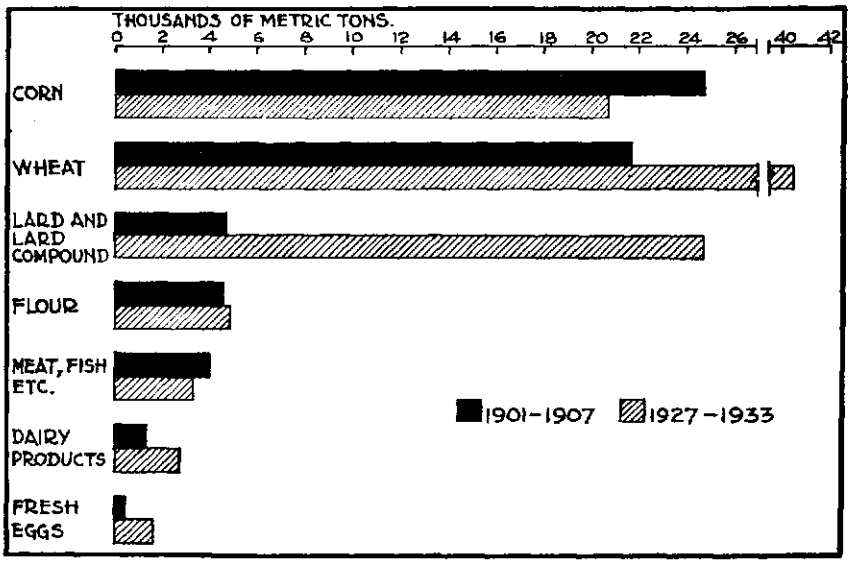

FIG. 38.—Average annual imports of corn, wheat, and flour and of principal animal foodstuffs, 1901-1907 and 1927-1933. (See Appendix A, Tables 64 and 65.)

(3) Although no accurate figures bearing directly on the subject are available with which to compare the volume of animal and dairy products in the two periods under discussion here, import and export statistics indicate that the yield of animal and dairy products in the period 1927-1933 was less than in the period 1901-1907. The average annual imports of lard and lard compound showed an increase of 429.3 per cent in the postrevolutionary period over the prerevolutionary period; fresh eggs 277.6 per cent; and miscellaneous dairy products 98.5 per cent. At the same time the exports (Fig. 39) of cattle hides and goat, deer and kid skins decreased in the later period as compared with the earlier by 70.1 and 36.7 per cent respectively.[37]

(4) Just as foreign trade statistics tend to bear out the general

[37] In the absence of production figures, it may be argued that the increased imports of animal and dairy products mean that the people are simply eating more of these products—i.e., that the domestic yield of these items has been at least as great in the period 1927-1933 as in 1901-1907, and consumption has increased. This argument can be supported by the figures on livestock population. Thus the census of 1930 reveals a marked increase in cattle, sheep, goats, and hogs over the census of 1902. However, it is known that the census of 1902 was incomplete. See Appendix A, Table 70.

impression based on volume of production figures that the yield of fundamental food products in the period 1927-1933 was, on the

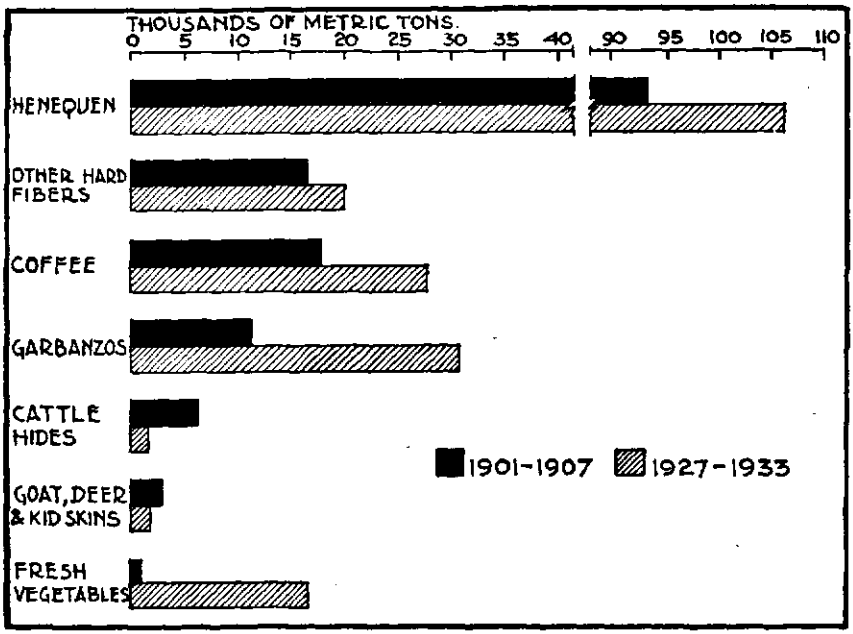

FIG. 39.—Average annual exports of sundry agricultural products and of uncured hides and skins, 1901-1907 and 1927-1933. (See Appendix A, Tables 66 and 67. Note that tomatoes are not included in "Fresh Vegetables.")

whole, *less* than in the period 1901-1907, so also do foreign trade statistics support the conclusion that the production of certain commercial and important export items was uniformly *greater* in the later as compared with the earlier period. Thus, for example, the average annual exports of henequen increased 13.7 per cent in the period 1927-1933 over the period 1901-1907; other hard fibers (*raíz de zacatón*, and so forth) 20.6 per cent; coffee 54.5 per cent; garbanzos 167.8 per cent.[38] Although comparable figures for the earlier period cannot be obtained for bananas and tomatoes, there is every reason to believe that the export of these items increased by a much greater percentage than the products just named. For rice and cotton, also, there was a notable increase in exports and in the

[38] Henequen (sisal) is for the most part exported to the United States where it is used for binder twine; coffee is sold to many countries, Germany being one of the largest buyers; garbanzos (chick peas) are mostly shipped to Spain and the Antilles (via the United States).

case of cotton (despite the decrease in production) Mexico became a net exporter to a very considerable amount of a product for which she used to be a net importer.[39]

The fact that for several years during the period 1927-1933 Mexico was a net importer of sugar, whereas in the period 1901-1907 the country was practically always a net exporter of this item often to the value of several million pesos, suggests that either the production figures are not entirely dependable or that there has been a tremendous increase in sugar consumption.[40]

(5) The general conclusion which may be drawn from a comparison of Mexican agricultural output in the two periods selected for analysis is that production of basic food products—notably corn, frijoles, and animal food products—in the postrevolutionary and agrarian reform years of 1927-1933 has been to a significant extent lower than in the prerevolutionary years of 1901-1907. Also the output of food products of secondary importance such as dried chile and barley has been less in recent years than before the revolution.

On the other hand, for certain other products, primarily for export—notably garbanzos, henequen and other hard fibers, coffee, tomatoes and other fresh vegetables, bananas and sugar—there has been a marked increase in the amount produced in the later as compared with the earlier period.

TREND OF PRODUCTION 1927-1933

If now we turn to the second test of Mexican agriculture under the agrarian reform and analyze the statistics of production and foreign trade with sole reference to the course of events during the period 1927-1933, the following trends appear:

(1) The curve of the amount of land reported under cultivation for the basic food crops of corn, wheat, and frijoles has, during the seven-year period 1927-1933, exhibited: for corn a more or less even level; for wheat some irregularity with definite losses during the last two years; and for frijoles a definite trend downward.

The curve of the area under production for three typical subsidiary food crops, barley, rice, and dried chile, was generally downward with chile and barley exhibiting some tendency to recover during the last two years.

[39] Appendix A, Table 68.

[40] Of even greater importance in explaining the sudden variations in sugar exports in recent years is the fact that certain powerful politicians have obtained complete control of the production of sugar and have been rigging the market in an attempt to obtain higher prices. In 1933 large quantities of sugar held over from previous years were dumped on the foreign market at prices less than the cost of production.

For four other important crops, cotton, garbanzos, henequen, and tomatoes: great irregularities were exhibited in the curve for cotton and garbanzos; tomatoes showed a marked tendency to decrease the area under cultivation during the last part of the period; henequen exhibited a definite trend downward up to 1932 and recovered somewhat thereafter.[41]

(2) Volume of production curves for corn and frijoles show a marked sag in the dry years of 1929 and 1930. Wheat throughout most of the period holds its own except for a sharp rise in 1931. All three crops at the close of the period are at approximately the same level as at the opening.[42]

The curve of the volume of production of three typical subsidiary food products, barley, rice, and dried chile, was pretty definitely descending the whole period with a clear tendency toward recovery at the end of the period for chile.

In the field of crops prominent in export trade: for cotton the upward trend of production in some years more than offset the tendency downward in other years and the period closed with production more than 45 points above the base year; the output of garbanzos, except for the year 1931, was throughout the period anywhere from 15 to almost 50 points lower than 1927; henequen and tomatoes after opening strong, on the whole, exhibited a tendency to descend; bananas were well above the base year throughout the period.[43]

(3) Imports and exports[44] of agricultural products during the period under consideration were apparently much more definitely functions of changes in domestic and foreign tariffs, the unsettled conditions on the world market, and fluctuations in monetary values than they were reflections of the operation of the laws of supply and demand.

In the case of corn, as we have seen, production definitely dropped in the bad years 1929 and 1930. This would explain the rise of the index figure of imports to a high for the period of 279 in 1930. The practical disappearance of corn imports thereafter (although production little more than recovered its 1927 level) can only be explained by the fact that in 1931 the import duty was raised from

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[41] Appendix A, Tables 60 and 61.

[42] Tremendous variations from year to year in the volume of production of the basic food crops in Mexico are not at all uncommon. The production of corn, for example in a "bad" year has been known to drop to considerably less than half of the previous year's yield.

[43] Appendix A, Tables 58 and 59.

[44] *Ibid.*, Tables 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, and 69.

1 to 5 centavos per gross kilo plus an added tax on container sacks varying with the quality of the sacks. Similarly, the irregularities in wheat imports, although answering in part to fluctuations in production, are mainly to be accounted for in terms of tariff manipulations. This is especially true in explaining the drop of the index number from 254.9 in the year 1929 to 4.4 in 1933.[45] Essentially the same story is true for flour—a change in import duties from 13 to 28 centavos in 1931 and thereafter the virtual disappearance of flour from the list of imports.

Imports of lard and lard compound for three of the seven years included in the period 1927-1933 were greater than in the base year 1927; after 1930 the curve swings definitely downward. The index numbers for fresh eggs, meat, fish, conserved animal foods and miscellaneous dairy products all followed an almost uninterrupted descending trend throughout the whole period. This may have been due in part to improvements in domestic production,[46] but undoubtedly of much greater importance, especially during the latter part of the period, were new and higher import duties[47] and the declining value of the peso in international trade.[48]

The advantages Mexican agricultural products have enjoyed in recent years by reason of the devaluation of the peso have been offset in many cases by foreign tariff walls and the general disorganization of markets accompanying the world-wide depression. Exports of coffee and bananas (except for the year 1932), and "other fresh vegetables" (except for 1933) were uniformly high and superior to the base year 1927. Tomatoes, on the other hand, in addition to having to contend with higher tariffs in the principal export market (the United States) suffered on several occasions from unseasonable weather. Henequen exports, except for a brief flurry in 1932, were not able in the period under discussion to overcome low prices, the competition of other production centers,

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[45] Import duties on wheat in the period 1927-1933 were subject to the following changes: up to December 31, 1929 the duty was 3 centavos a gross kilo; from January 1, 1930 to July 20, 1930 it was 5 centavos; from July 21, 1930 to May 1, 1931, 7 centavos; and, finally, beginning May 2, 1931 the duty was raised to 10 centavos per gross kilo plus an additional tax on the container sacks.

[46] See the comparison between the 1926 livestock census and that for 1930 given in Appendix A, Table 70.

[47] Import duties on eggs, for example, were raised 800 per cent between 1927 and 1930! Needless to say, after 1930 eggs were no longer imported.

[48] The value of the silver peso in terms of dollars at par is $0.4985. In 1927 the peso was quoted at around $0.4939. A sharp drop to an average yearly quotation of $0.3549 took place in 1931. For the last several years the silver peso has been quoted at around $0.28.

and the maleficent effects of the increasing use of the combine thresher. Exports of cattle hides and goat, deer and kid skins were, for the most part, also depressed. Garbanzos, on the average little more than held their own.

(4) The general conclusion to be drawn from an analysis of the course of events in Mexican agricultural production during the post-revolutionary period 1927-1933 is, in sum: for the basic food crops, corn, frijoles and wheat, there was no marked improvement—on the contrary, during two years of the period corn and frijoles suffered severe losses; typical food products of secondary importance—barley, rice and dried chile—were below par during most of the period, chile alone, revealing a tendency to recover during the latter part of the period; of the crops prominent in export trade, only bananas revealed a uniformly healthy trend, although cotton, coffee, and tomatoes struggled to hold their own with varying degrees of success—sometimes surpassing and sometimes falling below the production of the base year 1927; finally, although the evidence is not entirely clear, it seems there was some tendency toward an increasing output of animal and dairy products.

SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF PRODUCTION STATISTICS

The answer to the question—Has agricultural production in Mexico under the agrarian reform decreased or increased?—is clearly not so simple as some of the parties to the controversy would have us believe. The output of some products under the reform measured against a typical prereform period, has greatly increased; for other products, yields have to a very appreciable degree decreased. Within the period since the land distribution program has begun to take on sizeable proportions the trend of production of some items has been clearly upward and for other products just as clearly downward. Indeed, the fact that all the figures refuse to take their stand like well-disciplined soldiers on either side of the fence is one of the very good reasons why the controversy still waxes hot and furious.

However, we need not leave the matter with this vague and equivocal statement. After all, the statistics do show at least two rather definite and significant facts. First, those products—corn and frijoles—showing the most notable decline in volume of yield during the reform years as compared with the prereform period are the two most important food crops of the country. The average annual production of corn in the period 1927-1933 was 29.4 per cent less and frijoles 21.9 less than in the period 1901-1907 and there are no signs in recent years that these two crops are making

any notable progress in recovering lost ground.[49] In the second place, those products—tomatoes, bananas, coffee, sugar cane, henequen, and so forth—showing clear increases in the volume of production under the reform and in recent years exhibiting the strongest tendencies to maintain or improve their levels of production are primarily relatively large scale plantation crops, crops of specialized areas and commercialized export crops. These are the facts. How shall they be interpreted?

Leaving aside all attempts to dispose of the facts by arguing that the official statistics, either in prerevolutionary or postrevolutionary times, or both, are unreliable, and neglecting for the moment whatever pertinence there may be in the observation that the period 1927-1933 probably had more than its share of "bad" years[50] and that it in large part coincided with a world depression of unprecedented depth and severity, I think there is a simple but sufficient explanation for the facts we have unearthed about Mexican agricultural production: the reasons why postrevolutionary Mexico has failed to produce basic food crops and succeeded in producing hacienda export crops are in the main the same reasons which explain why prerevolutionary Mexico failed to produce basic food crops and succeeded in producing hacienda export crops. The only difference is that under the reform the undesirable features of the Mexican system of agricultural production have been aggravated and accentuated. In a word, the agrarian reform has failed to reform. The ejido as a vital element in production is yet to be created and the hacienda is yet to be destroyed. Just enough ejidos have been formed to scare the *hacendado* and either to drive him out of business altogether or to confirm him in his traditional disposition to seek such security as he may in commercial and export crops; but not enough ejidos have been set up as going concerns, as efficient units of production (as opposed to mere subsistence units), to take over the surplus production functions of the haciendas. The result is that, generally speaking, the ejido, as now constituted, *cannot* produce the basic food crops; and the haciendas *will not* produce them. Unable to make up her mind about what kind of a production system she wants, Mexico, like that well-known beast of burden famous in the annals of irresolution, is running the risk of starving to death standing midway between two haystacks.

[49] These figures take on added significance when it is recalled that the population of Mexico between 1900 and 1930 increased from 13.6 to 16.6 million.

[50] Out of the seven years only one (1933) has been classified as "good"; two (1929 and 1930) were "bad"; and the rest were "average."

From one point of view, then, it would appear that the reactionaries and conservatives are entirely correct in holding that Mexican agriculture regarded as a procedure for producing fundamental crops necessary to feed, clothe, and shelter the people is in a worse case than it was in the "dear dead days of Díaz" and that the agrarian reform is responsible for this situation. This argument is correct, I repeat, but not in the sense that the defenders of the status quo ante intend it. As I see it, the reform must bear a large part of the onus for the present agronomic inadequacy and inefficiency of Mexican agricultural production only in the sense that it has fallen short of its logical goal. Or, put in another way, the agrarian reform is at fault, paradoxically enough: (a) because it has gone too far; and (b) because it has not gone far enough. What the lords of the land, and their sympathizers and henchmen, usually mean, however, when they claim that the agrarian reform is the source of all evil in Mexico, is (to select a few phrases at random) that the ejidatarios are "indolent and ignorant," that the ejido lands are "badly cultivated or entirely abandoned," and that in general the "ejido represents a regression to barbarism."

Now, given the data presented in this book about the amounts and classes of land granted to ejido communities, the feeble attempts that have been made to supply the ejidatarios with agricultural credit, and the ineffectiveness of the government efforts to organize the ejidos (to say nothing of the fact that the ejidatarios have been recruited from a class abandoned to poverty and virtual slavery for generations on end) it would be entirely reasonable to expect that the charges brought against the ejido by the reactionaries were true. But, alas for those who would beat the under dog with a two-edged sword! Sometimes they cut their own fingers. And this appears to be one of those times; for such statistics as are available indicate that, although lands have been abandoned and crops have been badly cultivated, it is the private landowners who have been most at fault and not the ejidatarios.

Consider the following facts revealed in the 1930 agricultural census: (1) Of the approximately 1.9 million hectares of crop land in the definitive or provisional possession of 4,189 ejido communities in the agricultural year May, 1929-May, 1930, a little over 1.1 million hectares or 57.4 per cent were placed under cultivation. In the same year, of the 12.6 million hectares of privately-owned crop land only slightly more than 6 million hectares, or 48.3 per cent were under cultivation. Score one for the ejidos: a relatively more complete utilization of their crop land resources of 9.1 per

cent.[51] (2) Of the 1.9 million hectares of ejido crop lands 0.8 million hectares, or 41.9 per cent of the total were harvested. Of the 12.6 million hectares of crop land belonging to private individuals slightly less than 5 million hectares, or 39.7 per cent, were harvested. Score two for the ejidos : a relatively more successful use of their crop land resources of 2.2 per cent.[52] (3) For the basic food crop of the country, corn, ejidos averaged yields of 586 kilos per hectare as compared with 511 kilos per hectare on privately-owned properties. Score three for ejidos : a 14.7 per cent higher yield of the crop which occupied 73 per cent of the total area harvested in ejidos and 64.4 per cent of the total area harvested in privately-owned farms.[53] (4) Over against these favorable showings of the ejido, on the basis of the figures available at the present writing only two unfavorable facts can be registered : (a) the proportions of land harvested as compared with land cultivated in 1929-1930 in privately-owned farms was 82.3 per cent, in ejidos 73.1 per cent ;[54] and (b) the average yield of frijoles per hectare on ejidos was 343 kilos per hectare as compared with 367 kilos per hectare on privately-owned farms.[55]

The figures just cited, covering as they do only a single year and that not a very recent one, are admittedly no foundation on which to base any very elaborate argument concerning the superiority of the ejido (in its present reincarnation) over privately-owned farms as instruments of production. They should serve, however, until better data are forthcoming, at least to give pause to those who would jump willy-nilly to the conclusion that the ejido is the only nigger in Mexico's agricultural woodpile. The ejido as it stands is, with rare exceptions, a poor thing at best ; but even in its present inadequate form it is not quite as poor as some of its enemies would have us believe.

[51] Appendix A, Table 78.
[52] *Ibid.*, Table 79.
[53] *Ibid.*, Table 83.
[54] *Ibid.*, Table 80.
[55] Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

CHAPTER XXVII

SPECIFICATIONS FOR EJIDOS

HAVING PAID my respects to a few of the controversies—sociological legal, and economic—which, in my opinion, have operated to obscure the real issues involved and to hide the ejido in verbiage often more luxuriant than learned, I am now free to return to the major thesis of my argument: the ejido is the way out for Mexico; it is the solution of problems of property and production; it is the key to problems of industrialism.

But what kind of an ejido? The primitive, patriarchal ejido of pre-Conquest and early Colonial days? The misconceived and ill-begotten stop-gap of an ejido envisioned by the *veteranos?* The present ejido as it actually exists, that mockery of social aspirations, that halfhearted fulfillment of revolutionary promises?

A plague on all three of their houses and let him who will, contend with the devil for the hindmost! If we must have ejidos in Mexico—and have them we must unless the revolution fail—then let us add courage to our convictions and create ejidos worthy of the high purposes to which they are to be dedicated. Let us have done with fence-straddling, shilly-shallying, boggling and all things irresolute. Indeed, let us have done with rhetoric such as this and in good gringo style get down to the business of drawing up a plan for bigger and better ejidos.

Not that I propose to rewrite the Agrarian Code or to make a new Six-Year Plan, or anything of the sort. So detailed a bill of particulars for the future of the ejido and of Mexico would exceed both the space and the wisdom at my command. But, borrowing a few planks here and there from the *agraristas* and gathering together some of the materials left lying around loose in the several chapters of this book, we may at least have a try at laying the foundations for that new and shining structure of Mexican rural life so often dreamed.

1. *The goal of the agrarian reform in Mexico must be nothing less than the complete socialization of the nation's lands and waters.*

By the word socialization I mean the abandonment of any notion that rights in real property are inherent, unlimited, and contingent only upon the individual owner's ability to establish and maintain possession thereof, and the substitution for this natural rights theory of the functional doctrine that the right to property shall be a right

to effective use and that this right shall endure only so long as the individual uses to which properties are put are not in conflict with the collective interests of society.

In other words, the socialization of agricultural real property in Mexico implies the undeviating development and application of those precepts I believe to be basic to the ejido. The conception of the ejido is still in need of considerable clarification. In the evolution of the agrarian reform at various times all sorts of theories and notions have been added to and subtracted from the apperceptive mass covered by the term ejido. Notably the Law of Ejido Patrimony introduced a number of extraneous elements. Nevertheless, through all the changes which have taken place certain fundamental ideas about the ejido have tended to persist. If the ejido stands for anything at all it means: the doctrine of collective tenure, the theory of the right to usufruct based on effective use rather than mere possession, and the exploitation of the land for the good of the social entity rather than for individual profit.

I do not hold that any magic virtue resides in any particular form of property tenure in and of itself. It is conceivable that after a fashion the demands of social welfare could be met and agricultural production could be stimulated by some such modification of the traditional forms of private property as has been proposed, for example, by the *veteranos*. But even assuming this were true, why accept half a loaf when determination, courage, and foresight will buy a whole loaf? Why should Mexico take the hazardous and wasteful course of going all around the barn to get in the door? What good end is to be served by running the risk of repeating the weary cycle of peasants into small property owners and small property owners gobbled up by the rich and the powerful? Why should Mexico deliberately create new problems for herself by turning those peasants who still preserve some of the ancient communal spirit into individualistically minded owners of small private properties and then attempting, as inevitably must be done, to turn them back again into socially and collectivistically minded participators in a coöperative system of planned national economy? Why confirm those peasants who are already imbued with the ideals of capitalistic production in agriculture in the error of their ways, and thus strengthen the *egoismo* which already presents so formidable an obstacle to all attempts to implant in rural Mexico the spirit of self-discipline and the practice of teamwork? In a word, why should Mexico not build her new system of property and production directly on and with the ejido?

The ejido may not be the only way to put the doctrine of social-

ization in Mexico's rural economy into effect, but the ejido is certainly one way, one not without considerable historical precedent and, in any case, the way which, albeit haltingly and timidly, the revolution has chosen. My only contention is that Mexico, having put her hand to the plow, should not turn back from the furrow. Would Mexico solve the problem of an equitable distribution of her agricultural resources? Would Mexico create a truly socialized agricultural economy? I submit that she need look no further. In the ejido she already holds in her hand the solution of both of these problems. What is lacking is the vision, the courage and the singleness of purpose to hew to the line and let the chips fall where they may.

In my opinion, any and all attempts to curtail the ejido program or to distort the collectivistic conception of the ejido cannot be regarded otherwise than as efforts to weaken and eventually and inevitably to destroy the only truly revolutionary thing the Mexican agrarian movement has produced. For it should be obvious that there is nothing revolutionary about an undertaking merely to redistribute landholdings. The transformation of many or, for that matter, of all of the "have-nots" into "haves" is undoubtedly uncomfortable for the old lords of the land who are thus relieved of part of their holdings, but as long as the system is maintained intact, as long as the fundamental postulates are not materially altered, there is no revolution. The admission of beggars to Dives' table is pleasant for the beggars, but it does not affect those factors and forces which produced both Dives and his table. And this would still be true even if the beggars should so far forget themselves as to grab all the food and the table to boot.

As I understand it, a social revolution takes place only when adjustment, reorganization, accommodation and other essentially meliorative types of social interaction give away to a movement which destroys the old and creates the new. It is in this sense that the socialized and collectivistic ejido represents a truly revolutionary product, for it involves practices and is postulated on concepts completely alien to the old order based on private property, individual profits and pecuniary standards of value. The ejido must be conceived as an end in itself, as *the* end of the agrarian revolution. The Revolution will have fulfilled itself if and when Mexico has been transformed from a land of privately-owned, individualistic haciendas and *ranchos* into a land of socialized ejidos, and not before.

2. *Eventually all agricultural real property in Mexico, except such areas as the federal government may for the good of the whole country see fit to hold*

in trust as national forests, parks and agricultural reserves, must be held collectively and be exploited coöperatively by agrarian communities.

The frank recognition of this principle automatically solves many of the problems which have, so to speak, been sticking in the craw of the agrarian reform for these many years. In the first place, it quite obviously means that the whole conception of the ejido as a subsistence unit, as a temporary transition stage and as a "nursery for the small proprietors of the future" must go by the boards. The only transition involved is a transition from the present inadequate and inefficient ejidos to ejidos that will be in every case real instruments of coöperative production and agencies of the good life. From this point of view, to repeat a previous phrasing of the matter, the ejido is not something from which the Mexican peon is to graduate, but it is, rather, a way of life which the ejidatarios actual and potential (including many of the present owners of private property) must graduate into.

It follows, in the second place, that all questions of whether or not the *acasillados*, communities of less than twenty heads of agrarian families, and communities with this or that particular political category should be given land are meaningless. Likewise all of the elaborate paraphernalia and legalistic mumbo-jumbo by which the ejido laws have tried to define what areas and kinds of private farms shall be unaffectable are completely beside the point. The only question of any importance is how rapidly and under what conditions existing private properties are to be transferred to and transformed into ejidos.

Again, it is obvious that all other schemes for agrarian reform in Mexico—the creation of new owners of private property by the forced division and sale of landed estates, colonization projects also designed to create small private property owners, and so forth, are obsolete. Such undertakings cannot be regarded otherwise than as efforts to sabotage the true agrarian reform.[1]

Finally, I think it is plain that my conception of the part the ejido must play both as a method of landholding and as a procedure of production puts that much agitated question—Will there be enough land to go around?—in an entirely new light. With the ejido program disembarrassed of all necessity to protect private property large or small, and freed of all notions of excluding any

[1] Timid recognition of this fact is to be found in those sections of the new Agrarian Code which provide that no division of private properties shall be made under state laws limiting the size of holdings until all ejido requirements present and future in the regions where such properties are located have been met. See Appendix D, Article 176.

legitimate agriculturalist who is willing to work from the right to participate in the privileges of membership in an ejido community, the question of whether or not there will be enough land is reduced in its simplest terms to a problem of equating the amount of land available to the number of communities and individuals who are to devote themselves to farming. Mexico is far from possessing unlimited agricultural resources, but there is every reason to believe that if such an equation were made—that is, if all the available agricultural land were to be divided among the persons engaged in farming and immediately allied industries—and if the lands were then exploited coöperatively by such individuals organized in agrarian communities (ejidos) there would be more than a sufficiency of land for the purposes at hand. In other words, if, as I believe, the only test which should be applied in answering the question—Will there be enough land?—is a test in terms of population to be supported, on the one hand, and available agricultural resources on the other hand, there can be but one answer: Mexico's agricultural resources are, granted proper exploitation, more than enough to maintain the present population occupied in farming, as well as the population now occupied in other ways, in comfort, decency, and good health.

The basic figures relevant to this matter, already canvassed in some detail in Chapters IX and X, may be recalled here for the benefit of doubting Thomases and those who do not want to run the risk of getting mired down again in the muck of statistics in the chapters just mentioned.

Mexico actually has available for agricultural and allied purposes around 14.5 million hectares of crop land, 66.5 million hectares of pasture land, and 25.9 million hectares of forests—not counting in any of these categories some 36 million hectares of unclassified national lands and around 100,000 hectares in agricultural properties of less than one hectare each.

On the other side of the ledger, there are, out of a total economically active population of 5.2 million, approximately 3.6 million persons actively engaged in agricultural and allied industries.

If we assume that every person (landless peons, ejidatarios and private property owners alike) should under the new dispensation continue to be so engaged and that all the land available should be equally divided among them, this would mean that there would be for each individual approximately 4.0 hectares of crop land, 18.5 hectares of pasture land and 7.2 hectares of forest land. Or, since what is here envisaged is not individual but community tenure and exploitation, our calculation may be brought nearer the proposed theoretical reality by supposing the 3.6 million persons engaged in

agriculture divided up and distributed in ejido communities of, say, 200 each. This would mean something more than 18,000 ejidos each holding collectively and exploiting coöperatively 800 hectares of crop land, 3,700 hectares of pasture land, and 1,440 hectares of forest land.

It is understood, of course, that I do not contemplate any such equal concentrations of land or of population as those just indicated. Ejido communities in the future as at present will vary in size depending on local conditions. Likewise, the amount of land of any given class that any given community will receive will depend upon the kinds of land available as well as upon other considerations. Some ejidos (in Chihuahua, for example) might be entirely devoted to cattle raising and have no crop lands at all. Other ejidos might very well be devoted to the exploitation of forest resources and have neither pasture nor crop lands.

The figures here cited, it must be remembered, take no account of the possibly 2.2 million hectares of crop lands at present held by the government[2] or of the fact that 8.8 million hectares (now presumably in large part classified as pastures) are deemed to be more or less immediately potential crop land. If these lands were put under cultivation and if the 7.4 million hectares of actual crop land now allowed to lie fallow each year were brought into effective use, it is clear that the crop land theoretically to be placed at the disposal of each ejido community might easily be increased by 75 per cent. Granted improvements in agricultural techniques, I submit that coöperative farming of areas of on the average from 1,000 to 1,400 hectares of crop land is a prospect to be faced with equanimity.

In this connection it may be recalled that in the United States, as a result of improvements in agricultural techniques (principally the use of power machinery and the application of scientific knowledge), although there has been no increase in crop acreage for 15 years, nor in acre-yields of crops as a whole for 30 years, agricultural production has nevertheless increased about 50 per cent since the turn of the century. It is estimated that an American farmer now provides food for himself and three members of his family, for 12 Americans not living on farms and for 2 foreigners—a total of 18 persons.[3] It may be some time before Mexican farmers reach an equal level of productiveness, but even supposing that our new and glorified ejidatarios should be only half as successful as their neighbors to the north, this would mean that the 3.6 million persons (assuming no increase in population and that all these now engaged in agriculture

[2] See footnote 36, p. 152.

[3] *Recent Social Trends*, I, xviii.

will become ejidatarios) would produce enough food for twice the present population of Mexico!

There is only one point of view, then, from which it may be said that Mexico has an insufficiency of land: there is not enough land to satisfy the demands of social justice and economic efficiency and at the same time permit the continued existence of privately-owned and operated farms. There is a sufficiency of land to support the population of Mexico; but there is not enough land to create all the ejidos of the type necessary if all agrarian communities are to be admitted to rights under the reform, and at the same time to protect private properties, small or large. This is already obviously and notoriously true in the thickly settled areas of the Mesa Central; eventually it must be true for the whole country.

Quite aside from the fact that there is not enough land to go around in the sense just indicated, the private exploitation of individually owned farms under the new regime cannot be allowed for other reasons. The contradiction in logic involved in the effort to build a new rural economy based on principles of collective holdings and coöperative production and at the same time protect and encourage a system of land tenure rooted in the precepts of private property and free competition, must inevitably mean in the world of fact at the very least an unnecessary borrowing of trouble and at the very most stalemate and frustration.

It is quite possible that the imposition of higher taxes, the enforcement of minimum wage laws and other measures for the protection of rural laborers already on the statute books and the increasing scarcity of labor will force out of existence the old type of hacienda and *rancho*. However, as long as the institution of private property is maintained, the normal result of the operation of the factors just mentioned will be to stimulate private farmers to more efficient methods of production. Even assuming that larger and economically more effective ejidos will be created in the future, the competition of the more easily manageable and more rapidly adaptable private agricultural enterprises, especially if these are, as the present laws permit, of considerable size, is bound to retard the development of the ejidos. By forcing the private agriculturalists to strengthen their position, new and formidable enemies of the ejido will be raised up who will not only seek to weaken the ejido by attracting the ejidatarios away from their lands by offers of high wages, but also, by combining, to undersell the ejidatarios in the market place. Founded originally in considerations of social justice, in the desire to bring about and insure forever a fair and equitable system of land tenure,

the principle that Mexico cannot exist half slave and half free, half hacienda and half ejido, is confirmed by economic experience.

Just as both social and economic considerations point the wisdom and necessity of the substitution of the ejido as a form of land tenure for the hacienda and the *rancho*, so also do these same considerations dictate the coöperative organization and exploitation of the ejidos once they have been created. The common sense principle involved here is: in union there is strength. In Mexico this principle is imbued with peculiar urgency by reason of the limitations on the amount of land and capital available. A system of agricultural production posited on such an assumption as that involved in the Law of Ejido Patrimony—namely, the division of crop lands into x millions of tiny parcels each held and farmed by a single individual is a system obviously foredoomed if it is expected that anything more will be forthcoming than a mere subsistence. As we have seen, the agrarian reform was led into this blind alley partly because of the difficulties encountered in protecting the ejidatarios against local political bosses and partly because of a conviction that the ejidos were not producing.[4] The remedy devised was to weaken, if not destroy, the only possibility of constituting the ejidos as really effective agencies of production. Having got themselves into this fix, the *veteranos* then began to raise the cry that the ejidos divided into little parcels could never take advantage of modern agricultural techniques.

In the last mentioned contention the *veteranos* are quite right. For it is clear, even assuming that all agricultural lands should be divided up into ejidos, the amount of land available will not be sufficient to permit its effective exploitation on an individual basis. The only solution of this problem of atomization of holdings which should be entertained is a return to the conception of the ejido as an agency of coöperative production. No additional arguments need be offered to prove that Mexico is urgently in need of the techniques and procedures of modern scientific agriculture. Nor is any further evidence necessary to support the contention that Mexican farmers, and more especially the new farmers being created by the ejido program, taken individually are unable to afford the machinery and equipment indispensable to transforming a stick and hoe agriculture based primarily and disproportionately on the exploitation of human

[4] At least these were the ostensible reasons. The real reason, as we know, was that those responsible for the Law of Ejido Patrimony, in any case, had no faith in the edijo. Their real objective was private individual farms and the ejido was simply a way station on the road to that goal.

brawn into an agriculture in which land and capital will play their proper parts. But what can not be done by discrete individuals may in time be accomplished by collective effort. I do not argue that every ejido must be exploited as one big farm or that in all cases it will be desirable to buy the latest models of tractors and other types of power machinery. In some instances it is quite possible that the most effective system will be one of small exploitations with each ejidatario working an individual parcel and coöperating only to the extent of the collective purchasing of supplies and marketing of products. In other, and perhaps the majority of cases, however, the actual business of farming will be carried on collectively.

I am aware that bigger does not necessarily mean better and that the possession of a tractor does not automatically insure a bumper crop. These are matters to be worked out with reference to local conditions and in the light of regional and national plans for agricultural development.[5] The solution of these problems, let it be repeated once again, will not be easy. There are no free passes on the royal road to coöperation. But one may not doubt that the way is worth the toll. In any case, for the Mexican ejido, there is no choice. What wisdom and the ideal of socialization counsel, nature and economics demand.

3. *The responsibility for the carrying out of the ejido land distribution program must rest in the first instance with the federal government and the basis of operations must be agricultural regions rather than individual agrarian communities.*

The principle that the burden of initiative in petitions for land should rest with the individual agrarian community, first introduced in the reform by the decree of 1915, has never been a satisfactory method of procedure even for attaining such relatively limited objectives as those characterizing the ejido program up to the present time. The ignorance and inertia of the people, the difficulties of communication, the ease with which the landowners have been able to intimidate the peasants—all have operated to place obstacles in the way of villages obtaining land. The whole movement has been threatened by placing the greatest strain on the weakest links in the chain.

Under our broader conception of the agrarian reform it is impera-

[5] A concrete suggestion for providing agricultural machinery for the ejidos is that of adopting the Soviet system whereby a number of state owned tractors, reapers, binders, etc., are kept at a regional base and loaned or rented out (together with expert operators) to the communities in a given area. This system has the obvious advantages of greatly reducing the numbers of machines needed and of insuring that they are properly run and kept in repair.

tive that the present retail procedure of land distribution give way to wholesale methods. This is demanded, if for no other reason, by considerations of time and money. It is clearly wasteful to make a separate and distinct investigation of the needs of each agrarian community if and as these communities see fit to make petitions for land, when the whole job could be done at one time for all of the communities in a given natural area.

But the most important reason why the central authority must assume the function of a distributor rather than a grantor of land is that the new ejido program[6] presupposes an undertaking not merely to hand out land, but to reconstruct Mexico's rural economy. From this point of view, I repeat, the real task is one of equating population to resources with a view to creating efficient units of coöperative production. The problem heretofore has been conceived as one of how to meet the minimum requirements of individual villages and at the same time protect private properties (at least of certain sizes and types). Under the new program the problem becomes: given a certain quantity and variety of agricultural resources and a certain number of people in a designated natural area, what is the best man-land ratio to establish? Undoubtedly it will be necessary in many cases to consolidate villages within a given area; in other cases the only solution may be the moving of considerable portions of the population from one region to another and their colonization in new centers. Such mobilizations and redistributions of population admittedly will be difficult—in Mexico perhaps more so than in many other countries—but they should not be impossible.[7]

By taking the agricultural region as the point of departure in the new ejido program, the much disputed questions of what shall be done with the *acasillados* and with agrarian communities of less than twenty heads of families will be solved as a normal and natural part of regional planning. In the case of the smaller communities, including some of those of resident laborers, consolidation or removal to another region will be the indicated course. Large *acasillado* settlements will simply be granted land according to their needs as these are estimated in relation to other communities in the area.

Another matter which under the new program will appear in an entirely different perspective is that of how much land each ejido

[6] In order to avoid the repetition of such phrases as "here advanced," "here posited," etc., I will hereafter refer to the program I am advocating in these pages as the "new ejido program."

[7] See in this connection Alanís Patiño, "Síntesis del ciclo de conferencias. . . ," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, II, 682-84.

community should receive. Hitherto this question has been dealt with by setting up an arbitrary "typical parcel" of crop land and then multiplying this area by the number of heads of families having rights to land. This procedure, always a little ridiculous given the great variety of natural regions in Mexico, will be abandoned in favor of calculations made for each specific region on the basis of the kinds of lands available and the uses to which they are to be put by the communities receiving them. These uses, in turn, will be determined in each instance in the light of soil analyses, climatic conditions, and the national plan of agricultural production.[8]

4. *The new ejido program presupposes national planning and effective centralized control of agriculture.*

If the socialization of her rural economy be Mexico's goal there can be no turning back at the first mile post. The success of a collective system of land tenure and a coöperative system of production leads inevitably to, indeed, demands as an indispensable antecedent, a national plan that will give direction and significance to the activities of the separate community and regional units and a centralized control that will see to it that the plan is followed and friction is reduced to a minimum.

For a time it may be necessary for the government to enforce control by the exercise of police power. Since under the new program, however, all agricultural credit functions and all marketing operations will be in the hands of the state as the representative of the associated agrarian communities, economic sanctions will very soon offer sufficiently powerful arguments for imposing the will of the majority on recalcitrant communities.

The National Bank of Agricultural Credit will, of course, have to be reorganized, shorn of its present commercial predilections, and supplied with sufficient funds and personnel to carry out its joint educational-credit functions. The bank in its role as the only source of agricultural credit may be expected, as a normal part of its development, to assume the duty of organizing and controlling the marketing and distribution of the nation's agricultural produce including internal as well as external (export) marketing.

The reorientation and expansion of the functions of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit will be only the first step in the general

[8] The concept of the region already exists in incipient form in the ejido zones or districts of the new Agrarian Code. Also in this same connection should be recalled the sections of the code providing for the establishing of new centers of agricultural population. Several ejido districts have already been established. See the report of Heriberto Allera on the plan for the so-called Laguna area published in *El Nacional*, November 24, 1934, *et seq.*

reorganization of government agencies necessitated by the new ejido program. The present overlapping and duplication of activities as between the Agrarian Department, the National Bank of Agricultural Credit and the Ministry of Agriculture obviously must be done away with. Probably the simplest way to effect the concentration of administrative authority and the reorientation of points of view demanded by the new program will be to bring together the various government agencies now concerned with the ejido and with agriculture and organize them into a single Ministry of Coöperative Ejidos. Under such an arrangement a division of labor within the new Ministry would naturally be made along functional lines. The present Agrarian Department, for example, would become the Division of Land Distribution and would be charged with all matters pertaining to the constitution of ejidos; the National Bank of Agricultural Credit would become the Division of Ejido Credit and its duty would be to handle all questions relating to the financing of production and marketing of ejido products; the present National Irrigation Commission might very well become the Division of Ejido Water Supply—and so on and so forth as need and experience might dictate.

Certainly one of the most important of the sections of the new Ministry of Coöperative Ejidos will be the Division of Ejido Coördination and Planned Production.[9] As its name suggests, it will be the duty of this department to work out both short and long term regulative plans for ejido, or, what will amount to the same thing, national agricultural production. The division will be charged not only with the difficult task of determining what crops shall be produced but also of deciding where they shall be produced.[10] Incidentally, one of the first jobs this division must tackle is the problem of tropical export products vs. subsistence products. Should Mexico, as some have argued, attempt to wean her agriculturists away from corn and wheat in favor of such crops as bananas and

[9] Since 1933, there has been much talk in Mexico about *economía dirigida* and *agricultura planeada*. Indeed, the Ministry of Agriculture has published a most elaborate contribution to the Six-Year Plan (see: *Sugestiones para la elaboración del Plan Sexenal, 1934-1939;* and *Memoria de la Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento. . . , 1933*).

This plan, however, while revealing a lively appreciation of many of the nation's agrarian problems, is distinguished by no unity of conception for their solution. On one page the plan urges the carrying out of the ejido program as the solemn duty of the revolution; a few pages later the plan is equally eloquent on the subject of the necessity for protecting and encouraging private agricultural property and enterprise!

[10] For examples of the difficulties already encountered by the failure to make comprehensive plans for ejido production, see Villaseñor, "Las zonas nuevas y el indio," *Revista Mexicana de Economía*, I, 37-52.

coffee? Would it be wise for a country admittedly poorly equipped to produce cereals and well equipped to produce tropical export products to concentrate on its best bet and trade bananas and coffee for corn and wheat? What price national self-sufficiency vs. international interdependence?

Another function of the planning division will be to determine what areas should be withdrawn from crop production altogether and dedicated either to forest or pasture. In other words, this department, working in coöperation with the Division of Land Distribution, must undertake the rationalized zoning of agriculture. This will undoubtedly lead very quickly to the regional and national planning of power resources and industrial developments. Concerning this subject I shall have more to say later.

Since the new ejido program will involve nothing less than the complete reconstruction and reorganization of the way of life of almost three-fourths of the population already living under rural conditions (and in some measure of that of the rest of the population as well), the coöperation of every government agency will be necessary. What this will mean in the way of the development of the present programs of the Ministry of Public Education and the Department of Public Health has perhaps been sufficiently implied in the discussion of matters related to these agencies in the chapters on Education. What may not be so clear is the part other divisions of the government will have to play if the new program is to succeed. By way of illustration let us consider briefly the problems of communication and transportation.

Mexico's present system of railways and highways is inadequate in extension and badly planned from the point of view of agricultural development. Large sections of the country are either virgin territory or mere subsistence areas, not because soil and climate are poor, but because it is too expensive to get produce to markets.

The construction of Mexico's railways, as even Díaz's Minister of Public Finance the great Limantour himself admitted, was singularly planless, the product of private interest and accident.[11] Graft and waste of public funds, the usual accompaniment of railway development in all but a few of the most fortunate countries, in Mexico even rivaled the records in such matters set by the "robber barons" of the United States.[12] The paralleling of lines, the zig-zag principle of construction, the building of roads without reference to or thought of the economic resources of the territories they were to serve—these and all the rest of the sorry bag of railroading tricks find ample

[11] Gruening, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[12] Beals, *Porfirio Díaz*, pp. 343-44.

illustration in Mexico. To discover any purpose in the "system" of railways at all one must see the roads from the point of view of the mining industries, and the interests of those engaged in the development of international trade in tropical products. For, as usual, these interests were served first, last, and always. The idea of connecting up areas of agricultural production with internal centers of consumption was a very secondary consideration when present at all in the minds of the builders. The natural result has been that in only a few regions have the railroads helped agriculture;[13] in the rest of the country they have not only failed to stimulate agricultural development, but often have actually had the opposite effect.[14]

The extent to which the railways have failed to open up the country or to give anything approaching an adequate coverage may be readily appreciated by an examination of the relevant statistics. Mexico, I beg to remind the reader once again, is a much larger country than is usually realized. It would be possible to fit within the two million square kilometers of its area the combined territories of France, Germany, Spain, and Italy and still have space to tuck in Belgium, Denmark, and Switzerland. A line drawn from the northern border of Lower California to the southern border of the territory of Quintana Roo measures considerably more than 2,800 kilometers. By railroad from Mexico City to Nuevo Laredo is a distance close to 1,400 kilometers. Mérida, the capital of the state of Yucatán, at the other extremity of the country is 1,200 kilometers from Mexico City; Hermosillo, the capital of the state of Sonora, 2,200 kilometers. To go from Veracruz on the Gulf coast to Acapulco on the Pacific coast one must go across a distance of some 800 kilometers and up and over two mountain ranges attaining heights of more than 10,000 feet at places on the road.

To connect these widely separated points and to furnish the principal means of transportation and distribution of agricultural and other products from farm to city and from city to farm Mexico has at the present time approximately 23,800 kilometers of railways. In terms of square kilometers of area per kilometer of line this figures out 82.8 for Mexico as compared with, for example, 19.6 in the United States, 8.7 in France, 30.3 in Spain and 71.1 in the Argentine.

[13] "In only a few favored spots has the agricultural organization shown any considerable response . . . [to the influence of the railways]. Those are the Laguna district, where cotton has been developed on a large scale; the West Coast, where sugar and fruits and vegetables are grown; certain sugar, banana, and coffee haciendas on the Eastern slope and in Chiapas near the border of Guatemala." Frank Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 130. Reprinted by permission of the Brookings Institution.

[14] González Roa, *El problema ferrocarrilero . . . de México*, p. 87.

In terms of population, Mexico has one kilometer of line for every 694 inhabitants as compared, for instance, with one kilometer for every 308 inhabitants in the United States; one for every 135 in Spain; one for every 292 in Argentina and one for every 646 in France.[15]

The significance for agriculture of the relatively slight coverage of the country by the railroad system is further emphasized when taken in connection with the fact that some of the potentially richest agricultural sections have the fewest railways. While the average for the whole country shows that each 1,000 square kilometers of territory is served by 12.1 kilometers of railway line, Jalisco, Durango, Zacatecas, Tamaulipas, Campeche and Tabasco, as well as six other states agriculturally of less importance, are served by 10 kilometers or less. The arid and unproductive states of Coahuila and Chihuahua have over five kilometers of line for every 1,000 inhabitants, but such agriculturally rich states as Michoacán, Jalisco, Chiapas, and Querétaro—to select only a few examples at random—have less than one kilometer for every 1,000 inhabitants.[16]

With such a planless and uncoördinated system, it is hardly necessary to add that high and disproportionate freight rates on agricultural products (except, of course, where hacienda products are concerned)[17] have been in the past and still are one of the most important obstacles in the way of agricultural development.[18]

Until recent times, the history of highways in Mexico has been like the history of the poor—short and uneventful. In another place I have put together this story in such detail as could be obtained.[19] The following paragraph summarizes my findings:

When the National Highway Commission began its work in 1925 it was faced with a tremendous problem. The failure of the Colonial government to supply the country with anything even vaguely resembling an adequate system of highways had been followed by almost 100 years of cumulative neglect by the national government and to all this, as if the cup of bad roads in Mexico were not already full and overflowing, had been added a decade and more of revolution, disorder and general social and economic upheaval. According to León Salinas, "at the beginning of 1925 the only roads in existence in Mexico passable in all seasons were those from Mexico City to Toluca (54 kilometers), from Mexico City to

[15] Appendix A, Table 85.

[16] Appendix A, Table 84.

[17] Phipps, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-27.

[18] García de la Cadena, "Desenvolvimiento agrícola de México," in *Los problemas agrícolas de México*, II, 497.

[19] Simpson, "Means of Transportation in Relation to National Planning in Mexico," pp. 1-9.

Cuernavaca (68 kilometers), and certain sections of the road between Cuernavaca and Acapulco—in all hardly more than 150 kilometers on which, owing to the lack of pavement, the steep grades and other bad conditions, traffic could be maintained only with the greatest difficulty.

Thanks to the activities of the above mentioned National Highway Commission and the expenditure of some 89 million pesos,[20] by the end of 1933 it was reported that, of national highways directly under the supervision of the Commission, there had been completed 746 kilometers of paved road and 1,435 kilometers of surfaced road, while 1,670 kilometers of highway were under construction. According to estimates made by the *Dirección General de Estadística*, all highways in the Republic in 1933 totaled 42,569 kilometers classified as follows: 10,997 "passable in all seasons of the year" (884 "paved" and 10,113 "all others"); and 31,572 kilometers "impassable during the rainy season."[21]

Although Mexico has made most commendable progress in road building in recent years, the highway coverage is still far from commensurate with the needs of the country. To make the usual odious comparison, it may be observed, for example, that the state of Texas with about one-third the area of Mexico has 42,500 kilometers of surfaced highways or almost four times the kilometrage of Mexico classified as "passable in all seasons."

Not only is Mexico still a very long way from being adequately served by highways, but, according to some critics at any rate, the principal highways on which the federal government is concentrating its attention and money have not been designed with a view to coöperating with the railroads in opening up the farming areas of the country, but rather for the purposes of developing internal and external tourist traffic, gratifying local and national pride and for other ends somewhat irrelevant to the interests of the farmer and the development of agricultural production.[22]

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[20] Appendix A, Table 92.

[21] *México en cifras*, p. 76.

These descriptive terms are, to say the least, relative. The word "passable" refers to automobiles. But, as anyone who has had any first hand experience knows, often a road considered passable in Mexico, in other parts of the world would be judged nonexistent.

[22] "The general scheme of the main highways repeats the error made by the railways. The Mexico City-Laredo road and the projected Nogales-Suchiate road are absurd, because instead of contributing to the development of the country, they open the way to imperialistic penetration and to the absorption of our national resources and our undeveloped national commerce.

"In other regions the mistake of building roads along the lines of existing railways has been committed thus creating two transportation routes through the same region and depriving the railways of the small revenues on which they depended. . . . The future

It cannot be denied that some of the sections of the new roads now under construction by the National Highway Commission pass through regions potentially of considerable agricultural importance and which heretofore have been cut off and isolated from the rest of the country. However, it would appear that the tapping of these regions was more or less accidental and incidental to other aims. Without attempting to judge the absolute value of these other purposes, one may nevertheless call into question their relative value. In other words, many students of the problem of agricultural production in Mexico are disposed to raise this point: Has the government in its road planning made any attempt to assess the value for the country of a program calling for a number of short roads radiating from and connecting up important marketing and distributing centers with the surrounding agricultural areas as compared with a program of long trunk highways largely designed for tourist purposes?

The sum and substance of this excursion into the field of communication and transportation is that Mexico is urgently in need of modern transportation facilities. Moreover, unless costly mistakes are to be made, these facilities must be planned in their interrelations to each other and to the areas and purposes they are to serve. The success of the new ejido program will depend in no small measure on the extent to which action in this field is guided by intelligence and foresight applied on a national scale.

I have, it is obvious, touched only a few of the high spots, given but a mere indication of some of the more important changes in outlook and procedure which logically follow from an acceptance of the new ejido and its role in the economy of the nation. But opening the door only a little way is enough to reveal something of the nature and general direction of the road Mexico must travel if she is to take the way out offered by the ejido. As I look down this road, I think I see journey's end in a shining castle on a far hill, a goal and an objective which, once attained, will be faith rewarded and hope fulfilled. At the same time I am, I trust, not so blinded by my vision as to be unaware of the weary miles, the hills to be climbed, often in despair, and the valleys to be traversed, not without fear and trembling, which lie between journey's beginning

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policy in regard to highway construction should favor transverse and local roads radiating from central points themselves already in communication with the object of uniting Mexicans among themselves, facilitating communication between the inhabitants of the country and bringing Mexicans in contact with Mexicans, which is what we most need." Cabrera, *op. cit.*

and journey's end. In the next chapter I shall attempt to list and assess the importance of some of the obstacles in the path of pilgrim's progress. Meanwhile, perhaps I should make it clear before I go further that I have no illusions about the nature of the task I have set for Mexico.

The program I have conceived here is at once an ideal and a frame of reference designed to focus, to give meaning, significance and a sense of direction to activities hitherto dispersed and all too often conflicting. I have hung the prize high because I believe with Daniel H. Burnham that one should: "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die. . . ." I realize that in the nature of the case the fulfillment of the ejido program as I have here envisaged it will take time. As, indeed, why should it not? Mexico was four centuries and more getting into the plight in which she found herself in 1910. Why should she expect to work her way out in a few decades? Mexico no more than any other nation can expect to enter overnight into the promised land. The traditional price of admission to the land of milk and honey is forty years of trials and tribulations in the wilderness. Mexico will be lucky indeed if the cost be no higher.

Again, in carrying out the ejido program it will undoubtedly be necessary to make temporary compromises and passing concessions in answer to the demands of statesmanship. The goal is the distribution of all agricultural lands in ejidos. But as a matter of practical procedure land distribution will have to move forward region by region. The objective is the coöperative ejido. The attainment of this objective, however, will depend upon a long and difficult process of education. Some communities will have to be led out of primitive communism and economic isolation; others will have to be weaned away from individualism and the complex of notions traditionally associated with private property. It will obviously be undesirable, lest unnecessary conflicts be created and irreparable damage be done, to force every community into the same mold. The ultimate goal must not be lost sight of, but Mexico must not again commit the error into which impatient idealism and ignorance of the country's great variety of regional conditions and cultures have so often led, of trying willy-nilly to jam everyone into a single Procrustean bed.[21] If some communities demand, for example, that their crop lands be divided into individual parcels, then let this be done, at the same

[21] See Gamio, *Forjando patria*, pp. 135-38.

time recognizing, however, that this may be either (a) the best way to exploit the particular kind of land in the possession of these communities; or (b) a temporary compromise necessitated by local conditions.[24]

In sum: in the realization of the new ejido program it may be necessary on occasion to take time to achieve direction by indirection; the ejido program like any other undertaking aspiring to change the habits of human beings must be subject to the dictates of common sense as well as the guidance of goals ultimately to be achieved. To allow a certain amount of latitude does not imply unbridled license; to recognize the necessity for a certain degree of give and take does not necessarily involve the abandonment of high ideals.

[24] Mexico may even find it useful for a time to take a leaf out of the recent Spanish agrarian reform: "The law provides that 'once in possession of the land, the communities will decide by majority vote whether the land is to be worked individually or collectively; and if individually will proceed to divide and distribute it, taking into account the nature of the land, the capability of the rural families and other factors that will contribute to the maintenance of the economic equality of the members.' " Diffie, "Spain Under the Republic," in *Foreign Policy Reports*, IX, 237.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE EJIDO AND INDUSTRIALISM

In 1931 the well-known writer and lecturer, Stuart Chase, in collaboration with Marian Tyler, published a book entitled: *Mexico —A Study of Two Americas*. Chase, according to his own statement, was interested in Mexico because the country, and more particularly the Mexican "free village," offered a convenient "bench mark" with which to compare the industrial civilization of the United States. The meat of the book, accordingly, is found in the contrast of the ways of life in what Chase chooses to regard as two "typical" or "symbolical" communities: one the little village of Tepoztlán in the state of Morelos in Mexico; the other the town of Muncie, Indiana, in the United States (or, as it is generally known for literary and sociological purposes, "Middletown").[1] The problem with which the book is concerned is of considerable interest to us for, in the end, Chase attempts to weigh the value of what he calls the "handicraft culture" of Tepoztlán (and by implication of most of rural Mexico) as over against the "machine culture" of Middletown and then as a result of his deliberations to write out a prescription for a new Tepoztlán (and, incidentally, for a new Middletown).

Now, since I also am in the business of prescribing for the new Mexico and since, in the nature of the case, my prescription must cover those questions of machines and industrialism with which Chase is occupied, it will be useful as an introduction to this chapter and perhaps of some interest to the many readers of *A Study of Two Americas* to attempt[2] a summary of some of Chase's findings and conclusions. For this purpose we may borrow one of Chase's favorite literary devices and make a list of those elements in Mexico's

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[1] The concrete data referring to Mexico in Chase's book is drawn partly from the author's personal observations during his stay of "about five months" in the country and partly from documentary sources, notably Robert Redfield's *Tepoztlán*. The bulk of the material relating to the American scene is taken from Robert and Helen Lynd's *Middletown*. Quotations from, *Mexico-A Study of Two Americas*, made by permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

[2] I say "attempt" because our author is so altogether charming (in the literal sense of the word) a writer and so canny a qualifier of his various arguments that it is not always easy to interpret accurately his meaning.

rural culture which apparently he finds most significant and admirable—to wit:

Mexican villages are distinguished by their economic security. "The future hangs like a great black raven over Middletown. In Tepoztlan the sky is clear. . . . There is no car, no electric refrigerator, but there is economic security." (p. 222.) "Unemployment is unheard of in Tepoztlan. . . . ." (p. 16.)

The Mexican village is independent, discrete and self-sustaining. . . . "In this body ["the vast, sprawling body of mechanical civilization"], Middletown is but a single cell, while Tepoztlan is aloof and unincorporated, an organic, breathing entity." (p. 216.) "The villages [of Yucatán] are largely self-sustaining. . . . Nobody is ever seriously hungry. . . . Stomach-ache is the ranking disease." (p. 131.)[3]

The culture of Mexican villages is a functional culture in the sense that the people produce only what they need, and that with a "minimum of economy." Thus Mexico is saved from that vast waste of goods and effort which in Middletown results from the drive to conspicuous consumption and emulative conduct. "We [in the United States] are cluttered up with things essentially meaningless . . . we flounder, puzzled and perplexed, trying to find the values which will give meaning back to life. Tepoztlan has never lost these values. It works, plays, worships, attires itself, composes its dwellings . . . without abnormal effort, without waste. It knows what life is for because every move it makes contributes to a legitimate function of living." (pp. 223-24.)

Mexican rural culture is essentially nonpecuniary. Values in Mexican life, therefore, are derived directly from things of innate importance and are not functions of "artificial" and "unreal things" as in Middletown. The Mexicans are not "money-conscious"—"life lies clear and sharp beneath his [the Mexican's] eyes, its values uncoated with cash considerations." (p. 221.)

"The gospel of Middletown is work, and the gospel of Tepoztlan is play —one day in three, the year around, the southern community is celebrating a major or minor fiesta." (p. 16.) Government in Tepoztlan "is 'a form of play.' " (p. 128.) "The fiesta is the spirit of play released on a vast and authentic scale." (p. 206.)

Mexican villages are largely populated by craftsmen and artists. "The men of the south are craftsmen—many students call them artists—they can put their hands to almost anything, fashion it, repair it, recreate it. Their popular arts, their weaving, pottery, glass work, basketry, are as authentic and delightful as any the modern or the ancient world has seen." (p. 17.)

But this is not the whole story, as Chase, the adroit player of both

[3] Sometimes Chase speaks as if the self-sustaining economic entity in Mexico is the individual village; at other times it seems to be the region, embracing a number of villages, that he has in mind.

THE MEN OF THE SOUTH ARE CRAFTSMEN

ends against the middle, is at some pains to point out. "Tepoztlán is no rustic Utopia." (p. 224.) Despite all the putative joys of life in Tepoztlán, Chase admits that he wouldn't like to live there. (p. 155.) There are, he discovers, no doctors or dentists in Tepoztlán. Public health has been "seriously neglected" and infant mortality is "appalling." (p. 18.) Chase likes Mexican food, or, at any rate, the kind you can get in Mexico City, but when he visited Tepoztlán he was careful to carry his lunch with him. "Were it not for pulque, Mexican village diet would be seriously short of vitamins. . . . perhaps all [regions] fail to achieve a soundly balanced diet." (p. 140.) "The gospel of Tepoztlán is play," nevertheless Chase is forced to admit that the female half of the population of Tepoztlán, for the lack of a simple machine, must spend "untold hours of heavy, monotonous work" in grinding corn for tortillas. (p. 133.) Moreover, it appears that "Mexican children ought to have more sports and games." (p. 206.)

The rest of what our visitor from Megalopolis finds not entirely to his liking in Tepoztlán may be inferred from the medicine he recommends that the Tepoztecans should take in order "to improve and enrich the processes of living." Chase's remedy, to be shaken well and taken in controlled doses morning and evening, is compounded as follows: 1. Modern hygiene and sanitation. ("I should not hesitate to lift this department out of Middletown, and transpose it [to Tepoztlán] *in toto*. . . . I would take the doctors . . . the nurses, the clinics, the hospitals, the city health department, the sewers, the water supply, the dentists . . . the whole kit and kaboodle of them, and dump them down without a tremor.") 2. "A reasonably stiff injection of scientific agriculture." ("An immense amount of dreary work could be avoided by a better knowledge of crops, seeds, fertilizers, irrigation, stock-raising, and a larger cash crop grown for ready absorption in Mexican cities. . . .") 3. "A wide extension of electric power, *properly controlled*." (Among other things, such power could be used for lighting; refrigeration—"thus stimulating the milk supply, now abnormally low" and improving the "unsavoury condition of the present meat supply"; to operate cement and mortar mixers; "to operate pumps for good drinking water and for irrigation" which are "both sadly lacking at the present time.") 4. "A telegraph line and a long-distance telephone could hardly do . . . any harm." 5. Motor roads. (But here one must be careful for a "motor road . . . would be both a blessing and a curse." "Trucks would save an unconscionable amount of slogging over mountain trails with a hundred pounds on one's back, or steering a plodding burro thereover. Supplies, newspapers, the world outside,

could come flooding in. But in that flood, alas, might come car ownership, snobbery, motor accidents. . . .") 6. Movies, talkies and radios. (But, "sensibly used," of course, "as they are in Russia.")[4]

It would be fun to stop at this point and pick a few bones with Stuart Chase, for, as should be obvious to anyone who has read the chapters in Part Two of this study, I do not always see eye to eye with him in his observations and his interpretation of Redfield's *Tepoztlán*. I might point out, for example, that Chase was somewhat unfortunate in choosing Tepoztlán as a symbol of a culture as heterogeneous as Mexico's.[5] In the second place, it would appear that Chase is a little too sanguine in his judgments concerning the self-sustaining capacities of the Mexican village. It is true, generally speaking, that unemployment is a rare phenomenon in rural Mexico, but, as I believe I have offered sufficient material to prove, this is far from meaning that life is safe and secure. By and large unemployment is unknown, but a bare subsistence standard of living is very familiar indeed and something very near to famine is by no means unheard of. . . . It is hard to feel the effects of a depression if you are already prone on the ground with "nothing to loose but your chains."[6]

Again, it would be interesting to cite chapter and verse and show that these colorful religious fiestas which Chase thinks are so playful may not be quite as full of functional fun as they appear to an outsider. There is, to be sure, a certain amount of relaxation involved in even the most serious of Mexican religious celebrations; but if anyone has the idea that these festivals are play in the sense that a game of tennis, or yes, even a trip to Coney Island is play—take it or leave it and go as far as you like—he is, I believe, in grievous error. Play which is in large degree compulsory[7] may be different

[4] All quotations in this paragraph from Chase and Tyler, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-27.

[5] For the unique as opposed to the universal characteristics of Tepoztlán, see Redfield's book, Chapter I. The chief source of error involved in taking Tepoztlán as a typical village lies in the fact that it was one of the few villages in Mexico (Phipps claims the *only* one in the state of Morelos—see *op. cit.*, p. 120) which preserved its communal lands and hence to a degree maintained its status as a "free-village." Chase's assumption (p. 98) that half of the population in Mexico (in 1921) lived in free villages of the type of Tepoztlán is, probably, a considerable overstatement—see my discussion of this matter in Chapter III.

[6] If any more evidence of the economic insecurity and poverty of Mexican village life is desired than that which I have already presented, see Mendizábal, "La universidad y los campesinos," *El Nacional*, May 12, 1934.

[7] "He who, for whatever reason, does not attend these religious acts is no longer a Catholic not only in the eyes of his neighbors but also in his own conscience. . . . From the moment in which one does not actually engage in these . . . rites, such as the dances, he is no longer a member of the group. . . ." (*La población del Valle de Teotihuacán*, p. 208.)

from working in the fields, but it is hardly pure pleasure. If you believe in your heart that unless you perform certain ritualistic acts your children will fall sick (or fail to get well), or your crops will wither away, or some other calamity will be visited upon you, the performance, be it ever so resplendent in the matter of costumes, songs, dances, and copious draughts of pulque, is scarcely a carefree lark.[8] The gods, spirits, saints, and devils which the Mexican villager seeks to propitiate in his numerous religious festivals, often at tremendous expense,[9] are as real and cruel as fear-driven imagination working on pagan survivals and Catholic dogma can make them. If one dances in their honor it is in very large part to escape the double lash of social opprobrium and a guilty conscience, not merely because it is one's whim to execute a Merry Widow waltz just for the good, clean fun of it. . . .

I say it would be good sport to try my hand at breaking a few lances with so doughty an antagonist as Stuart Chase, but what I am interested in here is something of more moment than a mere critique of the accuracy of Chase's observations. Indeed, for my present purposes it makes little difference whether the picture of the Mexican village Chase has painted is a reflection of reality or a back-handed expression of his disgust with certain aspects of machine culture. What I am mainly concerned with is the dilemma in which Chase finds himself and leaves his readers.

This dilemma would appear to take the following form: Chase would like to preserve certain characteristics (either real or imagined) of organization and procedure which he attributes to the Mexican

What this statement implies of social pressure in a small primary group needs no emphasis.

[8] "Sickness and unfortunate happenings . . . the indigenous population [believes] . . . are the result of irritating either their own or foreign divinities—those anthropomorphic deities dressed in variegated costumes of Turks and Romans and always ready to punish like those gods of other days which men placed on their altars of fire and blood. In order to propitiate these gods the fiestas of the patron saints are celebrated. . . . In order to appease them the peasants go on pilgrimages, sometimes of hundreds of leagues, with their feet torn and their knees bloody, to visit the famous sanctuaries. . . . [They perform] . . . ritualistic, interminable, frenzied dances with monotonous music and songs, and rigidly fixed costumes of the most onerous type. . . . These ceremonies and rituals, together with the fleeting optimism which alcohol produces, are their only stimulus and their sole diversion, the only relief from the tedium, the fatigue, the afflictions and physical pains which are their daily life." (Mendizábal, *op. cit.*)

[9] "The problem of the continuous exploitation of the peasants for religion is [one of the most serious] in this region. . . . The festivals . . . known variously as *mayordomías, tetlahuantis, calendar,* . . . involve great outlays of money and bring about an almost constant economic disequilibrium. . . . The cases of the festivals of Tlacotepec and Chojula are typical . . . in these 'fairs' each year over 10,000 pesos are spent on fireworks alone." Report of the *Jefe de Zona,* Zone 8-9, Puebla.

village—economic security, craftsmanship, leisure, functional living, and so forth. Certain other things which he also finds in the Mexican village—such as dirt, disease, and technological inefficiency— he would like to do away with. To accomplish the latter he is forced to recommend the importation of certain elements from that very world of machines concerning which he has so many misgivings. Chase would like to have his villages independent and self-sufficient, but at the same time producing "cash crops . . . for easy absorption in Mexican cities." He likes the flower bowered burros he sees on the roads of Mexico, yet there is something to be said for trucks. He admires the "functional life" which produces "without abnormal effort, without waste," and he thinks that Tepoztlán shows "it is possible to lead a normal, reasonably creative, and rewarding life without thirty slaves of energy at one's elbow," but at the same time maybe a little scientific agriculture, a few tractors, and some electric power would not be amiss. The fact that the Mexican village is "aloof, unincorporated, an organic breathing entity" calls forth his highest praise, but, still, "there is such a thing as being too independent" and good roads, radios, telephones, and movies have their points. He is particularly pleased with the sales resistance capacities, the "wantlessness" and the absence of emulative motivation which he thinks characterize the Indian; on the other hand, it would be nice if the Indian would let down the barriers of his sales resistance to the extent of wanting a few doctors, nurses, hospitals, refrigerators, mortar mixers, and sewers. He smacks his lips over the fact that "there are no Freudian complexes in rural Mexico"; and yet it is also "true that there is no progress."

In a word, Chase's analysis, as he himself in his less enthusiastic moments apparently realizes, leads him up against that old poser of making an omelet without breaking any eggs. Much of what he sweeps out the front door in a cloud of dust with shouts of *¡Viva México!* and *¡Abajo el industrialismo!* he is forced quietly to sneak in again via the back door. Chase's frankest recognition of the fact that it is possible to tear one's pants on the horns of the dilemma here in question I find, not in his book, but in the following paragraphs from an article written in December, 1930:

I do not envy the governors of Mexico. Aside from the hazards of their calling, they are faced with a problem to confuse a Socrates. If they remain Mexicans and hold to their village economy, their charcoal fires, and clay cooking pots, they leave their citizens in poverty and their material civilization hopelessly behind all the nations of the modern world. If they attempt to compete with these nations, on the other hand, if they encourage the promoters who swarm even now around the capital, they sac-

rifice what remains of a noble and in many ways a lovely culture. In village life to-day, crime is rare, unemployment is unthinkable, a Freudian complex unheard-of. One must accept a responsibility of the gravest nature when he attempts to break down this self-sufficient economy, to specialize labor, make men and women dependent on pay checks rather than on their own provisioning, substitute movies and bleacher seats for fiestas, and thrust into their hands motor cars, radios, tabloids, Arrow collars, Simmons beds, corrugated iron roofing, Listerine, and canned asparagus.[10]

Now I sympathize with Chase for the very good and sufficient reason that I am in imminent danger of tearing my Sunday pants in exactly the same place and in the same fashion he has torn his. For I, too, should like to remake that world of poverty, back-breaking toil, disease, and general frustration in which a large part (and, be it said, a much larger part than Chase is apparently aware) of the Mexican people live. I should like the Mexicans to have greater control over their environment, to be released from the discipline of fear, to live in health and well-being, to bask in the sun of democracy and to enjoy the freedom which comes with enlightenment and security. I should like to do all this and at the same time preserve and strengthen those cultural elements and human attitudes and capacities—the decentralization and flexibility of the economic system, the functional integration of life, the freedom from hurry and worry, the dignity of craftsmanship and the joy of creative activity—which, although I do not find them in Mexican village life in quite the same way or to the same extent that Chase does, I nevertheless recognize as being present and of a value that can hardly be exaggerated.

But can all this be done? Will it be possible for Mexico to take over only those parts of the techniques and institutions, the values and attitudes of industrialism which will, in Chase's words, "improve and enrich the process of living?" Or is there a price that must be paid, and, if so, is the candle worth the game?

Needless to say, I do not know the answers to these questions; for here we enter a realm wherein dwell the most basic of all problems with which, not only Mexico, but all nations in the modern world, after their own fashion, are faced. Here we embark upon seas for which no final charts have yet been made; a world of fog and shoals where all men see as in a glass darkly. To lay a true course for Mexico through these troubled waters presupposes a wisdom to which I can lay no claims. However, it is perhaps not too much to hope that one may chart a few of the rocks to be avoided and indicate the general direction in which the Mexican ship of state must navigate.

[10] "Machineless Men," *The Forum*, December 1930. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

If such an undertaking be motivated by the kind of courage that angels are said to lack, then, so be it; I have already gone too far to turn back now. I will take such comfort as I may from the fact, as the unending stream of books with which the presses groan by day and by night bears me witness, that in rushing in to set Mexico right in the world of men and machines, I shall not lack for company.

Aspects of Industrialism

Stated in the broadest and most inclusive terms, the problem with which Mexico is faced is the problem of induction into the Great Society.[11] Or, if you please, it is a problem of acculturation. As this statement implies, there are two sides to the equation. On the one hand stands Mexico with certain institutions, folkways, mores, and techniques and the corresponding individual and collective attitudes. On the other hand, we have a world differing in many and marked respects from Mexico—a world, it may be observed, presented most immediately to Mexico by her neighbor to the north. One of my intentions in this book has been to set forth the Mexican side of the equation, the cultural complex, the way of life which is Mexico. Shortly I shall add a few more details; for the moment it may be assumed that the Mexican factor is a "known." But what of the other term in the equation? What are the characteristic features of the Great Society from which it is proposed that certain values are to be transposed over to the Mexican side?

To answer this last question in any detail would require several volumes and in any case would be a work of supererogation. For the purposes at hand, it will be sufficient merely to recall some of those features of the Great Society which for convenience we may subsume under the concept "industrialism."[12] To this end let us have recourse once more to the device of making a list. Turning over the pages of the books of such well-known analysts as Thornstein Veblen, Werner Sombart, J. A. Hobson and R. H. Tawney, and of more recent writers in the same field, such as Lewis Mumford, Stuart Chase, and Erich W. Zimmermann, let us jot down a rough classification of some of the characteristic features of modern industrialized society:

[11] This well-known phrase, first given extensive currency by Graham Wallas, I propose to use here as a convenient way of designating the western world of industrialism best exemplified by such countries as Germany, England, and the United States.

[12] I have selected this word because of its relative colorlessness and its broad connotations. "Machine culture," a phrase often used loosely to symbolize the phenomena with which I am here concerned, is too narrow and concrete a form of reference. "Capitalism," another favorite concept, has become a fighting term and hence has been robbed of some of its usefulness in objective discussions.

Techniques and procedure: The use of inanimate power with a corresponding emphasis on machines and capital equipment rather than labor; the factory system of mass production involving the subdivision of work and the specialization of labor; an economy of exchange with a complex structure of interdependent markets and a highly complicated and ubiquitous system of money and credit; private property, especially private property in "intangibles" and "imponderables" such as good-will and monopoly rights; the corporate organization and absentee ownership of industry; the "suzerainty of the business man"; highly developed techniques of salesmanship; intensified communication and mobility; a close interrelation between science and industry with the method of deliberate controlled experiment taking the place of haphazard trial and error and traditional rule of thumb; the storing of "depersonalized and devitalized facts and formulas" in books and libraries and the building up of a common reservoir of fungible knowledge; a cumulative process of invention.

Attitudes and motives: The "maximation of profit" the chief motive and "free competition" the basic principle of industrial activity; a mental world which, under the discipline of the machine, tends to be matter of fact and secular rather than magical and superstition-ridden; pecuniary standards of value; expanding wants.

Concomitants and resultants: "Man in large degree dominant over nature"; a high total and per-man productivity; relatively high standards of living for the mass of the population; international rivalries over sources of raw materials and markets often leading to armed conflicts; the dominance of time considerations ("mankind crucified on the hands of the clock"); conspicuous consumption and emulative conduct (the dominance of the drive to "keep up with the Joneses," satisfaction derived from quantity rather than quality, possession rather than enjoyment the hallmark of success); shoddy goods; the "divorce of the worker from his tools," the "repression of the instinct of workmanship," the "nullification of personal skill"; "technological tenuousness" (the danger of concentrating the control of the industrial processes in the hands of a few engineers and technicians); a disproportion between the accumulation of technical knowledge and the effectiveness of the control of this knowledge for human needs ("we control nature but not ourselves"); business cycles, price and credit dislocations, instability, crises and depression; wasteful exploitation of natural resources; standardization of behavior patterns and uniformity of attitudes; surplus production and dumping; overvaluation of industry at the expense of agriculture; urbanization, supercongestion and overconcentration of population;

the machine sets the pace of living ("we do not ride upon the railroad; it rides upon us").

It is obvious that any list such as this raises questions with every phrase set down. I do not pretend that the list is exhaustive or logically and scientifically air-tight. Moreover, it is clear that many of the features here cited are not peculiar to the Great Society; it is only the intensity and extensity of their presence in this society which leads students to dub these features as "characteristic."

I do not conceive it as my job to enter into a discussion of the accuracy of the analysis my peers have made of the culture of the Great Society. What interest me here are the conclusions they draw. Stuart Chase, for example, in his book, *Men and Machines*, presents an elaborate balance sheet of the operations of the "machine" in society under the headings: "Effects manifestly good"; "Effects manifestly evil"; and "Effects both good and evil." Ordinarily such attempts to balance the books on industrialism run in terms of a distinction between techniques and procedures which, generally speakings are deemed to be "good" and attitudes, motives and methods of control which, by and large, are considered to be "bad." Veblen wrote a whole shelf of books mainly to show that the "industrial arts" are being perverted at the hands of businessmen motivated by pecuniary considerations. Zimmermann, approaching the matter from the point of view of resource patterns and energy uses, concludes:

> The modern resource pattern makes possible a division between man —the inventor, planner, director and aspirer—and the inanimate forces of nature. Few will deny that the latter system has inherent advantages over the former [that is the Athenian system under Pericles]. Unfortunately, however, there is a wide gap between what is possible under the modern resource pattern and what is actually being achieved. But that gap is due to an "institutional lag," and especially due to the excrescences of our pecuniary system of economics and to the remnants of feudalism still present in our social order. In other words, man today has a fuller opportunity to plan, direct, and to aspire. What uses he makes of this opportunity, how well he plans, directs and aspires, depends on him.[13]

Sometimes the analysis is made in terms of "industrialism" and "capitalism." Thus we find G. D. H. Cole writing:

> It does not follow that industrialism need in its later phases preserve certain of the features most prominently associated with it up to the present time. Urbanization [for example] is still proceeding unchecked in the

[13] Erich W. Zimmerman, *World Resources and Industries*, p. 61. Reprinted by permission of Harper and Brothers.

industrialized countries, but its causes are now social quite as much as economic. The development of cheap road transport and of widely diffused electrical power is removing the technological reasons for close urban concentration of industry. . . . Little advantage has yet been taken of these opportunities, because no less essential to business than accessible power and cheap transport is an available supply of labor. . . .

If mechanization were applied with the conscious object of making labor less hard and intense as well as more productive, a great deal that is barely attempted as yet could be readily accomplished. . . .

Industrialism then does not connote capitalism, although it is historically connected with it. The essence of industrialism lies in certain technical forms of productive activity which are capable of being directed to various economic ends and by radically different forms of economic organization.[14]

However the question is dealt with, the clear implication of practically all the dissectors of the Great Society is that there are features which are evitable and features which are inevitable, some which are in the nature of the case and some which are in the nature of historical accident, cultural lag, the perversity of mankind, or other factors and forces not deemed to be unalterable. The specific content of the evitable as opposed to the inevitable, of course, varies from writer to writer. Interdependence of economic units, social and economic mobility, the subdivision and specialization of labor, the use of inanimate power and machines, a system of credit and money—these in the heightened and intensified form in which we know them in modern times would appear to be a few of the elements inherent in industrialism. On the other hand, there seems to be more than a reasonable doubt that such phenomena—to mention only a few—as the profit motive, private property, pecuniary standards of value, overconcentration of population, waste, and the dominance of the business man, are of necessity part and parcel of the system, whatever may be their actual connection therewith. If these statements be true, they have bearings of the greatest importance upon the matters with which we are chiefly concerned here, that is: Can Mexico appropriate only those parts of industrialism which will be economically and socially useful? And, if so, what price will she have to pay? Before we are ready to answer these questions, however, we must consider one other closely related matter: At what stage does Mexico stand at the present time in the process of industrialization; to what extent has Mexico taken over or developed in her own right the characteristic features of industrialism?

[14] "Industrialism" in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VIII, 25-26. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

Pilgrims Progress

Here again I shall have to restrict myself to illustrating rather than exhausting the subject. This is partly due to the fact that this book must come to an end some time. Also, the statistical material available is inadequate to allow anything more than a most cursory survey of the extent to which industrialism has made its mark in the land of the snake and the eagle.

INDICES OF MECHANIZATION

The indices of the relatively limited mechanization of Mexican agriculture we have already considered in detail. The reader wishing to refresh his mind on the subject is invited especially to note again the data given on pages 258 and 259.

Likewise, in the preceding chapter, figures have been reviewed showing the relative absence in Mexico of machine methods of transportation. To the data there presented on railways, we may add that, despite the inadequate coverage the railways give to the country, they are nevertheless the largest employers of labor in any single mechanized industry—almost 59,000 men being so occupied. Mexican railways, it may be further observed, in recent years have been transporting around 16 million passengers a year. Railway kilometrage since the turn of the century has almost doubled: in 1900 there were 13,585 kilometers; in 1933 almost 24,000.[15]

Mexico, we have noted, as yet has few surfaced highways. We may now add the concomitant of this fact: there are also relatively few automobiles. According to the latest estimate available (1934) the total number of automobiles of all types is 95,356. This figures out one automobile for every 173.6 persons. By way of comparison, the ratio of persons per automobile in the same year in the United States was 5.4, Canada 9.5, France 21.6, Argentina 35.3, and Spain 145.2.[16] However, both the number and use of automobiles in Mexico are growing with considerable rapidity. Between 1926 and 1934 the total number of cars increased by 63.8 per cent, or from 58,223 to 95,356.[17] The annual consumption of gasoline in the period from 1925 to 1933 increased from a little less than 106 million liters to almost 232 million liters.[18]

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[15] *México en cifras*, p. 73a.

[16] Appendix A, Table 91.

[17] But note that almost half the automobiles in Mexico are concentrated in the Federal District—42.5 per cent of all cars in 1932, the last year for which detailed data are available.

[18] Appendix A, Table 92.

Other indices of the use of the machine in the field of transportation and communications may be listed as follows: Mexico had at the last (1932) accounting 101,208 telephones and 26,888 kilometers of telephone line. This would mean one telephone for every 163.6 inhabitants and 13.7 kilometers of line for each 1,000 square kilometers of area.[19] By way of comparison: in 1931 Germany had 3,114,000 telephones, or approximately one instrument for every 20.8 persons; the United States in 1927 had 18,523,000, or approximately one for every 6.4 persons.[20] Telegraph lines (all wires) in 1931 in Mexico totaled 138,460 kilometers or about one-fifth the total length of telegraph wire in use in Great Britain in the same year.[21] Finally, aviation in Mexico in the last few years has developed by leaps and bounds. Passengers transported in 1933 totaled 39,123 as compared with 12,386 in 1929; kilograms of freight (baggage, mail, and packages) carried increased from 216,770 in 1929 to 1,290,778 in 1933.[22]

Turning now to manufacturing, we have the following picture according to the 1930 census: total number of establishments 48,793; total investments 979.5 million pesos; total persons employed 318,763 of whom 262,264 were wage earners, 19,364 were administrative (office) employees and 37,135 were proprietors or partners; total gross value of product 908.9 million pesos; total wages and salaries paid out 181.1 million pesos, of which 137.4 million pesos were wages to workers.

In interpreting these figures it is important to note: (a) The geographical distribution of industry in Mexico is very uneven. The Federal District ranks first both in value of total production and in number of wage earners employed, accounting for 27.3 per cent of the first and 19.4 per cent of the last mentioned. The Federal District and the state of Veracruz together account for 38.5 per cent of the total value of production and 31.3 per cent of all wage earners employed; on the other hand, in the 17 lowest ranking states (over half of the total), less than 21 per cent of the total wage earners are employed and only 12.9 per cent of the total value of the articles manufactured is produced. (b) Most manufacturing plants in Mexico are on a relatively small scale. A little over 21,000 or approximately 43 per cent of the total manufacturing plants produce articles valued at less than 500 pesos a year; these plants employ 10.4 per cent of the

[19] *México en cifras*, p. 82.

[20] *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1933*, pp. 52, 55; *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1932*, pp. 7, 336.

[21] *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1933*, pp. 141, 218.

[22] Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*.

total wage earners and account for 0.4 per cent of the values produced annually. On the other hand, the 305 plants in the big industry class (that is, with the annual value of their products averaging 500,001 pesos or over) account for almost 44 per cent of the total values produced, and 31.4 per cent of all wage earners employed.

The most important single manufacturing undertaking in Mexico is cotton textiles. The 520 plants in this field employ almost 15 per cent of all the wage earners occupied in manufacturing and produce 11.2 per cent of the total annual values. In the order of their importance in terms of the annual value of production the next 9 industries are: electric power plants, flour mills, sugar and alcohol refineries, corn mills (*molinos de nixtamal* for grinding corn for tortillas), breweries, cotton gins, bakeries, cigars and cigarettes, and machine shops. Note the absence of "heavy" industries. Carpentry shops, corn mills, bakeries, shoes and ready made clothing account for 17,387 or 35.6 per cent of the total of all manufacturing plants in Mexico.[23]

In order to furnish some basis for the evaluation of the importance of manufacturing in Mexico attention may be called to the fact that 11.4 times as many people are employed and 3.8 times as much money is invested in agriculture as in manufacturing. In such highly industrialized countries as the United States and Germany the situation is reversed and the number of people employed in manufacturing exceeds the number employed in agriculture by 10.3 per cent and 94.3 per cent respectively.[24] The state of California in the United States in the same year covered by the Mexican census (1929), although California is not one of the most important manufacturing states and although the figures do not cover plants whose annual product was valued at less than 10,000 pesos or any electric power plants at all, nevertheless employed in manufacturing 14.7 per cent more workers, paid out 515.8 per cent more wages, and produced articles valued at 582.8 per cent more money than the whole manufacturing industry in Mexico.[25]

Mexico is famous the world over for its oil and mining industries, and not without reason. In 1929 the oil industry[26] employed 12,129 individuals, paid out approximately 8.8 million pesos in salaries and

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[23] For detailed statistics on manufacturing see Appendix A, Tables 86, 87, 88, and 89. The figures here cited do not include 11 "official" establishments, employing 3,374 workers and paying 5.6 million pesos in wages (mostly for the manufacture of army and navy supplies) for which detailed data are not available.

[24] *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1933*, pp. 314-15.

[25] Based on data in *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1932*, p. 765. Dollars reduced to pesos at the rate of two for one.

[26] Does not include refineries. These are listed under manufacturing.

wages and turned out products valued at around 92.0 million pesos. Similar figures in mining and metallurgy were: 74,734 persons employed; 77.8 million pesos paid in salaries and wages; and an annual product valued at 373.3 million pesos.[27] Yet, all things are relative. Oil and mining and metallurgy combined employed less than 2 per cent of the total economically active population in Mexico. The amount of oil produced in Mexico in 1929 (44.7 million barrels) was considerable, but as compared with, say, the production of the state of Texas in the same year (296.8 million barrels) it was hardly more than enough to cover the bottom of the barrel. Mexico's mines are rich indeed, but the total value of all minerals produced in Mexico in 1929 was, as compared to countries in which mining is highly organized and industrialized, relatively small—for instance, the value of the coal alone exported by Great Britain in 1929 was almost 100 million pesos more than the value of the total production of all minerals in Mexico.[28]

Foreign trade statistics are also useful in indicating trends of mechanization in Mexico. These statistics reveal the relative inability of the country at the present time to produce machines and machine-made products; at the same time they are indicative of a large flow of machines and machine products into the country from the outside. If we take a recent year, and one not too far down in the valley of depression,[29] and place side by side Mexico's most important imports and exports the truth of the statement just made becomes apparent at once. Thus in 1931 Mexico's most valuable imports were in order of their rank:

	Million Pesos
Lard and lard compound	10.1
Mineral oils and derivatives	10.3
Automobiles, trucks and parts	8.9
Miscellaneous machine parts	6.2
Iron and steel tubing	5.5
Rayon fiber and cloth	4.6
Generators, transformers, etc.	4.3
Miscellaneous iron and steel manufactures	4.0
Textile milling machinery	3.9

[27] Appendix A, Table 86 and *México en cifras*, p. 68.

[28] *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1933*, p. 144.

[29] The story of Mexico's international trade in recent years parallels that of most other countries: from the high level in 1929 exports and imports started slipping into the chasm, hitting bottom in 1932; since 1932 there has been a slow and painful climb upward. One difference in the Mexican story is that exports were on the downgrade long before imports—i.e., the high point for exports in recent years was 1926. See *México en cifras*, p. 84.

	Million Pesos
Telephone and telegraph apparatus	3.7
Varnishes, paints and lacquers	3.5
Cyanide of potassium, soda and alkaline	3.0
Material for electric transmission lines	2.9
Tin in sheets	2.8
Automobile tires	2.3
Sheet iron and steel	2.2[30]

Of the specific products in the export list in 1931 the most important were:

Copper, lead, zinc, etc.	111.1
Gold and silver	84.1
Mineral oils and derivatives	58.2
Coffee	19.3
Tomatoes and other fresh vegetables	19.1
Henequen	10.4
Bananas	7.1
Chicle	6.7
Cotton	5.1
Ixtle and other fibers	4.7
Sugar	4.6
Raíz de zacatón	3.3
Hides and skins	3.0
Garbanzos	2.6
Cattle	1.9[31]

The story these figures tell may be summarized in a phrase: Mexico is a country that produces raw materials and uses them to buy machines and manufactured products.

MISCELLANEOUS MARKS OF INDUSTRIALISM

If we turn now from the field of mechanization to those other and often more intangible features of industrialism in the Great Society and inquire to what extent they are found in Mexico, even fragmentary statistics and indirect indications of the type just reviewed are difficult to come by.

[30] The value of all imports in 1931 was 216.6 million pesos classified as follows: minerals and metals 46.9; machinery and apparatus 38.5; textile manufactures 28.4; vegetable products 22.1; chemicals and drugs 21.7; livestock and animal products 18.8; automobiles, trucks, tires and parts 11.2; and "all others" 29.0.

[31] The value of all exports in 1931 was 399.7 million pesos classified as follows: mineral products 253.3; vegetable products 87.5; livestock and animal products 7.1; manufactures and miscellaneous products 7.0; and gold and silver coins 44.8. In connection with the last mentioned it should be noted that in 1931 a prohibition in force for several years against the export of gold was removed.

That the institution of private property is in fact the accepted basis of economic activity in Mexico (whatever may be its position in law), I think I have already sufficiently demonstrated. The idea of private property in Mexico, however, has mainly been associated in the minds of the people with property in land. Mexicans, partly because of the lack of opportunity and partly because of the strong hold on them of the aristocratic tradition that gentlemen become lords of the land or bureaucrats but never businessmen,[32] have been slow to grasp the advantages derivable from the manipulation of stocks and bonds, good-will, monopoly rights, patents and other modern forms of property. Similarly, under the sway of the psychology of the *hacendado* the Mexicans of pecuniary competence have been moved less by the desire for profits and more by an interest in satisfying their appetite for security and conspicuous land-hogging and the concomitant pleasures thereof.[33]

However, it would be a mistake, indeed, to assume that the concepts of "property in imponderables" and "the maximation of profits" are unknown in Mexico. The conquerors of Mexico and their successors in Colonial days were certainly no mean exponents of the principle of extracting what the traffic will bear and of monopolizing the good things for the home folks. In more recent times, since the days when Díaz first brought the concessionaire system of alienating the country's resources and markets[34] to the fine flower

[32] Handman, "The Mexican Revolution and the Standard of Living," *Papers and Proceedings of the American Sociological Society*, XV, p. 90.

[33] ". . . The life of the *hacendado* holds a charm unrivaled by the attractions of any other occupation. The elements which make this appeal are sufficiently obvious: pride of proprietorship, a minimum of toil, the leisurely oversight of an estate, and unlimited opportunity for the exercise of authority over humble servitors. Furthermore, the life of the *hacendada* offers ample occasion for the display of fine horses, expensive trappings, and picturesque accouterments. . . . The *hacendado*, the 'man on horseback' . . . is the real hero of the nation. A large rural estate is the goal of ambition of every true Mexican, and the sentimental value that attaches to these holdings is an influence in the life of the nation that far eclipses the economic value of the properties." G. M. McBride, *The Land Systems of Mexico*, p. 40, published by the American Geographical Society of New York.

[34] Business and industrial enterprises, especially if they be of some importance, are usually carried on in Latin American countries under contracts entered into with the government. These contracts, or concessions, may or may not stipulate monopoly rights. Quite often their terms, however, are most favorable to the concessionaire and, accordingly, most unfavorable to the underlying population in the country in which they are granted. Concerning the concession system under Díaz, González Roa states:

"Governments founded under capitalism must necessarily grant extraordinary protection to capital and when in a given nation such capital does not exist, or will only be invested in agricultural business, then the protection must be conceded to foreign capital. Foreign capital will not emigrate to countries such as ours unless attracted by great gains. . . . If to this we add the rapacity of certain politicians to amass wealth even though the

of its perfection, Mexico has enjoyed the advantage of having in her midst a number of foreign experts in modern forms of business enterprise. These gentlemen have found the Mexicans, and more especially those Mexicans who undertake to make a living out of the exceedingly unstable occupation of politics and bureaucratic preferment, apt pupils. The old *hacendado* was an exponent of leisure, knew something of the fine art of conspicuous expenditure, and had his acquisitive bump well developed, but, as compared to the new leisure class recruited from the more up-and-coming members of the bureaucracy under Díaz, he proved to be a mere amateur. The opportunities and the wherewithal the *hacendado* could command for the purpose of engaging in emulative conduct were too small to allow him to keep up in the procession headed by those who were strategically placed to catch the shower of gold released in the "exchange of favors" between the foreign business men and their Mexican associates.[85]

In a word, the seeds of pecuniary standards of value fell on fertile soil in Mexico. The lessons of business enterprise were well learned and, although the revolution has operated to circumscribe somewhat the area in which business talent may be exercised, the principles of this art acquired in Díaz's time have not been forgotten by reason of disuse. The number of individuals who have been inducted into the esoteric mysteries of business in Mexico is still relatively low and the scale on which indigenous business men are able to operate is very small as compared to captains of industry of the first rank such as are found in those nations which are members in good standing of the Great Society. Nevertheless, within their limits, Mexican business men perform in quite the usual manner.

Nation be sold out for a mess of lentils, then it will be understood why the system of concessions was established in Mexico. According to this system, native power, water flows and streams, public utilities and industries were adjudicated to foreigners, frequently under the form of monopolies and under special legislation which in every case placed the concessionaire outside the common law." *The Mexican People and their Detractors,* p. 53. In the same connection see also Howland, *op. cit.,* pp. 42-50.

[85] "The upper bureaucracy was the immediate beneficiary of this large scale investing [by foreign interests]. Either in the capacity of government officials or of that of legal advisors of foreign investing concerns, the upper bureaucrats found themselves in a strategic position. The earnings of the investors ordinarily exceeding what might be termed good profits, they could afford to pay for services which would put them in a position to gain such profits or even better ones. In order to do this they were willing to pay for services rendered, and payment was not ungenerous seeing that the terms were not ungenerous. True to the European-Spanish ideals of life, the beneficiaries of the new regime were not slow in letting the world know of their good fortune." Handman, "The Mexican Revolution and the Standard of Living," *Proceedings of the American Sociological Society,* XV, 97.

Mexico has even reached the stage where Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, and other unions of mutual aid and comfort for the practitioners of pecuniary arts are becoming as prevalent as *pulquerías*.[36]

Other indices of the uneven infiltration of industrialism in Mexico might be offered. I have called attention, for instance, to the relatively slight coverage of the country by the monetary and credit system.[37] Also, I have cited figures showing the extent of urbanization and its growth in recent years.[38] However, I think I can better illustrate the point I wish to make here by considering a few examples of the more incidental, and perhaps even accidental, evidences of the invasion of industrialism than I can by burdening the reader with any further statistical analyses.

By reason of geographical contiguity and other factors it is the United States that is playing the role of master of ceremonies in initiating Mexico into the amenities of existence in the Great Society. The industrialization of Mexico is in large measure only another way of saying the Americanization of Mexico. Let us consider a few of the evidences of the progress of this process.

Pick up the Sunday edition of either one of the principal morning newspapers in Mexico City, and what do you find? Let us look at the advertisements first. Does this sound familiar: Hinds Honey and Almond Cream—Keep Your Skin Smooth and Youthful; Pebeco Tooth Paste—Mothers and Children Prefer It Because of Its Agreeable Taste; Cutex—Beautiful Nails in Five Minutes; Flit—Do Not Accept Imitations; Crane Co., Bathroom Furnishings—Service Quality, Economy; Elizabeth Arden Will Make You Beautiful; Stein's Emulsion—Will Invigorate Your Organism; Parker's Duofold Fountain Pens—Pressureless Writing; Dr. Scholl's Zino Pads—No more Corns! or, if you prefer, Bauer and Black's Corn Plasters—Goodbye Corns and Pains; Remington Cartridges; Elgin Watches; Studebaker Automobiles; Arrow Shirts for the Well-Dressed Man; Crown Corks and Seals; Scott's Emulsion Makes You Robust; Dr. Lovett's Pills; Brunswick Balke Callendar Billiard Tables; Chevrolet Automobiles; John Deere Tractors; Vigorlina—For Weak Men and Women; Vick's Vaporub; Pontiac Automobiles; New Method Oil Stoves; Quality Batteries; Standard Plumbing Fixtures; General Electric Refrigerators; Palmolive Soap—Will Conserve the Natural Beauty and Freshness of Your Skin; Bayer Aspirin; Fairbanks Scales; Princess Pat Powder—Tell the World That You Are Beauti-

[36] Indeed, as I write these words the newspapers announce that Mexico is to be the seat of the international conventions of Rotarians and Lions in the summer of 1935!

[37] Pp. 378-79.

[38] P. 301.

ful; Ford Trucks; Automatic Record Company of Chicago Will Teach You English; R. C. A. Radios; Westinghouse Radios; Clarion Radios; Atwater Kent Radios; Victor Radios.

An analysis I recently made of the advertising in the Sunday edition of one of the leading morning newspapers in Mexico gave the following results: Out of a total of 1,650 column inches of unclassified advertising, 940 inches, or 57 per cent were devoted to the advertising of American products; 570 inches, or 34 per cent of the total, to Mexican products, and the remaining 123 inches, or 9 per cent to German, French, and other foreign products.

While we are on the subject of advertising let me mention how well American techniques have been applied in the case of the road to Cuernavaca—that haven of delight for all tourists. Eight years ago when I first arrived in Mexico a trip to Cuernavaca was high adventure. It meant several hours of bumping over an ancient cobble road, up mountains and around curves that left your soul in ecstacy and your heart in your mouth. Came progress and pavement. Now you can drive to Cuernavaca in half the time in ease and comfort over what is surely one of the best built roads in the world. And that is all to the good. But the scenery, the mountain vistas, the stark cold plains of the plateau at the top, the valleys spread out thousands of feet below? Well, you can still see them, but you have to be quick about it, for where once there was not a billboard or a signboard for miles on end, there are now, according to a count which I made in October, 1934, 270, or an average of 6 to every mile![39]

Going back to our newspapers, let us look at the magazine section and list what we find:

(a) Four pages of comics. *Moot y Jef* are immediately recognizable despite the Spanish orthography. But what are these: *Educando a papá*, *Maldades de los pilluelos*, and *La taquígrafa que no trabaja?* Nothing more or less than our old friends "Bringing up Father," "The Kat-

[39] The classification of products advertised was as follows:

	Domestic	*Foreign*
Automobiles and supplies	10	20
Oil and gasoline	3	17
Cigarettes	37	—
Liquor	55	6
Clothes	36	7
Household equipment and supplies	3	4
Drugs and beauty aids	16	12
Food	13	—
Miscellaneous	22	9
	195	75

zenjamer Kids," and "Polly and Her Pals." (b) A page of *rompecabezas*, literally "head-breakers," and actually the familiar puzzle drawings of A. W. Nugent appearing in dozens of American papers every Sunday. (c) A special feature article entitled *New York by Day and Night*, which each Sunday supplies new evidence of the decadence and iniquity of the gringos in their native habitat. (d) A two-page spread with lurid illustrations of a serial supplied by the King Feature Syndicate entitled *Revelations about Classic Crimes—Police Mysteries from the Secret Archives of the Pinkertons.* (e) A page devoted to *Life in Hollywood*, containing all the latest and juiciest gossip, including the real inside dope on Greta Garbo.

And now that the subject of the movies has been mentioned, let us review a few more facts about this highly significant index of American *kultur* in Mexico. Are you a Mexican living in Mexico City, and are you seeking amusement? All right, turn to the pages of the morning paper on a typical Sunday and you will find that you have the choice of the following:

Of the two largest movie houses in Mexico City (each with a seating capacity of 3,500), one offers Marlene Dietrich, Gary Cooper, and Adolphe Menjou in *Morocco—The Film Without Precedent;* the other presents *Oh For a Man—A Delicate Romance of Exotic Loves*, with Jeanette MacDonald and Reginald Denny. In another equally high-class (albeit, somewhat smaller) downtown movie, you may see Helen Twelvetrees, the Empress of Drama, in *Millie—The Most Sensational and Electrifying Success of the Year.* If you do not like any of these, then there are four theatres where you can see *That Epic of the Forest: Rango;* six theatres showing Ruth Chatterton in *The Right to Love*, and Clara Bow in *The Sky Is the Limit;* five theatres presenting *That Master Work—Lummox;* one theatre where you may watch Constance Bennett, Adolphe Menjou, and Anita Page perform in *The Sinner—A Soul Stirring Drama.* And finally, in one small suburban theatre you can see somebody or other in *The Woman Who Surrendered*—or perhaps something else equally uplifting in the score of neighborhood theatres that do not advertise in the particular paper you are examining.

Now if you are a highly patriotic Mexican and do not want to see *any* American movie, then you are more or less out of luck, for although Mexico City has dozens of movie palaces, there are only seven legitimate theatres and tonight only five of these have shows: two Spanish dramas, and three variety entertainments.

In order to feed the some 700 movie theatres scattered over the Republic, Mexico imports from the United States each year around nine and half million linear feet of film, or, on the average, about

600 "feature films" and 800 "short subjects." Nine-tenths of all the movies shown in Mexico are made in the United States.

The newspapers and the moving pictures, being at once both indices and instruments of cultural penetration, are highly significant in revealing the force of the impact of Americanism upon Mexico. Hardly of less importance as agencies for the spread of American ideas and American ways of life, however, are the radio and the phonograph.

There are 60 broadcasting stations in Mexico, and the number of receiving sets was recently estimated at 150,000. In 1929, before depression and currency depreciation raised their barriers to trade, Mexico imported from the United States over one million dollars worth of radios and radio equipment. More than 90 per cent of all radios in Mexico are of American manufacture. In 1929, Mexico was the second best foreign market in the world for American phonograph records, with total imports from the United States of around $600,000.

Ponder these figures and you will understand why in one of Mexico City's leading newspapers there appeared recently a cartoon showing an American tourist trying to buy a parrot from a Mexican laborer. Under the cartoon were these words:

Gringo (in broken Spanish): "Me want parrot with very Mexican habits." *Mexican Laborer:* "Sure boss. This is the most Mexican parrot you ever saw. He knows how to sing *Mammy*, *Broadway Melody*, and *Hot Mamma!*"[40]

In the conversion of Mexicans to American and English sports we have still another illustration of Mexico's induction into the Great Society. On a recent Sunday in Mexico City, one morning paper announced 2 boxing matches, 3 tennis matches, 20 basket-ball games, and 115 baseball games. The days of bullfighting as the national sport of Mexico are numbered. More than once during the last season the bullfighting news yielded the first page of the sporting section of the newspaper to reports of baseball and basket-ball games. And an American consul in Mazatlán, on the West Coast, reports: "On two occasions during the past year a bullfight and a baseball game were held on the same day. The baseball stadium was packed, but the promoters of the bullfight did not even make expenses . . . baseball is the most popular sport in this district. The City of Mazatlán

[40] A few years ago I heard the following speech over the radio by the announcer for one of the official government broadcasting stations:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: The program tonight is dedicated to the National Prosperity Campaign which the government has been carrying on for the last few weeks. Every patriotic Mexican must consume products made in Mexico. The only salvation of the nation is to stop importing foreign goods. . . . The next number on our musical program will be a *foxtrot titulado, 'Los San Luis Blues,' Victor record por Paul Whiteman y su orquesta.*"

has had a baseball team for the last thirty years and at present has a league of five teams, two of which are composed of girls."

For obvious reasons it is the larger urban centers in Mexico which are bearing the brunt of the American cultural invasion; the great rural masses of the people are relatively untouched by the new ways of life. The word relatively is used advisedly, however; I have in mind a three-week's horseback trip I made not long ago through one of the poorest and most isolated parts of the country. I remember arriving, after three long days of grueling riding into the heart of the great Guerrero mountain range, at the little town of Tlapa. As I dismounted from my horse a native Indian band came marching down the street with a little boy in front holding aloft on a stick a lurid billboard poster announcing to the world that on that very night the local movie house would show a *Stirring and Adventurous Drama in Eight Parts Entitled: The Reporter of Hollywood!*

In this village I found the next morning that I could buy in one of the stores: Spaulding's boxing gloves, Kodaks, Palmolive soap, Everready flashlights and batteries, Kellogg's cornflakes, Pebeco tooth paste—to mention only a few of a long list of American factory-made products.

It was on this same trip, in the mountain village of Malinaltepec that the local Catholic priest told me how, in a certain neighboring village where he was holding mass, just at the most solemn part of the ceremony the native Indian band in the back of the church, in all seriousness and reverance, began to play *My Man*!

And then there is the story about two of my friends who, while making a horseback trip through the interior of Yucatán, stopped for a few days at a little Maya village. During their stay, two messengers appeared from a neighboring community twelve hours away by horseback to invite them to come and see the new open-air rural school. My friends, feeling that this would take them too far out of their way, declined the invitation with appropriate regrets. Two days later the messengers reappeared. And this time they played their trump card, for very seriously and very formally they said: "You have refused to visit our village; you have refused to inspect our school; but surely you *cannot* refuse to come and see our brand new W.C." And indeed my friends could not. They rode all the next day; arriving at the village at twilight they were greeted by the town officials, and, accompanied by most of the population, they very solemnly inspected the handiwork of the local Maya "Specialist" and declared it good!

CHAPTER XXIX

THE EJIDO AND THE WAY OUT

MEXICO STANDS in the presence of a profound and far-reaching change—a change which a large part of the Western World has already undergone. Eighty-five years ago, the first thirteen kilometers of railroad were opened to traffic. Fifty years ago, Porfirio Díaz had already launched his program of economic development, the first step in a process destined to undermine the old landed aristocracy and destroy the essentially feudal agricultural system that dominated the economic life of the country, thus sweeping away the last bulwark against the pressing forces of the outside world. The long years of political upheaval and social disorder ushered in by the Madero revolution served to retard but not to stop the inevitable onrush. Now at last the floodgates are wide open and the tide begins to flow across the face of the land.

Mexico is already on the way and the new world beckons. But let us not lose our perspective: as I tried to indicate by comment and comparison as I went along, the evidences I have offered of the industrialization of Mexico are, after all, only straws indicating which way the wind is blowing; it must be remembered that it does not take much wind to move a straw. Mexico City and a few other centers in somewhat less degree are already for all practical purposes part and parcel of the Great Society; but step out of these centers and you step back one century, two centuries, or what you will. The vast majority of the Mexican people still live and have their being in quiet backwaters, only beginning here and there to be sucked into the new currents stirring Mexican life. It is this fact which in some ways is the most hopeful aspect of the present Mexican situation: not because the life in these backwaters is a finished thing perfect and complete; not because it is in all things superior to life in the Great Society; but rather because it is yet to be shaped and molded, because it is still raw material out of which, if time be caught by the forelock, it may be possible to create a better life than has yet been achieved not only in Mexico but perhaps in any other part of the world.

Attitudes and Points of View

In the face of the problems presented by the impending industrialization of Mexico it is possible to assume any one of a number of different attitudes. Some have chosen to adopt the attitude of shrill and, I believe, impotent protest. Take, for example, the following diatribe by the Mexican writer José Juan Tablada (who, by the way, lives in New York!):

> Mexico is threatened by a plague that is diluting our blood, softening our bones, turning our marrow to water and, worst of all, weakening our wills. . . . I do not exaggerate . . . the vast majority of Mexico is contaminated with Americanization, and an untoward *gringoism*. . . . We are attacked by the vain megalomania of an elephant inflated with pure air. . . . Telephones, radios, victrolas, tin Lizzies, typewriters—mechanisms all, not to make life easier but to complicate it, not to liberate us but to enslave us. . . . Machines that poison us with their smoke and brutalize us with their deafening noise. . . . And all this material and moral bankruptcy, polarized around Wall Street and the gangrenous [institution of] prohibition, and having for its equator the girdle of the Venus of Hollywood, that citadel of sex appeal—this is what we take for grandeur, what we judge to be a worthy model and what grotesquely and fatefully we imitate.[1]

Others prefer the closely associated attitude of romantic revolt. Like those writers who used to seek refuge in some ideal of imaginary past perfection—the guild system of the middle ages, the life of the noble savage in the South Sea islands, or, more vaguely, in some variety of "back to the land and nature"—they endow the Mexican village with values which are largely potential rather than actual, and construct a picture of a type of rural life that has never existed on land or sea and much less in Mexico. In its purest form this attitude of seeking asylum in some "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me" amounts to an almost complete negativism, a throwing out of the baby with the bath water with a vengeance.[2] Unable, or unwilling to distinguish between the forces in industrialism which serve life and those hostile to it, those individuals who adopt the attitude of romanticism are disposed to lump good, bad, and indifferent together and turn their backs on all alike. Their attitude is essentially sentimental, retrospective, and regressive.[3]

[1] *El Universal*, August 20, 1931.

[2] See Mumford, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-87.

[3] A fairly good illustration of this point of view is found in the following declaration made not long ago by a group of students in the Mexican National University:

There is still a third attitude possible to assume toward the problem of industrialism—an attitude which, I am happy to report, is gradually taking form and gaining ground in the minds of a few at least of the younger generation of Mexico's intellectual leaders. Not all Mexicans are wasting time in futile and bitter tirades. Not all Mexicans are given to sentimental vaporings and wailings over the passing of the good old days and the loss of the dear familiar ways. There are some Mexicans who are content to leave that sort of thing to expatriates living in New York and Paris or to the small army of visiting authors who write books filled with nostalgia for the rose gardens of Montezuma and advice to the Mexicans to sprinkle carpet tacks on their new national highways. Not all Mexicans are trying to hide their heads in the sand in order to shut away from their sight the spectacle of modern industrialism or are sticking out their tongues at Henry Ford or punishing their children by telling them on rainy nights that the machine will get them if they don't watch out.

There are some Mexicans who are beginning to think that there might be things more important than preserving their country in quaint and picturesque poverty for the entertainment of tourists. There are some Mexicans who are hard-boiled and realistically minded. There are a few economists, a few engineers, and a few political leaders who realize that it is both foolish and useless to talk about keeping the "machine" out of Mexico. They know that Mexico has things that the world needs and wants, and they are aware that other countries have things that Mexico wants and needs. They realize that Mexico inevitably and irresistibly is destined to become a part of the Great Society.

It is with the content and implications of this point of view that I wish to occupy myself in the few pages remaining to me.

Manifest Destiny

The first fundamental characteristic of the realistic approach has just been suggested: it is the frank recognition of the fact that the

"Mexico must be freed from the ridiculous and eccentric customs transplanted from the United States. We want a Mexico with a Mexican soul! A Mexico which is not ashamed of its brown face and of its homespun clothes. . . . We reject all that is foreign and we embrace with love all that is ours. . . . We defend our nationality and the religion of nationalism. . . . We must struggle against imperialism of every sort—whether it comes masked in moving pictures, the English language, jazz bands, or in good-will. Mexico—only Mexico with her myths, her legends, and her fiestas. Mexico with her folk songs . . . her Indian bands, her pottery of Tonalá, and Tlaquepaque, Uruapán and Quiroga, with her textiles of Oaxaca, Saltillo and Santa María del Río. . . . When Mexico is really Mexico, we will have nothing to fear. . . . Then we will realize that civilization does not mean Americanization, but nationalization." *El Excelsior*, July 12, 1931.

question of whether or not Mexico will become a part of the modern world is no longer a debatable one. It is being drawn into that complex of ways of thinking and acting, into that maze of institutional structures and technological procedures we have called industrialism and there is nothing under the sun which can prevent this process from continuing.

Some have offered the arguments that perhaps Mexico will never become industrialized because the country is wanting in the basic resources of coal and iron, because the people are illiterate, because of the lack of capital, and because there is no mass of consumers for the products of mass production.[4] If this argument is put forward in support of the contention that industrialism will not spring full grown overnight and that the industrial process may very well take a somewhat different course in Mexico than it has in other parts of the world, then I am perfectly willing to grant that it is well founded.

On the other hand, if the proponents of the position here under discussion mean that Mexico cannot take advantage of the basic techniques, principles, and procedures of industrialism, then they are, I believe, in error. Mexico, to be sure, lacks capital; but so did Soviet Russia, and yet the Five-Year Plan was hardly a failure. Article 27 of the Mexican constitution sounds pretty discouraging to capitalists, but it was not too discouraging to keep the Electric Bond and Share Company from dropping more millions than they care to admit into Mexico ten years after Article 27 was part of the basic law of the land. If some of the recommendations I have made in these pages are put into effect, the keepers of the world's money bags will be even more discouraged with Mexico. Judging by their past record, however, they will probably not be too downhearted to continue their efforts to turn an honest penny if even the slightest opportunity is offered. As someone has said, it is not profits, but the expectation of profits which keeps the capitalistic world on the jump.[5]

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[4] See Tannenbaum, *Some Latin American Research Problems*, pp. 21-31; and Chase and Tyler, *Mexico*, pp. 311-15.

[5] No crucial argument is possible on either side of the question of whether the expansive forces of the Great Society in search of sources of raw materials and markets for goods and capital will continue to operate in the future as they have in the past. In recent years these forces have apparently lost a good deal of their energy. It may be, as some hold, that we have come to a change of phase, that surplus capital hereafter will not be available in such large quantities as it was before 1929, or, if available, will be used by each nation for the cultivating of its own garden. This may be, I repeat, but the facts are that up to the present time neither revolutions, nor constitutions, nor plague and pestilence have kept foreign capital out of Mexico. There are no reliable figures available, but according to the best estimates I can find between 1900 and 1930 American direct and in-

It is true that there is not sufficient effective demand in Mexico at the present time to warrant the establishing of ten thousand new factories next week; but this is one of those tail-chasing arguments. There is real demand in the sense that there are millions of people in need of the basic goods of life, to say nothing of those things which contribute to comfort and pleasure. Mexican peasants in their ignorance may be relatively wantless and in their poverty unable to supply their wants even if they were aware of them. The day of their ignorance, however, is already beginning to fade; the passing of their present poverty is already a possibility.[6]

As for coal in juxtaposition to iron, Mexico is admittedly poorly equipped. This may mean that the country will never be able to manufacture locomotives or automobiles. It does not signify, as we shall see in a moment, that Mexico is without power resources or basic minerals and other materials suitable for many industrial purposes. If by industrialism is meant "big industry"—Manchester, Pittsburg steelmills, shipyards and coal mines—it may very well be

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direct investments in Mexico increased from 185 million to around a billion dollars. From other countries also—notably England and Germany—there was a similar, albeit not as large, flow of capital into Mexico. Unless we are to assume that the current depression is to become permanent or that the present set-up in the United States and other capitalistic countries is to undergo radical changes, then I think we must admit that their expansive forces (including capital investment) will for some time to come continue to operate and that Mexico, even a changed and socialized Mexico, will be one of the fields of their operation.

[6] Those who are disposed to emphasize the cultural inertia (the *Verdammte Bedüfnslosigkeit*—damned Wantlessness) of the Mexican as a formidable barrier to industrialism might do well to consider how quickly his sales-resistance is broken down when opportunity allows. In this connection Manuel Gamio's study of what the Mexican emigrants returning from a stay in the United States bring back with them is significant. In 1927 Gamio classified the articles in the baggage of a large number of repatriates with the following results:

". . . It is obvious that in the case of 2,104 individuals considered, new needs have been created during their stay in the United States. Most notable is the tendency to raise the standards of domestic comfort, as is indicated by the number of objects brought in which these immigrants either did not use in Mexico or which were there very rare among them. . . . Clothing of American origin is represented by a high ratio . . . the trunks, valises, and bundles which contained clothing alone numbered 3,653, a ratio of 173.51. . . . The possession of automobiles is absolutely unheard of in the humble social class to which the immigrants generally belong. Nevertheless, 37.69 per cent of the persons in question, or more than one out of every three, owned an automobile on his return to Mexico."

Ratios for other articles to every 100 returning immigrants studied by Gamio were: bathtubs 38.19; wood and metal toilets 12.73; refrigerators 3.80; metal kitchen utensils 77.99; stoves 27.58; beds 82.88; mattresses 70.53; chairs 134.58; and sewing machines 16.57. Manuel Gamio, *Mexican Immigration to the United States*, pp. 67-69. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

that these things are not for Mexico. But small factories, powered by electricity or oil; specialized labor producing clothes, furniture, processing food and turning out a thousand and one articles which Mexicans need and eventually will want; the application of science, power, and machinery to agriculture; adequate highways and railways; a system of money, credit, and markets binding the whole country together—these are some of the techniques and procedures of industrialism of which Mexico can and must take advantage.

I say "must" for, quite aside from all questions of "peaceful penetration," "cultural imperialism," and other phrases referring to the putative, ineluctable operation on Mexico of the expansive forces of the Great Society, the internal pressure of necessity will inevitably force Mexico to embrace the basic procedures and attitudes of industrialism. Mexico like every other country must make its peace with the machine and with those inevitable concomitants of the machine such as specialization, interdependence of economic units, division of labor and increased social and economic mobility, for the very good reason that the machine and what it symbolizes and implies is the only way we know whereby man can obtain that control over his environment and reach that stage of productive efficiency which frees him from the trammels of a vegetable existence. This would seem to be too obvious to require emphasis were it not that the romantic revolters against certain aspects of industrialism, in their zeal to make their point, often leave the impression that nothing good can come out of Nazareth.

The second characteristic of the realistic point of view with regard to the problem of the "machine" is an unblinking and clear-sighted acceptance of the fact that the taking over and development of the basic techniques of industrialism must inevitably carry with it drastic and far-reaching changes in Mexico's present cultural complex. Change is part of the price which must be paid for the right to use the instruments of power. "Civilization," the Mexican educator, Moisés Sáenz, has written, "means the elevation of the masses, the incorporation of the Indian, the organization of the country, the raising of the standard of living, the improvement of the economic situation of the worker and peasant, the creation of institutions, the conversion of the Mexican ethnic, cultural, and political conglomeration into a nation. Civilization . . . means generalization; it means the loss of some things that are ours or their limitation in order that we may adjust ourselves to the universal."[7] No man can say how much will have to be surrendered in return for

[7] Sáenz, "La nueva escuela rural y el nacionalismo mexicano," *El Nacional*, July 25, 1932.

Mexico's adjustment to the universal. But of the fact of change there can be no question.

These changes following in the wake of the industrialization of Mexico, of the induction of the masses of the Mexican people into modern life, will be only partly a result of the spread of the machine. The modern machine—in the literal and concrete meaning of the term—is only one, albeit perhaps the most important, of the elements in the industrial complex. Some of the most profound changes due to appear in Mexican life will come not so much as direct effects of mechanization as they will be functions of increased communication, and the resulting intensification of social mobility. The automobile, moving picture, radio and tractor speed up and accentuate the process of the break-down of the folk culture initiated by schools and roads. The machine is a dynamic instrument in a social process, not the social process itself.

Profits and Losses

A third tenet of the realistic approach harks back to a point made in our discussion of Aspects of Industrialism and holds that: Whereas certain techniques, attitudes, and procedures of industrialism Mexico must and will have; and, whereas the taking over of these techniques, attitudes and procedures is bound to carry with it certain changes in culture; it does not therefore follow that industrialism need be swallowed whole or that every element in Mexican culture need be destroyed. The process of industrialism can and must be submitted to social control. Acculturation is not a matter possible to reduce to a recipe and manipulate at will; it is not as yet given to man to mix and create cultures as he would a cake —so many eggs, so much flour, so much milk. Foreign and undesired substances—a few pebbles perhaps, an egg too many, a little dirt—are in the present state of our knowledge and capacities bound to mar the products of our best social cooks. But this does not mean that no control is possible, that all attempts to define, select, and direct are condemned to futility. There is such a thing as a distinction between means and ends. Economic determinism is real and potent, but it is not the only factor in human existence.[8]

[8] ". . . Why should . . . [man] assume a craven posture in confronting the machine . . . ? It is absurd to hold that we must continue to accept the bourgeoise's overwhelming concern for power, practical success, above all for comfort, or that we must passively absorb, without discrimination and selection—which implies, where necessary, rejection—all the new products of the machine. It is equally foolish to believe that we must conform our living and thinking to the antiquated ideological system which helped create the numerous brilliant short cuts that attended the early development of the machine. The

MECHANIZATION: A STUDY IN PROFITS AND LOSSES

It is clear that this third principle of the realistic approach to the problems of industrialism is in some measure a confession of faith. It is a faith, however, which, I believe, is not without foundation. Let me illustrate what I have in mind by examining a few of the possibly evitable and inevitable aspects of the industrialization of Mexico, at the same time casting up a balance of some of the probable losses and profits.

The machine, urbanization, increased communications, interdependent markets, the use of inanimate power, the subdivision and specialization of labor, the scientific attitude, the introduction of time as a significant dimension of life, increased technological efficiency and productivity—these and other basic aspects of industrialism if they become integral parts of Mexican culture may mean :

1. The transformation of the present conglomerate of relatively independent and economically self-sufficient village cells into a coordinated, interrelated and interdependent economic system. "Splendid isolation" will be lost, but economic security for society as a whole, increased productivity, a higher standard of living, and a more intelligent and rational use of human and material resources may be gained.

2. The loss of a good deal of the present variety of the "functional integration" of Mexican village life. This functional integration, to the extent that it exists, depends partly on the ability of every man to turn his hand to any and everything and partly on the active participation of each individual in all aspects of village life. The division and specialization of labor will undoubtedly rob jack-of-all-tradism of much of the reason for its existence. But the good-at-none aspect of the matter may also be expected to disappear in increasing measure. Once again there is a loss of independence, but a gain in efficiency. Active participation in all forms of group life will be cut down and certain functions, including religion and entertainment, will tend to be delegated. Along with this, however, will go a release from the present social pressure to participate and an increase in the variety of types of activity in which the individual

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real question before us lies here : do these instruments further life and enhance its values, or not? . . .

"Every form of life, as Patrick Geddes has expressed it, is marked not merely by adjustment to the environment, but by insurgence against the environment : it is both creature and creator, both the victim of fate and the master of destiny : it lives no less by domination than by acceptance. . . . As a being with a social heritage, man belongs to a world that includes the past and the future, in which he can by his selective efforts create passages and ends not derived from the immediate situation, and alter the blind direction of the senseless forces that surround him." Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, pp. 318-19. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Co.

may take part if he so desires. At the present time, if one is in search of some way to find relief from the routine of work, he has in most Mexican villages two choices: alcohol or a religious fiesta—or, as is usually the case, the two combined. The widening of this choice to include such things as sports, looking at movies, listening to radios, reading, riding in automobiles, and so forth, need not involve a reduction in the total amount of energy expended in a truly recreative use of leisure time, and it will certainly increase the range and freedom of activity.

3. A change in the manner and methods of the exercise of craftsmanlike ability. I have stated the matter this way for two reasons: (a) I am extremely skeptical about how widespread or how significant the craftsman-artist is in Mexico; and (b) there is nothing in the nature of the case which dictates that whatever artistic ability there may be in Mexico need be lost through the process of industrialization. Let me expand each of these points briefly.

No one is more sympathetic than I am with the movement to give the underlying population in Mexico its proper due. I am just as anxious that the "Indian" should have a place in the sun as the most rabid nationalist who ever penned a poem to the pottery of Tlaquepaque or as the most ardent tourist and "good-willer" who ever "Ah'd" and "Oh'd" over a Saltillo sarape or a Uruapán lacquer box. I cannot but feel, however, that in their zeal to rescue them from the neglect of centuries, the defenders of the Indians have entangled the whole question of Mexican popular art in a mysticism and sentimentality as spurious as it is detrimental to the best interest of the very group they would protect and glorify.

This is not the place, even if I were capable of doing so, to develop an esthetic theory of handi- versus machine-crafts, but the following propositions suggest what I believe to be a saner and more useful point of view toward Mexican popular arts than the type of attitude which eventuates in the "Oh-the-loveliness-and-the-wonder-of-dark-brown-hands-moulding-dark-brown-pots" school of thought.

(a) There is considerable evidence in support of the contention that many Mexican peasants can turn their hands to many things with results that often combine utility with art.

(b) More specifically there is considerable evidence that many Mexican popular arts—pottery, lacquer work, carving, weaving, and so forth—often reveal beauty in design and skill in execution.

(c) If one means by art *creation*, the shaping, moulding and domination of materials for the purpose of a symbolical embodiment of experience deeply felt or to the end of transforming raw nature into objects which are at once things of beauty and things of enduring

use, then it turns out that much of Mexican popular art is not art at all, nor, for that matter, even good craftsmanship. On the contrary, Mexican popular art is in very measurable degree a slavish and monotonous copying of designs centuries old, designs which in many cases have little relation to the actual experience of the individual who executes them.[9] Or, what is worse still, it is an equally nonselective, laborious and uncreative reproduction of models drawn from modern life. And when I say modern models I mean not only chromo calendars depicting pretty blonde ladies or the New York skyline, but also reproductions of Aztec Calendar Stones and Maya Chac-Mools resurrected by archaeologists, for I verily believe that the one is as alien and as devoid of significant meaning to the peasant artist as the other.[10]

(d) Many of the products of Mexican handicrafts are badly made —the colors fade or run, the wool shrinks, the wood cracks, the pottery chips and the glass breaks. All this may be very picturesque, and it may contribute to the snobbish satisfaction of those who take pleasure in the unique and (relatively) useless just because it is unique and useless. But it is not what the workman intends, nor is it any contribution to beauty if beauty be defined in terms other than conspicuous waste. What the workman or, if you will, artist, strives for is symmetry, smooth surfaces, regularity, clarity, and utility. If he falls short of achieving these things it does not make his products any more artistic; rather it is an admission of the failure of his technique and the inadequateness of the tools with which he must labor.[11] Just because something is made by a real native at the cost of countless hours of monotonous hand labor does not necessarily clothe it with any more beauty, and it may give the product considerably less utility, than a similar article turned out by a machine. The inept logic that leads many individuals to despise the machine for its very virtues can only be explained in terms of the

[9] Compare Ramos, *El perfil del hombre y la cultura en México*, pp. 36-39.

[10] "In Capula, Tzintzuntzan and Zinapécuaro [the art of pottery making] has fallen into a lamentable primitivism and a decorative poverty. This has come about as the result of undesirable influence of western culture, for these communities are located near railroads and highways. . . .

"In the ex-District of Pátzcuaro . . . they are changing the incomparably beautiful and suggestive forms of the old Indian jars for the ugly and snobbish: 'Made in the U.S.A.' and the designs instead of containing local scenes, flowers, animals and landscapes . . . are horrible copies of European chromos. The work of molding is done solely by hand and thus precisely in the place where they could save themselves fatigue and increase production by the employment of a mechanical turnboard, nothing has been done. . . ." "Alfarería nativa: Sinónimo de dolor, opresión, miseria y gran belleza," *El Nacional*, February 7, 1935.

[11] Brenner, "Frontiers of Machine Art," *The Nation*, CXXXVIII, 368.

cult of the unique, the desire of human beings to distinguish themselves by the possession of something which is different even though it lack enduring beauty and utility.

(e) Granting, for the sake of the argument, that a very considerable number of Mexicans are natural born craftsmen and innately endowed with artistic capacities and sensibilities of the first order, it does not follow that the introduction of industrialism in Mexico must inevitably mean the suppression of either art or craftsmanship. There is nothing in the nature of the machine process itself which demands that the products turned out by this process shall be ugly. There is no lethal gas in industrialism which automatically destroys creative ability. The machine is an instrument. Industrialism is an opportunity. If the Mexican peasant has artistic and creative ability, the new and better techniques, the more efficient instruments and tools should mean not the stultifying of his ability but its release. The art he may then produce will assuredly not be the popular art of the present; on the contrary, in the sense of being esthetically more satisfying and economically less wasteful of human capacity and raw materials, it should be a better art; and, what is just as important, there should be much more of it. Indeed, there might even be enough for the peasant himself to enjoy some of his products instead of eking out a miserable existence selling them to tourists.

4. In certain respects greater standardization. A good deal of the present "color" of Mexican life derived from the diversity of regional cultures may be expected to give way to more universal patterns. But note: it is as easy to misinterpret and overemphasize the present diversity of Mexico as it is the standardizing effects of industrialism. As I have been at some pains to make clear, villages and regions in Mexico viewed individually are culturally disparate. Nevertheless, viewed as a whole, they have in common a rigidity of behavior patterns which isolation and a vegetable economy enforce the world over. As Stuart Chase has pointed out (not in his book on Mexico, however!): "The fact of culture, of group living, implies standardization. It always has; it always will. . . . Standards change, but standardization remains a perpetual element in all societies. . . . The machine has certainly helped to cast our present mould, but it has not created the phenomenon. Nor . . . has it enforced nearly such rigid standards as those promoted by ancestor worship in China; the Church in medieval Europe; the economy of the cocoanut, maize, wheat, or fish among peoples depending primarily upon

these foods. . . . One of the outstanding facts governing a machine culture is its restless and remorseless change."[12]

Undoubtedly one of the effects of industrialism will be a tendency for the universal overalls to take the place of the varied costumes now to be found in rural Mexico, for the local folk songs, folk sayings and folk ways to give place to urban ways diffused from a few centers. But the "one dead level" which so many fear will follow in the wake of industrialism is not what Mexico will attain; it is, paradoxically enough, what she will lose. The patterns of behavior of industrialized societies are enforced over wider areas, but they are neither so mandatory nor so enduring as those of folk societies.

5. A change in the conception of time and in the place of time in behavior. Stuart Chase has been most insistent in warning Mexicans if they want to stay as they are to beware of clocks and watches. And well he might, for the present foggy apprehension of time in rural Mexico[13] is one of the things that will undoubtedly be due for some alteration under the discipline of the "machine."

As Mumford has pointed out, "the clock, not the steam-engine is the key-machine of the modern industrial age."[14] The introduction of the clock into the behavior patterns of Mexican peasants, I am willing to admit, will rob village life of some of the haphazard, never-never-land quality which so delights visitors bent on enjoying an aimless vacation. But clocks, however their uses may have been perverted, are primarily designed to bring about a better coördination and a closer articulation of human activity. Clocks, properly employed, obviously serve to free rather than bind mankind. People who talk about becoming slaves to clocks are either talking nonsense, or they are using the clock as a symbol of a whole system wherein it appears as only one element. Life adjusted, as it is in the Mexican village, to the "great clocks of the sky" and to the slow rhythm of the seasons sounds much more poetical than life which moves to the ticking of an Ingersol watch, but I am not at all sure that it is necessarily any freer; it is certain that it is much

[12] *Men and Machines*, pp. 270-71. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

[13] "The white monkey has curious tricks. He knows, for example, the time. Now to a Mexican, and an Indian, time is a vague, foggy reality. There are only three times: *en la mañana, en la tarde, en la noche:* in the morning, in the afternoon, in the night. There is even no midday and no evening.

"But to the white monkey, horrible to relate, there are exact spots of time, such as five o'clock, half-past nine. The day is a horrible puzzle of exact spots of time." D. H. Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 57. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf.

[14] *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

less, if one may be allowed to use the despised word, efficient.

5. The "happiness of wantlessness"? Here we have a question which philosophers from time immemorial have stubbed their toes on. The argument runs something like this: the Mexican peasant is happy because he has few wants and because he can satisfy these wants after a fashion; if Mexico is industrialized then the Mexican peasant will be unhappy because he will have many wants and, even though he is able to fulfill some of them, he will be ever driven forward to satisfy still others.

Once again I am disposed to quarrel both with the premise and the conclusion. If the reasoning of the premise be pursued to its logical end, then it would follow that the amoeba is perhaps the happiest of all creatures; if the conclusion be accepted with all its implications, then it follows that absolute quiesence, Nirvana, should be the goal of all men. I suppose in the end it is a matter of how you define happiness and that your definition of happiness will, in turn, depend on your temperament and how your glands are functioning. Personally I prefer Schopenhauer's type of definition—"to overcome difficulties is to experience the full delight of existence"—and this despite the fact that "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." I prefer with Spencer to believe that he leads the good life who effectively unites in himself the widest variety, complexity, and completeness of life—and this even though the pain of unfulfilled desire be a part of experience. It is for this reason that I cannot bring myself, however enthusiastically those who do not live in Mexican villages may write about them, to regard the narrow and stunted life there as an Arcadian garden of delight. I do not believe that the Mexican peasant is able to satisfy in any adequate fashion the wants he does have, nor can I regard his relative wantlessness as an enviable state. Even though industrialism may create some desires that cannot be satisfied, I believe this to be preferable to the blind contentment of ignorance and the porcine soddenness of poverty. I will be willing to trade a little pecuniary emulation for the advantages of "divine discontent." I will barter even a Freudian complex or two for a little progress. And I might as well admit that I see no way in which a people can be awakened to a desire for doctors, hospitals, tractors, and sewers without running the risk of also unleasing their desires for gadgets, Arrow collars and canned asparagus. But I think the risk is worth running.

I might go on indefinitely in this fashion balancing probabilities and weighing possibilities. I have, for example, hardly mentioned the loss of the feeling of personal security that will attend the disorganization and reorganization of institutional patterns inevitably

following in the wake of industrialization. The breakdown of the control system characteristic of the present primary group relations in Mexican villages, the introduction of conflicting standards of value, competition taking the place of fixed status—all these, even though, or rather, because, they carry with them greater freedom and the possibility of choice, must inevitably mean a certain amount of personality disorganization. Lonesomeness will enter for the first time into the experience of many Mexican peasants.[15] I have merely suggested the nature of the problem of apparent individual freedom and security in a handicraft economy versus the security of the group in an interdependent industrial system: the pros and cons of dependence upon a pay check in a highly organized society versus dependence upon relatively uncontrolled nature and one's own personal powers pitted directly against time and tide in an unorganized economy.

But perhaps I have said enough to indicate that, although freedom be not complete, there are certain possibilities of choice in the creation of Mexico's new culture. There is a range within which human reason and foresight may operate to define and select. The basic techniques and procedures of industrialism can only be obtained at a price; but the price in many cases is not nearly so high as some would have us believe and in almost every case there is room for a certain amount of bargaining. In the end when all accounts have been balanced, I believe Mexico stands to gain much more than she will lose—provided: (a) that she achieves a clear idea of what it is she wishes to buy; and (b) that she exercises her right to select the best goods the market affords.

And this brings us to that insistent question which has been dogging our footsteps ever since we started out on this philosophical junket: How? That is to say: How can Mexico, as I have just put it, exercise the right of the buyer to furnish up her house to suit herself? In what way can she bulwark herself against the temptation of bringing home a lot of brightly colored but useless gadgets from the markets of the Great Society? What barriers can be thrown up to control the flood of industrialism and regulate its flow? Is there any frame of reference within which values may be judged, the "good" accepted and the "bad" rejected?

Mexico's Way Out

Let us go back for a moment to the doctors of the Great Society and see if we can get any suggestions from their diagnoses of its ills

[15] Reuter, "Introduction," *Race and Culture Contacts*, pp. 13-14.

and their prescriptions for how to be healthy, wealthy, and wise though industrialized.

On one point practically all the critics of life in the Great Society are agreed: some way must be found for restricting the rights of private property and reducing the area in which profits operate as the be-all and end-all of economic activity. Until this is done, there can be little hope of introducing order and direction into modern life. As Tawney has stated perhaps as clearly as anyone, the Acquisitive Society in the very nature of the case is an invitation to chaos.

> It is an invitation to men to use the powers with which they have been endowed by nature or society, by skill or energy or relentless egotism or mere good fortune, without inquiring whether there is any principle by which their exercise should be limited. . . . To the strong it promises unfettered freedom for the exercise of their strength; to the weak the hope that they too one day may be strong. . . . It assures men that there are no ends other than their ends, no law other than their desires, no limit other than that which they think advisable. . . . And it immensely simplifies the problems of social life in complex communities. For it relieves them of the necessity of discriminating between different types of economic activity and different sources of wealth, between enterprise and avarice, energy and unscrupulous greed, property which is legitimate and property which is theft, the just enjoyment of the fruits of labor and the idle parasitism of birth or fortune, because it treats all economic activities as standing upon the same level, and suggests that excess or defect, waste or superfluity, require no conscious effort of the social will to avert them, but are corrected almost automatically by the mechanical play of economic forces.[16]

The alternative which Tawney offers is the Functional Society—that is: a society which would aim "at making the acquisition of wealth contingent upon the discharge of social obligations"; which would seek "to proportion remuneration to service" and deny it "to those by whom no service has been performed"; which would inquire "first not what men possess but what they can make or create or achieve."[17]

Whether Tawney's formulation of the new motivation and the new orientation that must be achieved if industrialism as it is now found in such countries as England, Germany, and the United States is to be saved from itself is the best that can be made is a

[16] R. H. Tawney, *The Aquisitive Society*, pp. 30-31. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Co.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

matter which need not detain us here. I am simply interested in recording the fact that the best and keenest critics of industrialized society are convinced that unless some more socialized point of view can be devised to take the place of the maximation of profits and the associated principles of unregulated free competition and unrestricted private property, then industrialism is doomed to fall by reason of its own inner contradictions.

In the second place the analysts of the "machine culture" argue that many of the ills of present-day industrialism may be cured by following out to their logical conclusions the possibilities potential in the new technics which the system itself has developed. Specifically they are disposed to place their faith in the planned use of electrical power and modern means of transportation. A brilliant summary of the horizons being revealed by the "neotechnic" phase of industrial development may be found in Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Civilization.* In this book Mumford recalls how until very recently industry had to depend almost completely upon the coal mine as the source of power. It was this fact which was largely responsible for the "gigantism" afflicting the whole productive process during what he terms the "paleotechnic" stage of industrial development. From this Pandora's box and the related (relatively) primitive methods of communication and transportation came such evils as: the overconcentration of population in urban centers with all the attendant calamities of slums, crowding, dirt, and disorder; the uprooting of the proletariat and their dependence upon the factory as the sole source of their income; and the necessity for speeding up and constantly expanding production in order to keep down the overhead costs of the overblown industrial plants. With the development of electricity and improved means of transportation (as someone has put it, "the lengthening of the power belt") we now have in our hands the technological possibility of doing away with many of the evils which grew out of an industrial system shackled to the coal mine and the steam engine.

Electricity can be generated from many sources; "unlike coal in long distance transportation, or like steam in local distribution, electricity is much easier to transmit without heavy losses of energy and higher costs"; electricity can be used with high efficiency in all sizes and power ratings—unlike steam engines, the difference in efficiency between large and small dynamos and motors is very slight; thanks to the development of high tension lines electricity can be transported over great distances and hence need not be consumed in the local area in which it is produced.

These and other characteristics[18] of electrical power carry with them many implications most of which are suggested by the word decentralization.

> . . . The size of the productive unit is no longer determined by the local requirements of either the steam engine or the managerial staff: it is a function of the operation itself. . . . The efficiency of small units worked by electric motors utilizing current either from local turbines or from a central power plant has given small-scale industry a new lease on life: on a purely technical basis it can, for the first time since the introduction of the steam engine, compete on even terms with the larger unit. Even domestic production has become possible again through the use of electricity: for if the domestic grain grinder is less efficient, from a purely mechanical standpoint, than the huge flour mills . . . it permits a nicer timing of production to need. . . . To be efficient, the small plant need not remain in continuous operation nor need it produce gigantic quantities of foodstuffs and goods for a distant market: it can respond to local demand and supply; it can operate on an irregular basis, since the overhead for permanent staff and equipment is proportionately smaller; it can take advantage of smaller wastes of time and energy in transportation, and by face to face contact it can cut out the inevitable red-tape of even efficient large organizations. . . .
>
> Bigger no longer automatically means better: flexibility of the power unit, closer adaptation of means to ends, nicer timing of operation, are the new marks of efficient industry. . . .[19]

The possibilities opened up by the new technology have led to a third line of attack which those sitting in judgment advocate as a solution for the ills of industrialism: a new conception and emphasis on the role of the village and the small town in social and economic life. Here what is involved is partly an attempt to reëstablish the contact of man with nature and to restore more healthy and wholesome types of human relationships, and partly an undertaking to find a way out of the present dislocations of the productive system itself revealed in such phenomena as unemployment, depressions, and the antagonisms existing between agriculture and manufacturing. Thus we find a business man like Henry Ford advocating and putting into practice a program of scattering plants over the countryside and seeking by the location of small units in villages and towns to make it possible for workers to combine agricultural with industrial

[18] For a detailed discussion of the engineering and technical aspects of the production and use of electrical power see Zimmermann, *op. cit.*, Chapters XXVIII and XXIX.

[19] Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, pp. 225-26. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Co.

occupations. This is essentially an effort to produce a close organic relationship between the factory and the farm. "In doing this, Ford is striving to push our machine civilization off its narrow base of fund resources and to place it on the broad and more permanent base of flow resources, thereby curing the ills of both industry and agriculture."[20] Thus, also, we find an economist such as O. E. Baker concluding a study of industrialized society with especial reference to the problems of population growth and distribution in the United States with the statement:

> It appears that the economic and social system which has developed during the past century in the cities within the European sphere of civilization is tending toward decline, primarily because of its failure to promote the reproduction of the race. Moreover, this urban system threatens to drag down with it the old rural civilization, which has become dependent upon it. . . . The most feasible means, it seems to me, of saving this civilization, is through relocation of industrial establishments in villages, and the further development of suburban residential districts around commercial cities in the hope that the more pleasant and normal environment will promote family life and encourage the raising of children.[21]

We must envisage our future, says Baker, with a view to the "development of villages, thousands of them scattered along the highways." Regional planning for the coördination and fulfillment of industrial, agricultural, and human interests and needs must be our objective. "In planning for the future, we must assume a more stable society and then seek to bring it to pass. And this plan must begin with a vision. I submit for your consideration the vision of the village."[22]

Functional definitions of property and profits; decentralization of industry and population through the use of electric power and motorized systems of transportation; regional planning and the renascence of the village: let us assume that here we have the secret, as, indeed, I believe we do have, of the way to live in peace and harmony with the "machine." What, then, is the bearing of all this on the Mexican situation?

The problem with which Mexico must deal, you will say, has little in common with that of such nations as England, Germany and the United States. And that is true. Mexico is still for the most part in

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[20] Zimmermann, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

[21] "Rural-Urban Migration and the National Welfare," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, June, 1933, pp. 123-24.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

what Mumford would call the eotechnic stage of development, whereas other nations of the Western World are in the paleotechnic and on the threshold of the neotechnic. Where other and more completely industrialized countries are faced with the exceedingly difficult task of *remaking* an already highly complicated and delicately adjusted industrial system, Mexico confronts a problem of *creating* an industrial system, of erecting a new edifice out of materials that lie ready to hand. In Mexico, so far as industrialism is concerned, the ground is as yet relatively clear and unencumbered; the nations of the Great Society are already cluttered up with a tremendous hodge-podge of vested interests and antiquated institutional structures of all kinds and varieties which must be razed or remodeled before the new way of life can come into existence.

I do not wish to minimize the difficulty of the road Mexico must travel; but I repeat that from some points of view the country occupies a most strategic position. As the Mexican writer Samuel Ramos has expressed it:

> Fortunately we are beginning to introduce civilization into our life, after it has had time to run its course in other nations and we now have before us the necessary data on which to base a severe criticism of . . . [this civilization] and with which to estimate with exactitude its value. . . . It would be an unpardonable fault if we Mexicans, in possession of all of this data . . . should fall into the same errors committed by other nations. . . . Why should it be impossible to regulate from now on by means of the force of intelligence the development of technology in our nation in such fashion as to avoid the excessive mechanization of life? It is now possible to distinguish in the work of civilization the good from the bad and with this as a guide we can take advantage of that which is truly beneficient at the same time avoiding the calamities that other nations have suffered by reason of this same civilization.[23]

I have said that the materials lie ready to hand for the building of an industrial structure which will meet the best specifications. This does not mean that the planks are all cut, the bricks all made, the cement ready for mixing and that Mexico's task is simply that of driving a few nails and tightening a few bolts in the same fashion that one assembles prefabricated houses. Many of the materials are still in a raw state and all of them will have to be fitted and joined together. Let us take a look at them.

The basic neotechnic power resources? Mexico has them in abundance. According to the latest figures available Mexico has an actual installed capacity of around 700,000 horse power of electrical force of which about 60 per cent is derived from hydroelectric sources.

[23] Ramos, *op. cit.*, pp. 176-77.

Annual production of current varies from 1,700 to 1,800 million kilowatt hours.[24] Taking the higher figure this would give Mexico a per capita output of current in kilowatt hours of 110 as compared, for example, with 781 for the United States, 1,789 for Canada, 108 for Spain, and 919 in Switzerland.[25] What the potential resources in Mexico are for the production of electrical power no one knows with any exactitude. Enthusiastic writers like José Vasconcelos would lead us to believe that the nation's capacities in this respect are practically inexhaustible:

> . . . What other country in the world can rival Mexico in the lavish, unmeasurable amounts of utilizable energy that today goes to waste in the annual, natural rhythm of the fogs that rise from the sea in order to make the clouds, and the wind that takes the clouds over the mountain tops in order to cover the plateau with a rainfall that comes rushing down, every season, through the narrow passes of the ravines and through the *saltos* of the thousand grades of levels? And every one of these changes in level is like an inexhaustible coal mine—a perpetual source of energy, that will allow us to build, some day, one of the most potent manufacturing centers of history. . . . The mountain that has been a handicap is apt to become, tomorrow, just the treasure that is needed to give comfort and power to a great wonderful epoch.[26]

Students of a less poetical turn of mind place the permanent potential hydraulic power at between 10 and 15 million horse power with the possibility of doubling these amounts for short periods during the rainy season. If the lower figure be taken as an approximation of the truth this would mean that at the present time Mexico is utilizing less than 5 per cent of the available hydraulic power resources. By way of comparison: potential hydraulic resources were estimated in other countries in 1930 as follows: Argentina 5 million H.P., Canada 18 million, Germany 2 million, France 5 million, and Spain 4 million.[27] As these figures show, even though one holds in mind the sober counsel of engineers that just because water runs downhill it does not follow that power can be developed and that the irregularity of stream flow and the distance of water-power sites from load centers often turn out to be the nasty facts that kick beautiful theories in the stomach, it would still appear that Mexico's utilizable resources are of very considerable magnitude.

With regard to oil, the second of the neotechnic power resources,

[24] Herrera y Lasso, *La industria eléctrica en México*, p. 17.

[25] Zimmermann, *op. cit.*, p. 549.

[26] "Similarity and Contrast," in *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*, pp. 34-35. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

[27] *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1933*, p. 337.

Mexico also has a goodly share of the world's riches. Production at the present time is only about 6 million cubic meters a year, and of this a little over a third is consumed internally. This low production, however, is largely due to the conditions of the world market, political and other factors. In the past (1921) Mexico has produced as much as 31 million cubic meters in a single year.[28] There seems to be little reason to doubt that the country's oil resources have hardly been tapped. It is believed that the area of potential oil fields may reach 71 million hectares in extent; up to the present time only 4 million hectares have been exploited.[29] In petroleum, then, Mexico has not only an additional resource for the generation of electric power, but also an ample supply of the heavy oil, fuel oil, and gasoline so necessary to modern motorized methods of transportation and for the building of highways.

Villages and small towns? Mexico is embarrassed with riches. As we have seen the problem here is not one of decentralization of population, but rather its centralization and redistribution in larger units and units better placed with reference to the agricultural and and other resources of the country. There is only one city in Mexico with a population of more than a million. The next largest urban center has a population of slightly more than 175,000. In all of Mexico there are only eleven centers with a population of more than 50,000 and the aggregate population of these eleven places totals less than 2 million. On the other hand there are, for example, 49,000 villages with average populations of 100 or less.[30]

The decentralization of industry? Here again the question is more one of creating an industry that will be decentralized rather than breaking up and distributing large scale industries already concentrated in a few urban centers. As I have already pointed out, the number of manufacturing plants in Mexico turning out products valued at more than 500,000 pesos a year hardly totals 300 and the average number of workers employed in these plants does not exceed 275 men per plant. The Federal District (that is, for all practical purposes Mexico City), which outranks all other political entities in the number of workers occupied in manufacturing, has barely 60,000 individuals so employed.[31]

Functional definitions of property and profits? Tattered and torn though it may be, inadequate and incomplete though it is, I give you Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917.

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[28] Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

[29] Ortega M., "La industria eléctrica en el país," *Revista de economía y estadística,* I, 22.

[30] Appendix A, Tables 1 and 34.

[31] Appendix A, Tables 87 and 89.

Here, then, are our materials. We are almost ready to raise our new structure of industrialism in Mexico. All that we lack now is a scaffolding with which we can build, a framework which will define our procedure, lend order to our efforts and support the finished product.

And so at long last we come back to the ejido. For, as I announced in the theses which I nailed on the wall at the beginning of this section of my study, in the ejido properly conceived and developed I think I can see not only the solution of Mexico's problems of agricultural property and production, but also the key to the problems of industrialism. Is this mere idle day-dreaming? Perhaps. But bear with me a moment more before you pass summary judgment and dismiss me as another foreigner drunk and dizzy from wandering overlong in the seductive corridors of the Mexican maze.

Let us take the little state of Morelos (where the much discussed village of Tepoztlán is located) and see how we might reconstruct it using the ejido as a frame of reference. Here we have a state with a total population of 132,000 and an area of 4,964 square kilometers (about as large as the state of Delaware in the United States but with something less than 60 per cent of the population of Delaware). Over 85 per cent of the population is rural—that is, lives in communities of less than 4,000. Indeed, of the 243 communities in the state only two have a population of between 5,000 and 10,000 and six a population of between 2,500 and 5,000. As these figures suggest, the overwhelming majority of the people are engaged in agricultural pursuits—in fact a little over 82 per cent of the total economically active population of 43,800.

Agriculturally the state, while not having a very large area of crop land—about two-thirds of the state is mountainous—nevertheless possesses in the 105,700 hectares of actual and potential crop land reported in the 1930 census some of the richest farm land in the country. Almost a third of the actual crop land is classified as irrigated or humid and, thanks to an extensive system of rivers, a very much larger area could be supplied with water. A considerable proportion, perhaps the majority of the crop lands lie at low altitudes (varying between close to 900 up to around 2,000 meters) and hence are suitable for tropical and semitropical crops. The outstanding crops until recently have been sugar cane and rice. The region is also admirably adapted to citrus fruits.

Our first job, after we have made the necessary geographic, demographic, and sociological studies will be to finish the land distribution according to the procedure laid down in this book under the heading *Specifications for Ejidos*. Fortunately, our task here

will be somewhat easier than it would be in other states because of the fact that the land reform has already made considerable progress. Yet, there is much to be done; for according to the most recent definitive statistics (1933) the amount of land in ejidos is only 59.1 per cent of the total land in farms. There are 26,211 ejidatarios in definitive possession of their lands, but there are still perhaps from 8,000 to 10,000 persons (in 1930 the number was over 15,000), or about a third of the total economically active population engaged in agriculture, who are landless with the status of tenants, share croppers or peons. Moreover, there are 7 privately-owned farms remaining in the state with areas of 5,001 hectares or over and embracing in the aggregate more than 61 per cent of all the land in privately-owned farms. In terms of value, there are 10 privately-owned farms valued at 200,001 pesos or over, or in the aggregate 53.4 per cent of the total value of all privately-owned farms. The 40.9 per cent, then, of the total area of all farm lands, including the big estates just mentioned, still remaining in private hands we will immediately distribute in ejidos.

We may encounter some difficulty here because the amount of crop land, actual and potential, in the state is not quite enough to go around and at the same time create ejidos of the most desirable types. After we have established our ejido zones we will probably discover that some of the individuals now engaged in agriculture will have to be shifted to other parts of the country or to other occupations. In any case it will undoubtedly be necessary to redistribute some of the population within the state, for the present average of 129 ejidatarios per ejido community will need to be raised somewhat.

As soon as our land and population distributing job is under way we must immediately get busy with a number of other matters. Each ejido must be organized into a coöperative unit for the buying of supplies, and for the production and marketing of crops. A branch of the Ejido Credit Division of the (proposed) federal Ministry of Coöperative Ejidos must be established. Several farm machinery stations must be located at convenient points and stocked with tractors and other types of equipment too expensive for the individual ejidos to purchase. Also, on the basis of careful studies of the local areas and with reference to the Preliminary Plan of National Agricultural Production, decisions must be reached concerning the kinds of crops to be raised in our particular area. Past experience would seem to indicate that the present policy whereby the ejidatarios in Morelos are planting over two-thirds of their land in corn is wasteful and inefficient in a region admirably suited for sugar cane

and citrus fruits. If this actually turns out to be the case and it is decided, for example, that the majority of the ejidos are to raise the products just mentioned, then provision will have to be made for centrally located and coöperatively owned sugar mills and fruit packing stations. Obviously, also, a central marketing agency will have to be established probably in connection with the Ejido Bank.

The fact that 60.5 per cent of the population over ten years of age in Morelos is illiterate suggests the nature of our educational problem. The Ministry of Education must immediately place a federal rural school in each one of our ejido communities. The present situation where only 6 ejidos in the whole state have federal schools must be remedied at once. Also the Department of Public Health must be instructed to see what can be done about the present infant mortality rate of 187.7.

Our sugar mills and packing plants will require electrical power. Fortunately, Morelos has a number of rivers, water falls and mountain streams which can be harnessed for this purpose. This is a job for the Ministry of National Economy working in coöperation with the Division of Ejido Water Supply in the Ministry of Coöperative Ejidos.

We already have the beginning of an excellent system of highways in Morelos. The Mexico City-Acapulco road cuts across the western part of the state, and the road joining Cuautla in the northeast part of the state with Mexico City also runs north and west to connect Cuautla with Cuernavaca. The Ministry of Communications must now lay its plans for trunk lines connecting up the rest of the state. The three railway lines which at present amble around rather aimlessly must be integrated with the highway system.

All of the foregoing we would do as a normal and natural part of the ejido program viewed as an undertaking for agrarian and agricultural reform. But note how in carrying out our plan we have already introduced many of the basic elements of industrialism—machinery, inanimate power, division of labor, interdependent markets, credit, and specialization of productive functions. Is it not natural that we should take the next step and bind into our system industry itself? The people of Morelos need furniture, clothes, plows, books, cooking utensils, sanitary equipment and, yes, even Listerine and canned asparagus. Some of these things, when the Ministry of National Economy makes its plan of national production, it will be found can best be produced in other parts of the country. Surveys of the resources of Morelos, however, will undoubtedly reveal that some products, either by reason of the presence of certain kinds of raw materials or in order to take advantage of the

benefits of decentralized production, can best be made locally. All right, then let us establish in the ejido zones small coöperative factories. Labor supply for these plants will be drawn from the ejidatarios who will thus be provided with additional sources of income during the slack seasons of farming operations. It may even be desirable to establish some factories that will employ full time operatives. It will certainly be desirable for the benefit of all those artist-craftsmen who are said to reside in Tepoztlán and elsewhere to extend our electric power lines and provide current for such domestic industries as weaving, pottery making, wood carving, and so forth. Such a system, if it is to work successfully, will, of course, require the same kind of regional and national planning of production and marketing in the field of crafts and industries as the Ministry of Coöperative Ejidos will have to provide in the field of agriculture.

Is there anything about all this which in the nature of the case is impossible? Is there any reason why agriculture and industry could not be so geared together in the ejidos of the little state of Morelos as to give reasonable hope of productive efficiency and well-being for the population? After all, such an undertaking is not unlike what the old friars attempted and, indeed, actually accomplished in some regions under much more difficult circumstances in the Colonial period. And, if the job can be done in Morelos, then why not in Tlaxcala? in Oaxaca? in Chihuahua?—in the Republic of Mexico? Given time, leadership, singleness of purpose, and, above all, a vision, I think it could be done.[32]

Will Mexico Take the Way Out Offered by the Ejido?

Time, leadership, singleness of purpose, vision—ah, there is the rub!

A generation or two would mean little in the life of Mexico. The return of the golden age of Quetzalcoatl has been awaited so long that a few years more would make little difference. But in this day and time even a few years in the history of the world may mean much. "Egypt and Crete, Rome and the Gallic provinces, Saxon England and Norman France, had several centuries in which to wage their battles and slowly arrange their truce of cultural adjust-

[32] Some large industries such as railways, mining, petroleum, and electric power will probably not fit into the ejido coöperative system. As rapidly as may be these industries should be nationalized and run by the federal government in the common interests of the whole community. A good beginning in this direction has already been made in the present laws governing these matters. The principles laid down in Article 27 should now be followed out to their logical conclusion.

ment. The Javanese or Samoan or African has hardly a split second in which to parry the attack of Western civilization, forearmed with steam, electricity, explosives, and highly efficient organizations."[33] Mexico is in the same boat. Inside the country people are reaching out for the new ways of life, for the new instruments of power developed in the Great Society. Outside the industrialized nations, hungry for markets and sources of raw materials, each day press more strongly against Mexico's adobe walls. Mexico, Priestley, the historian, prophesies:

> . . . Has perhaps only the remainder of the present century to work out . . . [her problems], for by the end of the century the situation regarding the production of foods for the world will have reached a stage in which exploitation of expanses of virgin land for huge immediate gain will have passed forever. The population of the United States will be over two hundred millions; that of China and Japan, Mexico's other Pacific neighbors, will have advanced through similar numerical ratios. . . . We shall then have an economic factor in civilization against which national laws like those of Mexico, or continental protective devices like the Monroe Doctrine, will bend like feeble reeds in a flood. If Mexico by that time shall have succeeded in filling her great arable spaces with industrious producers of food, the vacuum will be filled, and the continental equilibrium will be maintained. Otherwise the lugubrious prophecy of Lucas Alamán will come to pass."[34]

However, things may not be so bad as such dire forebodings would make out. Recent studies of population growth raise serious questions concerning the accuracy of Priestley's predictions. Again it may be that the rest of the world, and more especially those nations which hitherto have exhibited predilections for "peaceful penetration" and other forms of what Veblen has called "international naughtiness," with a profound depression on their hands and another world war looming on the horizon will be too busy to

[33] Embree, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

[34] "The United States and Mexico," in *Some Mexican Problems*, p. 157. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

Alamán at the conclusion of his history of Mexico, finished in 1851, foresaw the future of his country in these words: "Mexico will be indeed a land of prosperity, for its natural resources assure that; but it will not be so for the races which now inhabit it. For it seems destined that the peoples who have established themselves in it in divers and remote epochs should disappear, leaving hardly the memory of their existence. Just as the people who built Palenque and other admired cities . . . in Yucatan were destroyed. . . ; just as the Toltecs perished at the hands of the barbarians of the north. . . ; and just as finally the ancient Mexicans fell beneath the power of the Spaniards . . . so also the present inhabitants [unless they return to the paths of orderly government and true religion] will be ruined without arousing even the pity which the ancient owners received." Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 158.

bother Mexico during the next few decades. Mexico may have a respite from the friendship of foreign powers and thus get enough of a headstart to bulwark political effectiveness in economic efficiency. The uncertainty of the future of the Great Society may hold as much of hope for Mexico as some people believe it does of despair. Time is a factor which fights first on one side and then on the other.

The problem of that alter ego of time, money, I have already touched on. To my previous remarks I may add that, whereas I do not wish unnecessarily to minimize the importance of capital in carrying out the program I have here envisaged, I cannot regard the question of funds as an insuperable obstacle. The present income of the Mexican federal government (which must bear most of the burden of the ejido program) is, in all conscience, small —at the present time it is less than 300 million pesos a year or about the same as the city of Detroit, Michigan. Nevertheless, if even these meager funds were spent with care, much could be accomplished. Perhaps I should not add to my other presumptions that of giving Mexico advice on how to spend her money. I cannot but wonder, however, if better uses could not be found for some of this money than, for example, spending 80 million pesos a year (average for the years 1921-1932) on an army and navy—not to mention such matters of relatively minor moment as 500,000 pesos for the recent ceremonies attendant to opening a national theater.[35] Moreover, I am convinced that if the government would turn its attention to installing a just and equitable system of taxation instead of depending as it has in the past on import duties for the chief source of its income, public revenue could be greatly increased without undue strain on the country's economy.

Concerning the matter of leadership I must admit I find it more difficult to be optimistic. The relative dearth in Mexico of what H. G. Wells has termed "competent receivers"—persons who are trained, socially minded, and willing to place the public good above private gain—is the greatest single obstacle in the way of any program of social reform. It seems to be pretty obvious that little more is to be expected from the old leaders. The *veteranos* either are already, or are rapidly becoming, old men (one gets old quickly here in Mexico—at fifty one is already beginning to wonder what the next world may be like). Hardening of the arteries has the same effect in Mexico as in other places: it produces tired radicals. I do not number myself among those who are disposed to criticize the *veteranos* for their monetary gains out of the revolution. I find it

[35] See the speech made by Congressman Luis Mora Tovar, as reported in *El Excelsior*, September 29, 1934.

difficult to get excited over the fact that a few of the leaders of the agrarian reform have become *hacendados*[36] or that there is a row of resplendent houses on a certain street in Cuernavaca (some wag has dubbed it the "Street of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves") which it is hard to see how the gentlemen who inhabit them on week-ends could have built entirely out of savings from their government salaries. If these new *hacendados* and week-enders in Cuernavaca were still devoted leaders of a dynamic revolution, then the price paid for their services would be cheap. It is the fact that this is not the case which rather disturbs me. In a word, I am more concerned with the ideological regression of the old leaders than I am with their pecuniary progress.

With regard to the young men who are coming along and who may be expected to step into the shoes of the *veteranos*, there are two discouraging facts: they are either entirely untrained and do not know it; or their training is of the worst academic variety. Many of the young men have as keen minds and active intelligences as one could wish for. But, for the most part, they either fritter their energies away in futile attempts to tag along in French, Spanish, or English processions of belles lettres; or, if by chance they become interested in economic and social problems, they content themselves with reading foreign publications on these subjects. The Mexican student who actually goes out in the field and looks for facts about his own country is so rare as to be a curiosity. I could name on the fingers of one hand the research monographs dealing with modern Mexican social problems published by Mexican students in the last decade which by any stretch of the imagination could be called scientific.

It is only fair to say that the younger men are not entirely to blame. The opportunities for obtaining training in the social sciences in Mexico are notoriously inadequate. The opportunities to do research are practically nonexistent. The National University is a collection of professional schools, poorly equipped, and taught by busy men in their odd moments. The libraries, with few exceptions, are antiquated and badly organized. But worst of all, despite protestations to the contrary, the University at the present time is conservative to the point of being reactionary. It is not only out of touch with national life,[37] it is not only failing in the positive task of train-

[36] See the charges made in the "Congreso de Comunidades Agrarias," as reported in *El Nacional*, May 6, 1934.

[37] ". . . The Universities of Mexico as institutions have never been concerned in the past, either remote or recent, with any of the national problems and much less with the most transcendental of all: the problem of the peasant. . . ." Mendizábal, *op. cit.*

ing leaders for the revolutionary cause, but it is actually engaging in the negative work of raising up a generation either entirely indifferent to the revolution or for which revolutionary principles are anathema. In its preoccupation with the rural school and reclaiming the peasant masses, the revolutionary government has shamefully neglected the equally important task of preparing leaders who will assume the responsibility of showing the masses the way to use their new knowledge and their new freedom.[38]

There is still another factor which undermines the effectiveness of leaders in Mexico, both old and young. I refer to a curious feeling of inferiority. The Mexican of whatever class or rank, but perhaps more especially the educated Mexican, is apt to be a most sensitive person; and what is more, he wears his sensibilities on his sleeve. This being the case, he is peculiarly susceptible to both praise and criticism. Mexicans are alternately attracted and repelled by what other nations have, do, and say. On occasion this internal warfare, this eternal switching from hot to cold, becomes insupportable and must find some manner of expression. Depending on temperament and at what stage the cycle of feelings stands, this expression takes either the form of a violent effort at self-protection or an equally violent self-denigration. In either case we have what the psychologists would call overcompensation, and in both cases the type of sustained, clear-sighted activity demanded if a successful adjustment to life is to be achieved, is made most difficult. It is this fact, it would appear, which is mainly responsible for the prevalent disease of *proyectismo* in Mexico, the tendency to spin out of thin air tremendous programs for the accomplishing of any and everything under the sun. The making of a plan or the enactment of a law, however, usually exhausts available energies and is taken as the equivalent of putting the plan into effect or enforcing the law. This inferiority complex also explains in large measure the negativism at times so notable in the Mexican character. A bitter jest at his own expense, a rueful admission of his own shortcomings, absolves the Mexican intellectual of any necessity for further action. Finally, the feeling of inferiority often leads to unwise and unpremeditated efforts to swallow some foreign idea or institution whole with no thought of its relevance to the Mexican situation. When these efforts fail, the Mexican is sunk in despair and his usefulness as a leader is sometimes permanently impaired. The obverse of this is

[38] Dromundo, "La irresponsabilidad ambiente," *El Universal*, June 22, 1932.

a refusal to have any traffic at all with foreign conceptions and hence the cutting off of his nose to spite his face.[39]

What I have just said leads quite naturallly to the next factor bearing on the question of whether Mexico will take the way out offered by the ejido: singleness of purpose. The Mexican publicist, Felix Palavicini, has written: "A constant indifference to life, a permanent lack of fear of death, a love for the fluctuating and the unstable, a curious forgetfulness of the past, a gluttonous pleasure in the present, and a high disdain of the future—these are the esthetic qualities of the Mexican character."[40] Such a statement as this is in part an illustration of the Mexican penchant for that auto-denigration which I have just mentioned; but it also contains a measure of objective truth. What it means—this living in the present—in actual behavior is either a tremendous indifference to or impatience with results. Thus we have the Mexican who, having glimpsed a far goal, is disposed forthwith to shout *¡Vámanos!* and taking thought of neither his own nor anyone else's past experience, to go galumphing down the road and devil take the consequences. This is one of the most attractive traits of the Mexican character and, surprisingly enough, for certain kinds of undertakings, it often leads to success. But quite as often it leads to a cosmic weariness and a stopping by the roadside for a long siesta from which one wakes, forgetful of one's original intention, but rested and ready for another sally at some other distant windmill. In either case this sort of behavior is of little use for the attaining of objectives which require careful planning and a steady haul over a long period of years.

It is this same impatience, this unwillingness to make the past bear fruitfully on the present and illuminate the future, together with the before mentioned susceptibility to praise that accounts for the ease with which the Mexican can be put off the track. Ambassador Morrow is a very good case in point. I make no pretense to passing any final judgments on Ambassador Morrow's policies and actuation in Mexico. I simply note the fact that coincident with his presence in Mexico the life went out of the revolution.[41] It may be

[39] See in this connection Ramos, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11, 12-13, and 90-91.

[40] Palavicini, *La estética de la tragédia mexicana*, p. 20.

[41] Ambassador Morrow arrived in Mexico in October, 1927. On November 17, the Mexican Supreme Court handed down a decision taking two of the largest teeth out of the petroleum law. On December 28, Congress empowered President Calles with the right to modify the agrarian legislation. What happened to the agrarian reform after Morrow had convinced Calles that Mexico should adopt the principle in land distribution of "pay as you go" can be seen in Fig. 28 on p. 194.

that the revolutionary movement had already run its course. On the other hand it may be that the kindly, sympathetic, well-intentioned, subtly flattering, former Morgan partner by trying to help Mexico put her house in order and to settle everything up in a ship-shape, businesslike fashion succeeded in putting the brakes on the only real reform movement in the history of the country. It is difficult to conduct a revolution on bookkeeping principles. The Mexican who exclaimed "God save us from the friendship of the United States" made a statement which the professional "good-willers" may have some difficulty understanding, but it contains a deal of wisdom nonetheless.

José Vasconcelos has for years been summoning his countrymen to dream a dream: ". . . Not a sterile dream but a constructive vision. . . . For a people there can be no greater calamity than not having defined its ideal. If we do not even construct in fantasy, how can we hope to do so with the rough and rebellious elements presented to us in reality?"[42] But Vasconcelos now wanders the world an exile and a prophet unhonored in his native land.

Will Mexico take the way out which is the ejido? I do not know. As I review the evidence I have massed in these pages, I can say only this: the road is still open. *Finis* cannot with justice be written over the Mexican Revolution. Time tarries yet awhile; opportunity still holds open the book.

[42] *Indología*, p. 202.

APPENDIX A

STATISTICAL TABLES

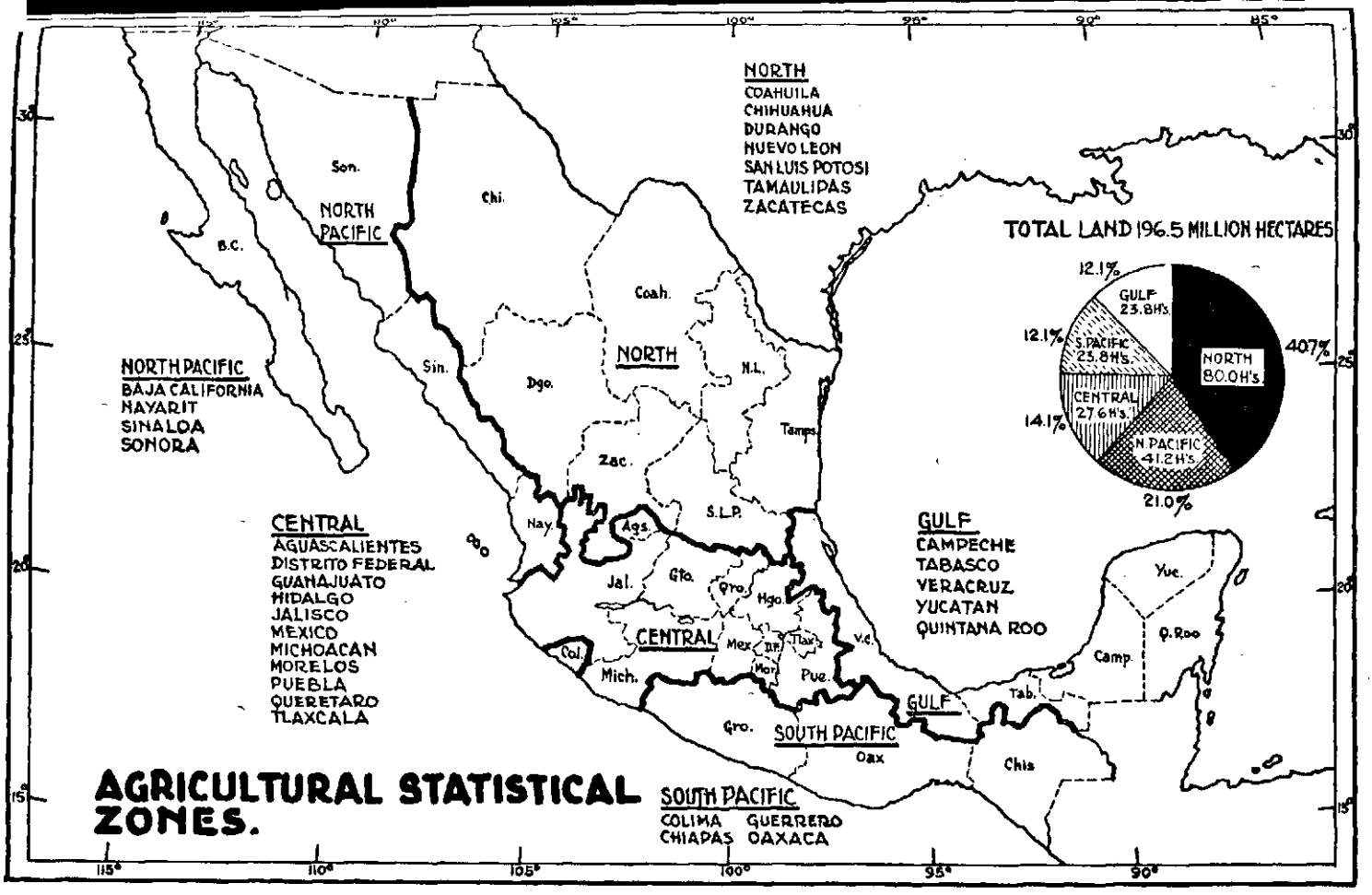

FIG. 40—Agricultural statistical zones. (The zones are designed to correspond in so far as possible to natural geographical divisions—compare Fig. 4, on p. 135.)

TABLE

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITIES AND POPULATION IN

1921

POPULATION OF COMMUNITY	COMMUNITIES			AGGREGATE POPULATION (IN 000's)		
	Number	As Per Cent of All Rural Communities	As Per Cent of All Communities	Number	As Per Cent of All Rural Population	As Per Cent of All Population
1 to 100	38,962	63.7	63.3	1,297.5	12.2	9.0
101 to 200	9,022	14.8	14.7	1,291.2	12.1	9.1
201 to 300	4,284	7.0	7.0	1,048.8	9.9	7.4
301 to 400	2,416	3.8	3.9	837.0	7.9	5.9
401 to 500	1,532	2.4	2.4	685.0	6.5	4.8
501 to 600	1,030	1.7	1.7	565.0	5.3	4.0
601 to 700	771	1.4	1.3	498.9	4.7	3.5
701 to 800	608	0.9	1.0	454.4	4.3	3.2
801 to 900	414	0.7	0.7	352.1	3.3	2.5
901 to 1,000	349	0.4	0.6	331.5	3.1	2.3
1,001 to 2,000	1,380	2.3	2.2	1,893.4	17.8	13.3
2,001 to 3,000	381	0.6	0.6	915.2	8.6	6.5
3,001 to 4,000	135	0.3	0.2	462.0	4.3	3.2
TOTAL RURAL	61,284	100.0	99.6	10,632.0	100.0	74.7
4,001 to 5,000	76		0.1	336.9		2.3
More than 5,000	192		0.3	3,287.7		23.0
GRAND TOTAL	61,552†		100.0	14,256.6		100.0

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Does not include 66 communities classified as "uninhabited"; 371 as "census taken with other communities"; and 890 as "census not taken" (total 1,327).

I

COMMUNITIES OF SPECIFIED SIZE, 1921 AND 1930*

POPULATION OF COMMUNITY	1930					
	COMMUNITIES			AGGREGATE POPULATION (IN 000's)		
	Number	As Per Cent of All Rural Communities	As Per Cent of All Communities	Number	As Per Cent of All Rural Population	As Per Cent of All Population
1 to 100	48,102	66.7	66.4	1,685.1	14.1	10.2
101 to 200	9,799	13.6	13.5	1,445.1	12.1	8.7
201 to 300	4,495	6.2	6.2	1,116.0	9.4	6.7
301 to 400	2,579	3.4	3.6	900.2	7.6	5.4
401 to 500	1,620	2.2	2.2	728.3	6.1	4.4
501 to 600	1,137	1.6	1.6	625.9	5.3	3.8
601 to 700	831	1.2	1.1	538.9	4.5	3.3
701 to 800	636	0.9	0.9	476.4	4.0	2.9
801 to 900	476	0.7	0.7	405.8	3.4	2.4
901 to 1,000	379	0.4	0.4	361.6	3.0	2.2
1,001 to 2,000	1,539	2.3	2.2	2,114.3	17.8	12.8
2,001 to 3,000	431	0.6	0.6	1,032.1	8.7	6.2
3,001 to 4,000	140	0.2	0.2	480.1	4.0	2.9
TOTAL RURAL	72,164	100.0	99.6	11,909.9	100.0	71.9
4,001 to 5,000	93		0.1	410.6		2.5
More than 5,000	218		0.3	4,232.2		25.6
GRAND TOTAL	72,475‡		100.0	16,552.7		100.0

‡ Does not include 8,769 communities classified as "uninhabited"; 3,154 as "census taken with other communities"; and 54 as "temporarily inhabited" (total 11,977).

TABLE 2

CHANGES IN RURAL POPULATION BY STATES BETWEEN 1910 AND 1930*

(Population in 000's)

STATES	1910			1930			PER CENT OF CHANGE 1930 OVER 1910
	TOTAL POPULATION	RURAL POPULATION	RURAL POPULATION AS PER CENT OF TOTAL POPULATION	TOTAL POPULATION	RURAL POPULATION	RURAL POPULATION AS PER CENT OF TOTAL POPULATION	
Ags.	120.5	70.5	58.5	132.9	66.6	50.1	—8.4
B. C.	52.3	46.7	89.4	95.4	57.8	60.6	—28.8
Camp.	86.7	63.4	73.1	84.6	53.2	62.9	—10.2
Coah.	362.1	239.7	66.2	436.4	228.3	52.3	—13.9
Col.	77.7	52.6	67.7	61.9	40.8	65.9	—1.8
Chis.	438.8	361.2	82.3	530.0	451.1	85.1	2.8
Chih.	405.7	315.3	77.7	491.8	346.3	70.4	—7.3
D. F.	720.8	102.9	14.3	1,229.6	109.6	8.9	—5.4
Dgo.	483.2	407.6	84.4	404.4	326.6	80.8	—3.6
Gto.	1,081.7	776.4	71.8	987.8	681.4	69.0	—2.8
Gro.	594.3	545.2	91.7	641.7	597.8	93.2	1.5
Hgo.	646.6	590.8	91.4	677.8	599.9	88.5	—2.9
Jal.	1,208.9	932.2	77.1	1,255.3	831.4	66.2	—10.9
Mex.	989.5	831.3	84.0	990.1	881.9	89.1	5.1
Mich.	991.9	828.9	83.6	1,048.4	854.7	81.5	—2.1
Mor.	179.6	139.5	77.7	132.1	112.6	85.2	7.5
Nay.	171.2	139.3	81.4	167.7	120.1	71.6	—9.8
N. L.	365.2	263.6	72.2	417.5	263.9	63.2	—9.0
Oax.	1,040.4	901.4	86.6	1,084.5	955.0	88.1	1.5
Pue.	1,101.6	896.6	81.4	1,150.4	907.6	78.9	—2.5
Qro.	244.7	200.2	81.8	234.1	194.5	83.1	1.3
Q. R.	9.1	9.1	100.0	10.6	10.6	100.0	....
S. L. P.	627.8	488.9	77.9	579.8	454.3	78.4	0.5
Sin.	323.6	278.4	86.0	395.6	320.3	81.0	—5.0
Son.	265.4	219.6	82.7	316.3	217.9	68.9	—13.8
Tab.	187.6	175.2	93.4	224.0	202.0	90.2	—3.2
Tamps.	249.6	198.8	79.6	344.0	200.3	58.2	—21.4
Tlax.	184.2	157.1	85.3	205.5	170.1	82.8	—2.5
Ver.	1,132.9	887.4	78.3	1,377.3	1,055.1	76.6	—1.7
Yuc.	339.6	249.1	73.4	386.1	228.0	59.1	—14.3
Zac.	477.6	406.2	85.1	459.0	370.0	80.6	—4.5
TOTALS	15,160.4	11,775.2	77.7	16,552.7	11,909.9	72.0	—5.7

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Note that the 1910 definition of rural communities—i.e., communities of less than 4,000 inhabitants—has been maintained for 1930.

TABLE 3

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY CLASSES OF OCCUPATION, 1930*

OCCUPATIONS	NUMBER (IN 000's)	PER CENT OF TOTAL
Agriculture, Forestry, Livestock, Fishing and Hunting	3,626.3	70.2
Industry—including Mining, Petroleum and Manufacturing	743.4	14.4
Transportation and Communication	107.1	2.1
Commerce	273.8	5.3
All Others and Unclassified†	415.2	8.0
TOTALS	5,165.8‡	100.0

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Excluded from *economically active population* are: housewives, domestic servants, non-productive persons (children, invalids, etc.), unemployed and persons with occupation unknown.

† Includes: Public Administration, Professions, etc., and unclassified occupations.

‡ 31.2 per cent of the total population of 16,552,722.

TABLE 4

DENSITY OF TOTAL POPULATION WITH RESPECT TO TOTAL AREA COMPARED WITH DENSITY OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE WITH RESPECT TO AGRICULTURAL LAND, BY ZONES AND STATES, 1930*

ZONES AND STATES	TOTAL POPULATION (IN 000's)	DENSITY PER SQUARE KILOMETER OF TOTAL AREA†	ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE (IN 000's)	AGRICULTURAL LAND (SQUARE KILOMETERS)‡	DENSITY OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION IN AGRICULTURE PER SQUARE KILOMETER OF AGRICULTURAL LAND
NORTH	*3,133.0*	*3.9*	*666.1*	*610,494*	*1.1*
Coah.	436.4	2.9	82.6	118,196	0.7
Chih.	491.8	2.0	102.4	184,416	0.6
Dgo.	404.4	3.3	99.3	88,102	1.3
N. L.	417.5	6.4	79.2	54,644	1.4
S. L. P.	579.8	9.2	130.8	45,718	2.9
Tamps.	344.0	4.3	63.3	59,976	1.1
Zac.	459.0	6.3	108.5	59,442	1.8
GULF	*2,082.7*	*8.8*	*479.9*	*120,075*	*4.0*
Camp.	84.6	1.7	17.5	33,909	0.5
Q. R.	10.6	0.2	2.3	13,492	0.2
Tab.	224.0	8.8	52.9	10,922	4.8
Ver.	1,377.3	19.2	326.0	51,005	6.4
Yuc.	386.1	10.0	81.2	10,748	7.6
N. PACIFIC	*975.0*	*2.4*	*219.5*	*109,173*	*2.0*
B. C.	95.4	0.7	19.0	21,807	0.9
Nay.	167.7	6.1	41.4	9,297	4.5
Sin.	395.6	6.8	94.9	21,532	4.4

Son.	316.3	1.7	64.1	56,537	1.1
S. Pacific	*2,318.1*	*9.7*	*613.3*	*107,133*	*5.7*
Col.	61.9	11.9	12.9	3,951	3.3
Chis.	530.0	7.1	134.8	35,589	3.8
Gro.	641.7	10.0	176.0	29,905	5.9
Oax.	1,084.5	11.5	289.6	37,689	7.7
Central	*8,043.9*	*29.1*	*1,647.5*	*161,134*	*10.2*
Ags.	132.9	20.5	22.7	4,197	5.4
D. F.	1,229.6	829.1	42.5	707	60.1
Gto.	987.8	32.3	226.9	22,993	9.9
Hgo.	677.8	32.5	167.2	10,899	15.3
Jal.	1,255.3	15.6	283.9	46,954	6.0
Mex.	990.1	46.2	239.4	14,267	16.8
Mich.	1,048.4	17.5	259.9	25,815	10.1
Mor.	132.1	26.6	36.1	3,185	11.3
Pue.	1,150.4	33.8	261.1	21,434	12.2
Qro.	234.1	20.4	60.1	7,798	7.7
Tlax.	205.5	51.0	47.8	2,885	16.6
Totals	16,552.7	8.4	3,626.3	1,108,009	3.3

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† For *Total Area* see Table 6.

‡ Includes all land censused in the 1930 agricultural census except that classified as "waste land."

[For Table 5 see p. 596]

TABLE 6

TERRITORIAL AREA COMPARED WITH AREA CENSUSED IN THE 1930 AGRICULTURAL CENSUS, BY ZONES AND STATES*

(Area in 000's of Hectares)

STATES AND ZONES	TERRITORIAL AREA†		AREA CENSUSED‡		
	Hectares	As Per cent of Total Territorial Area	Hectares	As Per cent of Total Censused	As Per cent of Total Territorial Area
NORTH	*80,031.6*	*40.7*	*70,915.6*	*53.9*	*88.6*
Coah.	15,039.5	7.7	14,866.1	11.3	98.8
Chih.	24,561.2	12.5	20,635.2	15.7	84.0
Dgo.	12,352.0	6.3	9,968.9	7.6	80.7
N. L.	6,510.3	3.3	5,946.7	4.5	91.3
S. L. P.	6,324.1	3.1	5,705.8	4.3	90.2
Tamps.	7,960.2	4.2	7,091.8	5.4	89.1
Zac.	7,284.3	3.6	6,701.2	5.1	92.6
N. PACIFIC	*41,244.8*	*21.0*	*13,404.7*	*10.2*	*32.5*
B. C.	14,409.2	7.3	2,428.5	1.8	16.9
Nay.	2,731.5	1.5	1,547.7	1.3	56.7
Sin.	5,848.8	3.0	2,807.9	2.0	48.6
Son.	18,255.3	9.2	6,620.5	5.1	36.3
CENTRAL	*27,605.6*	*14.1*	*18,858.2*	*14.3*	*68.3*
Ags.	647.2	0.3	478.0	0.5	73.9
D. F.	148.3	0.1	83.9	§	56.5
Gto.	3,057.5	1.6	2,715.3	2.0	88.8
Hgo.	2,087.0	1.0	1,292.0	1.0	61.9
Jal.	8,068.3	4.1	5,527.8	4.1	68.5
Mex.	2,141.4	1.1	1,631.6	1.2	76.2
Mich.	6,009.3	3.1	3,058.7	2.3	50.9
Mor.	496.4	0.3	344.7	0.3	69.4
Pue.	3,399.5	1.7	2,520.3	1.7	74.1
Qro.	1,148.0	0.6	877.5	1.0	76.4
Tlax.	402.7	0.2	328.2	0.2	81.5
S. PACIFIC	*23,828.9*	*12.1*	*12,959.9*	*9.9*	*54.4*
Col.	520.5	0.3	496.3	0.6	95.4
Chis.	7,441.5	3.8	4,134.8	3.1	55.6
Gro.	6,445.8	3.2	3,678.6	2.8	57.1
Oax.	9,421.1	4.8	4,650.3	3.4	49.4

TABLE 6—*Continued*

(Area in 000's of Hectares)

States and Zones	Territorial Area†		Area Censused‡		
	Hectares	As Per cent of Total Territorial Area	Hectares	As Per cent of Total Censused	As Per cent of Total Territorial Area
Gulf	*23,753.6*	*12.1*	*15,356.1*	*11.7*	*64.6*
Camp.	5,095.2	2.6	3,782.4	2.9	74.2
Q. R.	5,084.3	2.6	1,353.3	1.0	26.6
Tab.	2,533.7	1.4	1,304.6	1.0	51.5
Ver.	7,189.6	3.4	5,824.5	4.5	81.0
Yuc.	3,850.8	2.1	3,091.3	2.3	80.3
Totals	196,464.5	100.0	131,494.5	100.0	66.9

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. The 1930 agricultural census was taken in 1930 and covers the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930.

† The territorial area includes: 196,389,000 hectares of continental area; 26,200 hectares in the Archipiélago de las Islas Marías (islands off the coast of Nayarit); 49,000 hectares in the Isla Cozumel and 300 hectares in the Isla Mujeres (both off the coast of Quintana Roo).

‡ The census of 1930 was a census of farms (*explotaciones agrícolas*). The term "farm" was defined as: "any piece of land (*terreno*) dedicated in whole or in part to agricultural or livestock production under the direction of its owner or administrator, or managed by a single person, or with the help of others, without taking into account its size or location and which is composed of one or several parcels or lots in the same neighborhood always providing they are under a single administration."

§ Less than 0.1 per cent.

TABLE 7

LEVEL LAND COMPARED WITH TERRITORIAL AREA AND WITH AREA COVERED BY THE AGRICULTURAL CENSUS, BY ZONES AND STATES, 1930*

ZONES AND STATES	AREA OF LEVEL LAND† (000's OF HECTARES)	LEVEL LAND AS PER CENT OF TERRITORIAL AREA‡	LEVEL LAND AS PER CENT OF AREA CENSUSED‡
NORTH	*34,332.7*	*42.9*	*48.4*
Coah.	8,236.9	54.8	55.4
Chih.	10,685.9	43.5	51.8
Dgo	2,570.7	20.8	25.8
N.L.	2,934.5	45.1	49.3
S.L.P.	2,783.1	44.0	48.9
Tamps.	3,281.9	41.2	46.3
Zac.	3,839.8	52.7	57.3
N. PACIFIC	*5,030.8*	*12.2*	*37.5*
B.C.	802.9	5.6	33.1
Nay.	499.3	18.3	32.3
Sin.	1,194.1	20.4	42.5
Son.	2,534.4	13.9	38.3
CENTRAL	*8,240.9*	*29.9*	*43.7*
Ags.	223.5	34.5	46.8
D.F.	51.6	34.8	61.5
Gto.	1,306.3	42.7	48.1
Hgo.	648.6	31.1	50.2
Jal.	2,237.1	27.7	40.5
Mex.	812.1	37.9	49.8
Mich.	1,227.0	20.4	40.1
Mor.	162.8	32.8	47.2
Pue.	1,071.3	31.5	42.5
Qro.	284.8	24.8	32.5
Tlax.	215.8	53.6	65.7
S. PACIFIC	*4,661.1*	*19.6*	*35.9*
Col.	193.4	36.2	39.0
Chis.	1,779.6	23.9	43.0
Gro.	1,293.9	20.1	35.2
Oax.	1,394.3	14.8	30.0

TABLE 7—*Continued*

Zones and States	Area of Level Land† (000's of Hectares)	Level Land as Per Cent of Territorial Area‡	Level Land as Per Cent of Area Censused‡
Gulf	*12,595.8*	*53.0*	*89.0*
Camp.	3,680.3	72.2	97.3
Q.R.	1,353.3	26.6	100.0
Tab.	1,287.4	50.8	98.7
Ver.	3,226.9	44.9	55.4
Yuc.	3,047.8	79.2	98.6
Totals	64,861.3	33.0	49.3

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Defined as: "crop land" plus "pasture in plains" plus "level unproductive land" plus "uncultivated productive land."

‡ For absolute numbers see Table 6.

TABLE 5

TOTAL AREA COMPARED WITH TOTAL POPULATION AND AGRICULTURAL AREA COMPARED WITH ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE, BY ZONES, 1930*

ZONES	TOTAL AREA		TOTAL POPULATION		AGRICULTURAL AREA		ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE	
	Square Kilometers	Per cent of Total	Persons (in 000's)	Per cent of Total	Square Kilometers	Per cent of Total	Persons (in 000's)	Per cent of Total
North	800,316	40.7	3,133.0	18.9	610,494	55.1	666.1	18.4
N. Pacific	412,448	21.0	975.0	5.9	109,173	9.9	219.5	6.1
Central	276,056	14.1	8,043.9	48.6	161,134	14.5	1,647.5	45.4
S. Pacific	238,289	12.1	2,318.1	14.0	107,133	9.7	613.3	16.9
Gulf	237,536	12.1	2,082.7	12.6	120,075	10.8	479.9	13.2
TOTAL	1,964,645	100.0	16,552.7	100.0	1,108,009	100.0	3,626.3	100.0

* Based on Table 4.

[For Table 6 see p. 592]

TABLE 8

APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TERRITORIAL AREA OF MEXICO BY ALTITUDE AND LATITUDE*

(Areas in Square Kilometers)

LATITUDE	METERS ABOVE SEA LEVEL†					
	0 to 500	500 to 1,000	1,000 to 1,500	1,500 to 2,000	2,000 to 2,500	2,500 to 3,000
Up to 18° North	69,812	56,790	34,521	46,739	12,188	....
18° to 22°	192,749	51,076	75,555	99,049	74,646	9,517
22° to 26°	176,188	56,638	82,347	161,836	81,579	2,839
26° to 30°	120,462	141,976	149,160	60,568	18,871	....
North from 30°	82,547	20,370	63,975	19,876	1,804	....
Totals	641,758	326,850	405,558	388,068	189,088	12,356
Per Cent	32%	16%	20%	19%	9%	0.6%

* Data of the *Escuela Nacional de Agricultura.*

† 1 meter equals 3.281 ft.

TABLE 9

YEARLY RAINFALL AT VARIOUS POINTS IN MEXICO, 1921-1930*
(In Millimeters)

YEARS	MEXICO, D.F.	MAZATLAN	GUADALAJARA	LEON, GTO.	MERIDA	VERACRUZ	LA PAZ, B. C.	TEAPA, TAB.
1921	537.8	435.9	848.4	443.8	720.8	1,550.8	33.8	.....
1922	725.1	893.8	942.7	615.8	943.2	1,560.8	92.6	.....
1923	479.4	582.1	872.2	716.7	734.9	1,417.9	296.0	.....
1924	.....	670.4	834.4	437.4	.....	.....	65.5	.....
1925	.....	916.7	928.8	.....	1,106.2	1,420.7	128.2	3,849.8
1926	594.9	1,161.6	.....	831.5	907.7	1,541.5	.....	3,829.5
1927	587.1	791.7	1,007.6	831.0	820.3	1,978.2	.....	3,743.0
1928	615.4	940.2	729.5	765.2	901.8	1,854.0	131.3	4,425.5
1929	.....	639.1	940.4	498.6	1,132.9	1,885.9	259.1	4,626.0
1930	639.7	894.8	1,052.0	690.2	1,045.2	1,431.3	.....	4,530.0
AVERAGE	597.0	792.6	906.2	647.8	923.5	1,626.7	143.7	4,167.3

* Data of the *Dirección de Estudios Geográficos y Climatológicos.*

TABLE 10

THORNTHWAITE CLASSIFICATION OF HUMIDITY AREAS BY AGRICULTURAL STATISTICAL ZONES*
(Area in Square Kilometers)

ZONES	TERRITORIAL AREA	SUFFICIENT HUMIDITY IN ALL SEASONS (AA'r; AB'r; BA'r; BB'r; CA'r; CB'r.)			DEFICIENT HUMIDITY IN WINTER (BA'w; BB'w; CA'w; CB'w; DB'w.)			DEFICIENT HUMIDITY IN SUMMER (CB's)			INSUFFICIENT HUMIDITY IN ALL SEASONS (CA'd; CB'd; DA'd; DB'd; EA'd; EB'd.)		
		Area	Per Cent of Total	Per Cent of Territorial Area	Area	Per Cent of Total	Per Cent of Territorial Area	Area	Per Cent of Total	Per Cent of Territorial Area	Area	Per Cent of Total	Per Cent of Territorial Area
North	800,316	24,794	9.8	3.1	155,999	22.1	19.5	....	....	....	619,523	63.3	77.4
Central	276,056	11,175	4.4	4.0	237,668	33.7	86.1	....	....	....	27,213	2.8	9.9
N. Pacific	412,448	.....	....	....	60,475	8.6	14.7	27,952	100.0	6.9	324,021	33.1	78.4
S. Pacific	238,289	42,777	17.1	18.0	195,512	27.6	82.0	....	....	....	....	....	....
Gulf	237,536	173,085	68.7	72.9	56,318	8.0	23.7	....	....	....	8,133	0.8	3.4
TOTALS	1,964,645	251,831	100.0	12.8	705,972	100.0	35.9	27,952	100.0	1.4	978,890	100.0	49.9

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. See Fig. 6.

TABLE 11

UTILIZATION OF LAND BY STATES, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

STATES	TOTAL AREA	CROP LAND†						PASTURE		FOREST		ALL OTHER LAND‡	
		Under Cultivation		Fallow		Total							
		Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent
Ags.	647.2	87.2	13.5	24.6	3.8	111.8	17.3	259.0	40.0	46.4	7.2	230.0	35.5
B.C.	14,409.2	83.1	0.6	51.7	0.4	134.8	0.9	1,246.7	8.7	776.1	5.4	12,251.5	85.0
Camp.	5,095.2	41.9	0.8	600.1	11.8	642.0	12.6	358.6	7.0	2,390.3	46.9	1,704.3	33.4
Coah.	15,039.5	212.2	1.4	208.9	1.4	421.1	2.8	9,779.6	65.0	642.9	4.3	4,195.9	27.9
Col.	520.5	21.0	4.0	70.4	13.5	91.4	17.6	146.3	28.1	148.3	28.5	134.5	25.8
Chis.	7,441.5	177.7	2.4	666.2	9.0	843.9	11.3	1,422.5	19.1	1,241.4	16.7	3,933.7	52.9
Chih.	24,561.2	287.5	1.2	363.2	1.5	650.6	2.7	14,303.2	58.2	3,088.6	12.6	6,518.7	26.5
D.F	148.3	25.5	17.2	6.4	4.3	31.8	21.5	14.4	9.7	24.0	16.2	78.0	52.6
Dgo.	12,352.0	304.7	2.5	206.1	1.7	510.8	4.2	5,378.0	43.5	2,684.8	21.7	3,778.4	30.6
Gto.	3,057.5	613.8	20.1	313.1	10.2	926.9	30.3	1,176.7	38.5	168.7	5.5	785.2	25.7
Gro.	6,445.8	256.0	4.0	462.5	7.2	718.6	11.2	1,178.6	18.3	1,023.9	15.9	3,524.7	54.7
Hgo.	2,087.0	279.3	13.4	188.0	9.0	467.2	22.4	434.3	20.8	161.3	7.7	1,024.2	49.1
Jal.	8,068.3	656.3	8.1	568.4	7.1	1,224.7	15.2	2,568.1	31.8	846.4	10.5	3,429.1	42.5
Méx.	2,141.4	358.7	16.8	143.0	6.7	501.7	23.4	483.0	22.5	409.4	19.1	747.3	34.9
Mich.	6,009.3	401.1	6.7	307.9	5.1	708.9	11.8	1,300.2	21.6	517.7	8.6	3,482.5	58.0
Mor.	496.4	41.9	8.4	53.6	10.8	95.5	19.2	179.2	36.1	33.5	6.8	188.2	37.9
Nay.	2,731.5	71.2	2.6	77.5	2.8	148.7	5.4	478.2	17.5	263.9	9.7	1,840.7	67.4
N.L.	6,510.3	151.1	2.3	118.8	1.8	269.9	4.2	3,745.6	57.5	989.1	15.2	1,505.7	23.1
Oax.	9,421.1	301.1	3.2	499.2	5.3	800.2	8.5	1,163.9	12.4	1,724.3	18.3	5,732.6	60.8
Pue.	3,399.5	593.1	17.5	230.0	6.8	823.1	24.2	920.4	27.1	367.6	10.8	1,288.4	37.9

Qro.	1,148.0	139.2	12.1	70.1	6.1	209.3	18.2	499.3	43.5	69.1	6.0	370.3	32.3
Q.R.	5,084.3	1.4	§	2.4	§	3.8	0.1	0.8	§	1,344.2	26.4	3,735.5	73.5
S.L.P.	6,324.1	225.3	3.6	214.3	3.4	439.6	7.0	3,122.7	49.4	732.7	11.6	2,029.2	32.1
Sin.	5,848.8	227.9	3.9	183.2	3.1	411.1	7.0	982.9	16.8	674.2	11.5	3,780.5	64.7
Son.	18,255.3	127.6	0.7	97.3	0.5	224.9	1.2	5,008.4	27.4	392.7	2.2	12,629.3	69.2
Tab.	2,533.7	71.6	2.8	428.5	16.9	500.1	19.7	252.6	10.0	272.8	10.8	1,508.3	59.5
Tamps.	7,960.2	108.2	1.4	68.4	0.9	176.6	2.2	3,678.5	46.2	1,911.5	24.0	2,193.6	27.6
Tlax.	402.7	151.4	37.6	32.3	8.0	183.7	45.6	53.2	13.2	44.9	11.2	120.9	30.0
Ver.	7,189.6	412.2	5.7	877.1	12.2	1,289.3	17.9	1,678.0	23.4	1,855.0	25.8	2,367.3	32.9
Yuc.	3,850.8	304.8	7.9	142.5	3.7	447.2	11.6	124.7	3.3	502.8	13.1	2,776.0	72.1
Zac.	7,284.3	357.0	4.9	151.4	2.1	508.4	7.0	4,555.1	62.5	506.8	7.0	1,713.9	23.5
TOTALS	196,464.5	7,090.5	3.6	7,427.2	3.8	14,517.7	7.4	66,492.9	33.8	25,855.5	13.2	89,598.4	45.6

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Defined as land cultivated at any time during the five years preceding the census of May 15, 1930.

‡ Includes public lands not under agricultural exploitation, urban areas, rivers, lakes, roads, land exploited for uncultivated crops (maguey de ixtle, guayule, etc.) and waste lands. In this column are also included 100,070 hectares in properties of less than 1 hectare each, most of which were under cultivation.

§ Less than 0.1 per cent.

TABLE 12

UTILIZATION OF LAND BY ZONES, 1930*

(Areas in ooo's of Hectares)

ZONES	TOTAL AREA		CROP LAND								
			Under Cultivation			Fallow			Total		
	Area	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total
North	80,031.6	40.7	1,645.8	2.0	23.2	1,331.2	1.7	17.9	2,977.1	3.7	20.5
N. Pacific	41,244.8	21.0	509.8	1.2	7.2	409.8	1.0	5.4	919.6	2.2	6.3
Central	27,605.6	14.1	3,347.3	12.1	47.2	1,937.3	7.0	26.2	5,284.6	19.1	36.4
S. Pacific	23,828.9	12.1	755.8	3.2	10.7	1,698.3	7.1	22.9	2,454.1	10.3	16.9
Gulf	23,753.6	12.1	831.8	3.5	11.7	2,050.6	8.6	27.6	2,882.4	12.1	19.9
TOTALS	196,464.5	100.0	7,090.5	3.6	100.0	7,427.2	3.8	100.0	14,517.7	7.4	100.0

* Based on Table 11.

TABLE 12—*Continued*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

Zones	Total Area		Pasture			Forest			All Other Land		
	Area	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total
North	80,031.6	40.7	44,562.7	55.7	67.1	10,556.4	13.2	40.8	21,935.4	27.4	24.5
N. Pacific	41,244.8	21.0	7,716.2	18.7	11.4	2,107.0	5.2	8.1	30,502.1	73.9	34.1
Central	27,605.6	14.1	7,887.9	28.7	11.9	2,689.0	9.8	10.4	11,744.1	42.4	13.1
S. Pacific	23,828.9	12.1	3,911.4	16.3	5.9	4,137.9	17.5	16.1	13,325.5	55.9	14.9
Gulf	23,753.6	12.1	2,414.7	10.2	3.7	6,365.2	26.8	24.6	12,091.4	50.9	13.4
Totals	196,464.5	100.0	66,492.9	33.8	100.0	25,855.5	13.2	100.0	89,598.4	45.6	100.0

TABLE 13

Crop Land Actual and Potential Compared With All Other Types of Land, by States, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

States	Total Area	Crop Land						All Other Land§	
		Actual†		Potential‡		Total Crop Land			
		Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent
Ags.	647.2	111.8	17.3	21.6	3.3	133.3	20.6	513.9	79.4
B. C.	14,409.2	134.8	0.9	112.3	0.8	247.1	1.7	14,162.1	98.3
Camp.	5,095.2	642.0	12.6	1,073.3	21.1	1,715.2	33.7	3,380.0	66.3
Coah.	15,039.5	421.1	2.8	265.3	1.8	686.4	4.6	14,353.1	95.4
Col.	520.5	91.4	17.6	36.3	7.0	127.7	24.5	392.8	75.5
Chis.	7,441.5	843.9	11.3	601.9	8.1	1,445.8	19.4	5,995.7	80.6
Chih.	24,561.2	650.6	2.7	1,074.1	4.4	1,724.7	7.0	22,836.5	93.0
D. F.	148.3	31.8	21.5	0.4	0.3	32.3	21.8	116.0	78.2
Dgo.	12,352.0	510.8	4.1	462.9	3.8	973.7	7.9	11,378.3	92.1
Gto.	3,057.5	926.9	30.3	85.5	2.8	1,012.4	33.1	2,045.1	66.9
Gro.	6,445.8	718.6	11.2	259.8	4.0	978.3	15.2	5,467.5	84.8
Hgo.	2,087.0	467.2	22.4	51.4	2.5	518.6	24.9	1,568.4	75.2
Jal.	8,068.3	1,224.7	15.2	225.4	2.8	1,450.1	18.0	6,618.2	82.0
Mex.	2,141.4	501.7	23.4	48.7	2.3	550.4	25.7	1,591.0	74.3
Mich.	6,009.3	708.9	11.8	116.0	1.9	825.0	13.7	5,184.3	86.3
Mor.	496.4	95.5	19.2	10.2	2.1	105.7	21.3	390.7	78.7
Nay.	2,731.5	148.7	5.4	113.8	4.2	262.5	9.6	2,469.0	90.4
N. L.	6,510.3	269.9	4.2	497.0	7.6	766.9	11.8	5,743.4	88.2
Oax.	9,421.1	800.2	8.5	389.8	4.1	1,190.1	12.6	8,231.0	87.4

Pue.	3,399.5	823.1	24.2	143.7	4.2	966.9	28.4	2,432.6	71.6
Qro.	1,148.0	209.3	18.2	9.9	0.9	219.2	19.1	928.8	80.9
Q. R.	5,084.3	3.8	0.1	0.1	¶	3.8	0.1	5,080.5	99.9
S. L. P.	6,324.1	439.6	7.0	351.2	5.6	790.8	12.5	5,533.3	87.5
Sin.	5,848.8	411.1	7.0	185.5	3.2	596.6	10.2	5,252.2	89.8
Son.	18,255.3	224.9	1.2	299.5	1.6	524.4	2.9	17,730.9	97.1
Tab.	2,533.7	500.1	19.7	92.5	3.7	592.5	23.4	1,941.2	76.6
Tamps.	7,960.2	176.6	2.2	840.2	10.6	1,016.8	12.8	6,943.4	87.2
Tlax.	402.7	183.7	45.6	5.0	1.2	188.7	46.9	214.0	53.1
Ver.	7,189.6	1,289.3	17.9	1,026.9	14.3	2,316.2	32.2	4,873.4	67.8
Yuc.	3,850.8	447.2	11.6	115.1	3.0	562.4	14.6	3,288.4	85.4
Zac.	7,284.3	508.4	7.0	294.5	4.0	802.9	11.0	6,481.4	89.0
TOTALS	196,464.5	14,517.7	7.4	8,809.7	4.5	23,327.4	11.9	173,137.1	88.1

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Defined as land cultivated at any time during the five years preceding the census of May 15, 1930.

‡ Defined as land "easily susceptible to being opened to cultivation."

§ Includes forests, pastures, public lands not under agricultural exploitation, urban areas, rivers, roads, lakes, land exploited for uncultivated crops (maguey de ixtle, guayule, etc.), and waste lands. In this column are also included 100,070 hectares in properties of less than 1 hectare each, most of which should probably be counted as actual crop lands.

¶ Less than 0.1 per cent.

TABLE 14

CROP LAND ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL COMPARED WITH ALL OTHER TYPES OF LAND, BY ZONES, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

ZONES	TOTAL AREA		CROP LAND									ALL OTHER LAND		
			Actual			Potential			Total					
	Area	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total
North	80,031.6	40.7	2,977.1	3.7	20.5	3,785.2	4.7	43.0	6,762.2	8.4	29.0	73,269.4	91.6	42.4
N. Pacific	41,244.8	21.0	919.6	2.2	6.3	711.0	1.7	8.1	1,630.6	3.9	7.0	39,614.2	96.1	22.9
Central	27,605.6	14.1	5,284.6	19.1	36.4	717.9	2.6	8.1	6,002.5	21.7	25.7	21,603.1	78.3	12.4
S. Pacific	23,828.9	12.1	2,454.1	10.3	16.9	1,287.8	5.4	14.6	3,741.9	15.7	16.0	20,087.0	84.3	11.6
Gulf	23,753.6	12.1	2,882.4	12.1	19.9	2,307.8	9.7	26.2	5,190.2	21.8	22.3	18,563.4	78.2	10.7
TOTALS	196,464.5	100.0	14,517.7	7.4	100.0	8,809.7	4.5	100.0	23,327.4	11.9	100.0	173,137.1	88.1	100.0

* Based on Table 13.

TABLE 15

CLASSIFICATION OF CROP LAND BY STATES, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

STATES	TOTAL AREA OF CROP LAND	IRRIGATED		HUMID		SEMI-ARID		ORCHARD	
		Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent	Area	Per Cent
Ags.	111.8	11.1	9.9	1.6	1.5	98.9	88.5	0.2	0.2
B. C.	134.8	94.3	70.0	0.8	0.6	39.4	29.2	0.3	0.2
Camp.	642.0	12.2	1.9	84.1	13.1	543.4	84.6	2.3	0.4
Coah.	421.1	247.9	58.9	4.2	1.0	168.7	40.1	0.3	0.1
Col.	91.4	9.4	10.3	12.6	13.8	67.7	74.1	1.7	1.8
Chis.	843.9	13.1	1.6	122.6	14.5	707.1	83.8	1.0	0.1
Chih.	650.6	115.8	17.8	23.8	3.7	510.1	78.4	0.9	0.2
D. F.	31.8	3.3	10.4	6.7	21.0	21.8	68.4	0.1	0.3
Dgo.	510.8	111.4	21.8	8.8	1.7	389.6	76.3	1.0	0.2
Gto.	926.9	134.0	14.5	49.4	5.3	742.6	80.1	0.9	0.1
Gro.	718.6	10.3	1.4	45.1	6.3	660.7	92.0	2.5	0.4
Hgo.	467.2	38.1	8.1	39.4	8.4	388.7	83.2	1.1	0.2
Jal.	1,224.7	100.9	8.2	44.6	3.6	1,073.7	87.7	5.5	0.5
Mex.	501.7	81.1	16.2	28.2	5.6	391.4	78.0	1.1	0.2
Mich.	708.9	163.5	23.1	59.9	8.4	482.8	68.1	2.7	0.4
Mor.	95.5	25.7	26.9	2.2	2.4	67.2	70.4	0.3	0.3
Nay.	148.7	6.4	4.3	55.0	37.0	86.9	58.5	0.3	0.2
N. L.	269.9	69.6	25.8	8.8	3.3	190.2	70.5	1.2	0.5
Oax.	800.2	39.5	4.9	111.7	14.0	648.4	81.0	0.7	0.1
Pue.	823.1	69.0	8.4	61.3	7.4	690.0	83.8	2.9	0.4
Qro.	209.3	22.6	10.8	12.0	5.7	174.5	83.4	0.2	0.1
Q. R.	3.8	†	0.4	†	1.0	3.2	85.2	0.5	13.5
S. L. P.	439.6	19.7	4.5	39.9	9.1	378.4	86.1	1.6	0.4
Sin.	411.1	80.9	19.7	16.6	4.0	312.0	75.9	1.6	0.4
Son.	224.9	115.4	51.3	7.0	3.1	101.9	45.3	0.7	0.3
Tab.	500.1	0.3	0.1	94.8	19.0	404.2	80.8	0.8	0.2
Tamps.	176.6	36.8	20.8	12.0	6.8	127.2	72.1	0.6	0.3
Tlax.	183.7	8.5	4.6	3.0	1.6	172.1	93.7	0.1	0.1
Ver.	1,289.3	17.4	1.4	340.4	26.4	926.5	71.9	5.0	0.4
Yuc.	447.2	0.1	‡	1.0	0.2	445.5	99.6	0.6	0.1
Zac.	508.4	19.0	3.7	6.8	1.3	482.2	94.8	0.5	0.1
TOTALS	14,517.7	1,677.1	11.6	1,304.2	8.9	11,497.2	79.2	39.2	0.3

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

Crop land is defined as land under cultivation at any time during the five years preceding the census of May 15, 1930. Figures do not include 100,070 hectares in properties of less than 1 hectare each, most of which should probably be counted as crop land.

† Less than 100.

‡ Less than 0.1%.

TABLE 16

CLASSIFICATION OF CROP LAND BY ZONES, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

ZONES	TOTAL CROP LAND		IRRIGATED			HUMID			SEMI-ARID			ORCHARD		
	Area	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent in Zone	Per Cent of Total
Central	5,284.6	36.4	657.6	12.4	39.3	308.1	5.8	23.6	4,303.7	81.5	37.4	15.1	0.3	38.6
North	2,977.1	20.5	620.2	20.8	36.9	104.3	3.6	7.9	2,246.5	75.4	19.5	6.1	0.2	15.6
Gulf	2,882.4	19.9	30.0	1.0	1.8	520.4	18.1	39.9	2,322.8	80.6	20.2	9.1	0.3	23.3
S. Pacific	2,454.1	16.9	72.3	2.9	4.3	292.0	12.0	22.4	2,083.9	84.9	18.2	5.9	0.2	15.1
N. Pacific	919.6	6.3	297.0	32.3	17.7	79.4	8.6	6.2	540.2	58.8	4.7	2.9	0.3	7.4
TOTALS	14,517.7	100.0	1,677.1	11.6	100.0	1,304.2	8.9	100.0	11,497.2	79.2	100.0	39.2	0.3	100.0

* Based on Table 15.

TABLE 17

DEFINITIVE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND BY YEARS AND TYPE OF GRANT, 1915-1933*
(Areas in Hectares)

YEARS	RESTITUTION			DOTATION			CONFIRMATION			AMPLIFICATION			TOTALS		
	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons
1915	..	.....	.....	..	....	.....	..	.....	....	..	.....	....	..	.....	.....
1916	1	1,246	182	..	....	.....	..	.....	....	..	.....	....	1	1,246	182
1917	3	585	903	5	5,050	1,712	..	.....	....	..	.....	....	8	5,635	2,615
1918	4	13,603	1,417	53	49,371	13,654	..	5,335	....	..	.....	....	57	68,309	15,071
1919	..	.....	.....	60	36,969	14,948	..	3,307	....	..	.....	....	60	40,276	14,948
1920	1	217	2,792	63	60,165	12,774	..	3,951	....	..	.....	....	64	64,333	15,566
1921	7	45,473	2,310	110	125,605	23,804	..	3,932	....	4	3,805	1,545	121	178,815	27,659
1922	11	36,383	3,827	53	85,342	10,780	1	15,733	164	3	2,808	1,413	68	140,267	16,184
1923	5	46,979	1,019	120	209,137	29,620	..	27,799	....	3	1,956	503	128	285,871	31,142
1924	15	42,311	3,543	290	548,443	59,671	..	30,976	....	2	1,366	1,121	307	623,095	64,335
1925	11	35,557	2,814	377	658,196	73,594	8	84,470	1,390	8	8,791	1,808	404	787,014	79,606
1926	13	201,249	3,209	377	530,944	73,724	3	64,993	451	15	19,449	3,241	408	816,634	80,625
1927	13	328,270	5,067	373	552,539	76,564	1	100,360	112	10	10,197	2,373	397	991,366	84,116
1928	8	20,691	1,574	345	578,164	58,610	..	29,585	....	14	10,424	3,076	367	638,864	63,260
1929	11	57,171	2,572	628	902,663	95,107	2	73,117	1,138	51	51,418	10,029	692	1,084,370	108,846
1930	14	51,274	4,753	421	613,597	58,862	1	55,853	....	26	23,367	3,812	462	744,091	67,427
1931	5	170,553	1,444	340	389,152	40,241	3	17,955	285	25	32,645	3,682	373	610,304	45,652
1932	1	6,727	.....	198	324,129	19,966	2	5,105	437	7	12,439	814	208	348,401	21,217
1933	3	9,325	1,406	130	173,250	14,218	..	8,574	....	2	4,798	502	135	195,948	16,126
TOTALS	126	1,067,614	38,832	3,943	5,842,715	677,849	21	531,046	3,977	170	183,462	33,919	4,260	7,624,837	754,577

* Statistics of the *Departamento Agrario* and include all grants up to December 31, 1933. *Cases* means the number of presidential decrees and for all practical purposes equals the number of villages; *persons* equals ejidatarios, or heads of families counted in the agrarian census. Note that the totals of areas due to the dropping of fractions are not always the exact sum of the figures in the respective columns.

[For Table 18 see p. 612]

TABLE 19

Definitive Distribution of Land by States and Type of Grant, 1915-1933*

(Areas in Hectares)

States	Restitution			Dotation			Confirmation			Amplification			Totals		
	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons	Cases	Area	Persons
Ags.	..	....	....	79	64,939	7,360	..	14,188	....	3	2,286	502	82	81,414	7,862
B. C.	..	....	....	6	9,187	1,090	4	5,952	836	..	....	....	10	15,138	1,926
Camp.	2	6,300	496	55	151,796	9,709	1	51,418	156	5	8,794	1,016	63	218,308	11,377
Coah.	4	42,428	895	86	210,551	12,672	..	1,671	....	1	2,059	167	91	256,709	13,734
Col.	..	....	....	15	17,415	2,443	..	1,458	....	1	532	76	16	19,405	2,519
Chis.	..	....	....	52	90,567	9,704	..	6,933	....	1	1,388	323	53	98,888	10,027
Chih.	20	487,690	6,581	100	489,916	16,015	3	171,878	456	..	....	....	123	1,149,484	23,052
D. F.	8	3,539	6,088	53	15,138	11,076	..	1,459	....	2	744	550	63	20,880	17,714
Dgo.	8	241,749	3,409	112	292,222	19,850	..	1,975	....	12	32,347	3,163	132	568,293	26,422
Gto.	1	5,072	176	132	133,792	23,721	..	2,224	....	..	....	....	133	141,088	23,897
Gro.	2	4,786	958	222	293,498	27,487	1	5,146	107	..	....	....	225	303,430	28,552
Hgo.	1	185	37	233	257,581	38,703	..	5,212	....	11	10,757	2,951	245	273,735	41,691
Jal.	3	2,311	600	194	271,495	46,007	..	6,275	....	12	15,779	3,085	209	295,859	49,692
Mex.	8	23,156	3,241	407	297,713	108,233	1	32,827	237	39	33,143	7,435	455	386,838	119,146
Mich.	7	7,136	1,561	160	179,224	34,902	..	2,977	....	8	6,342	1,551	175	195,679	38,014
Mor.	5	8,291	487	170	195,325	25,484	1	27,807	....	8	3,888	240	184	235,310	26,211
Nay.	3	7,857	469	33	104,570	7,684	3	24,835	1,435	2	3,068	1,423	41	140,330	11,011
N. L.	1	7,954	211	64	108,174	5,561	..	....	....	..	....	....	65	116,128	5,772
Oax.	3	22,310	933	105	97,764	22,947	1	3,537	208	3	1,667	753	112	125,278	24,841
Pue.	8	24,129	2,501	414	426,850	77,873	1	11,204	98	33	23,401	5,663	456	485,585	86,135

Qro.	..	....	....	52	88,168	8,081	..	870	....	2	2,997	483	54	92,035	8,565
Q. R.	..	....	....	2	2,348	102	..	....	....	..	....	....	2	2,348	102
S. L. P.	9	63,138	2,490	262	623,760	35,294	2	25,396	222	2	7,478	845	275	719,772	38,851
Sin.	10	44,127	1,840	22	54,433	3,747	1	40,427	164	..	....	....	33	138,987	5,751
Son.	4	30,108	551	43	125,274	6,299	..	24,276	....	..	....	....	47	179,658	6,850
Tab.	..	....	....	15	14,014	1,014	..	100	....	..	....	....	15	14,114	1,014
Tamps.	..	....	....	141	155,804	10,417	..	765	....	3	2,506	153	144	159,074	10,570
Tlax.	4	2,845	1,936	108	58,994	22,629	..	5,451	....	9	3,507	1,717	121	70,796	26,282
Ver.	11	20,575	1,908	335	213,059	38,491	..	1,211	....	5	3,154	700	351	237,999	41,099
Yuc.	1	120	1,000	123	342,990	21,056	2	47,688	58	..	....	....	126	390,798	22,114
Zac.	3	11,811	464	148	456,153	22,197	..	5,886	....	8	17,625	1,123	159	491,476	23,784
TOTALS	126	1,067,614	38,832	3,943	5,842,715	677,849	21	531,046	3,977	170	183,462	33,919	4,260	7,624,837	754,577

* Statistics of the *Departamento Agrario* and include all grants up to December 31, 1933. *Cases* means the number of presidential decrees and for all practical purposes equals the number of villages; *persons* equals ejidatarios, or heads of families counted in the agrarian census. Note that the totals of areas due to the dropping of fractions are not always the exact sum of the figures in the respective columns.

TABLE 18

CUMULATIVE RESULTS OF DEFINITIVE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN EJIDOS, 1915-1933*

YEARS	NO. OF CASES	AREA (000'S OF HECTARES)	PERSONS
1915	....	....	.....
1916	1	1	182
1917	9	7	2,797
1918	66	75	17,868
1919	126	115	32,816
1920	190	180	48,382
1921	311	359	76,041
1922	379	499	92,225
1923	507	785	123,367
1924	814	1,408	187,702
1925	1,218	2,195	267,308
1926	1,626	3,011	347,933
1927	2,023	4,003	432,049
1928	2,390	4,642	495,309
1929	3,082	5,726	604,155
1930	3,544	6,470	671,582
1931	3,917	7,080	717,234
1932	4,125	7,429	738,451
1933	4,260	7,625	754,577

* Based on Table 17.

[For Table 19 see p. 610]

TABLE 20

PROVISIONAL GRANTS OF EJIDOS PENDING DEFINITIVE ACTION BY FEDERAL AGRARIAN AUTHORITIES, AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1933*

(Areas in Hectares)

STATES	RESTITUTION		DOTATION		AMPLIFICATION		TOTALS	
	Cases	Area	Cases	Area	Cases	Area	Cases	Area
Ags.	..	.....	..	.....	1	2,680	1	2,680
B.C.	1	3,327	2	4,243	..	.....	3	7,570
Camp.	..	.....	4	9,600	1	2,280	5	11,880
Coah.	..	.....	19	30,327	..	.....	19	30,328
Col.	..	.....	3	1,489	..	.....	3	1,489
Chis.	1	688	126	154,671	1	843	128	156,202
Chih.	3	23,006	104	230,060	..	.....	107	253,066
D.F.	..	.....	..	.....	..	.....	..	.....
Dgo.	2	22,475	56	112,392	..	.....	58	134,868
Gto.	..	.....	149	60,595	..	.....	149	60,595
Gro.	1	9,382	116	207,726	2	2,460	119	219,568
Hgo.	..	.....	100	62,684	3	2,715	103	65,399
Jal.	..	.....	80	50,453	..	.....	80	50,453
Mex.	..	.....	150	73,123	2	859	152	73,982
Mich.	1	3,350	230	144,891	1	1,389	232	149,630
Mor.	..	.....	1	497	..	.....	1	497
Nay.	..	.....	31	35,314	..	.....	31	35,314
N.L.	..	.....	24	45,409	..	.....	24	45,409
Oax.	..	.....	18	32,809	..	.....	18	32,809
Pue.	..	.....	194	195,656	8	4,722	202	200,378
Qro.	..	.....	48	53,693	..	.....	48	53,693
Q.R.	..	.....	6	9,514	..	.....	6	9,514
S.L.P.	2	95,425	77	102,115	..	.....	79	197,539
Sin.	1	16,865	27	19,280	..	.....	28	36,146
Son.	1	6,477	39	78,325	..	.....	40	84,802
Tab.	4	16,643	14	20,635	..	.....	18	37,278
Tamps.	..	.....	64	46,822	..	.....	64	46,822
Tlax.	..	.....	..	.....	2	630	2	630
Ver.	5	19,753	404	265,357	1	3,417	410	388,527
Yuc.	..	.....	82	507,069	1	498	83	507,567
Zac.	1	13,813	146	298,203	3	2,272	150	314,288
TOTALS	23	231,205	2,314	2,852,951	26	24,764	2,363	3,108,920

* Statistics of the *Departamento Agrario*. *Cases* means the number of State decrees and for all practical purposes equals the number of villages. Note that the totals of area due to the dropping of fractions are not always the exact sum of the figures in the respective columns.

[For Table 21 see p. 618]

TABLE 22

Land From Privately-Owned Farms Granted in Definitive Possession in Ejidos by States and Classes of Land, 1915-1933*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

States	Number of Farms Affected	Total Land			Crop Land Actual and Potential			All Other Classes of Land		
		In Farms Affected	Given to Villages	Per Cent Given to Villages	In Farms Affected	Given to Villages	Per Cent Given to Villages	In Farms Affected	Given to Villages	Per Cent Given to Villages
Ags.	87	471.8	82.2	17.4	298.2	42.9	14.4	173.7	39.3	22.6
B. C.	16	40.7	18.5	45.4	13.5	4.0	29.7	27.2	14.5	53.3
Camp.	140	608.9	184.0	30.2	215.5	120.1	55.7	393.4	64.0	16.3
Coah.	177	3,726.9	263.1	7.0	182.4	76.4	41.9	3,544.5	186.7	5.3
Col.	38	200.6	19.0	9.5	38.4	8.4	21.9	162.2	10.6	6.5
Chis.	153	551.1	75.5	13.6	63.8	31.4	49.2	487.3	44.1	9.0
Chih.	316	10,141.6	1,027.2	10.1	1,618.0	135.7	8.4	8,523.5	891.5	10.5
D. F.	59	44.8	19.8	44.1	29.2	13.3	45.5	15.6	6.4	41.0
Dgo.	323	4,712.6	419.2	8.9	317.7	104.2	32.8	4,394.8	315.0	7.2
Gto.	454	1,174.1	337.4	28.7	512.2	75.2	14.7	661.9	262.2	39.6
Gro.	351	770.8	161.2	20.9	329.9	88.0	26.7	440.9	73.2	16.6
Hgo.	364	717.2	297.9	41.5	153.0	103.0	67.3	564.2	194.9	34.5
Jal.	602	1,682.4	257.1	15.3	917.7	148.0	16.1	764.7	109.0	14.3
Mex.	422	1,176.2	379.8	32.2	464.3	161.4	34.7	711.9	218.4	30.7
Mich.	431	885.5	180.4	20.4	366.2	80.2	21.9	519.3	100.2	19.3
Mor.	78	396.2	202.3	57.0	186.4	89.3	47.8	209.7	113.0	53.9
Nay.	65	806.5	115.9	14.4	193.4	29.7	15.3	613.2	86.2	14.1
N. L.	132	1,139.4	125.6	11.0	197.1	25.2	12.8	942.3	100.4	10.7

Oax.	102	501.2	118.6	23.6	159.9	29.9	18.7	341.3	88.7	26.0
Pue.	745	939.9	427.7	45.5	308.6	118.3	38.3	631.3	309.4	49.0
Qro.	73	533.1	79.6	14.9	120.0	25.9	21.6	413.1	53.7	13.0
Q. R.†	....	.....	.....	....	.....	.....	....	.....	.....	....
S. L. P.	233	3,827.0	728.3	19.0	198.4	82.4	41.5	3,628.6	645.9	17.8
Sin.	114	362.7	142.5	39.3	103.1	41.5	40.2	259.5	101.1	39.0
Son.	104	804.9	179.2	22.2	184.0	20.7	11.2	620.9	158.5	25.5
Tab.	19	72.9	13.6	18.6	70.6	12.4	17.6	2.3	1.1	47.8
Tamps.	264	2,771.4	129.6	4.7	997.0	23.7	2.4	1,774.4	105.9	6.0
Tlax.	209	293.6	67.7	23.0	148.3	45.5	30.7	145.3	22.2	15.3
Ver.	855	1,850.4	191.5	10.3	1,145.9	116.5	10.2	704.5	74.9	10.6
Yuc.	803	1,532.9	333.4	21.7	282.2	126.1	44.7	1,250.7	207.3	16.6
Zac.	198	7,086.3	489.0	6.9	537.0	122.0	22.7	6,549.3	367.0	5.6
TOTALS	7,927	49,823.5	7,066.9	14.2	10,352.0	2,101.5	20.3	39,471.5	4,965.4	12.6

* Statistics of the *Departamento Agrario*. This table does not include *Public Lands* or *Confirmations*. The statistics refer to definitive grants as given in the presidential resolutions published; on December 31, 1933, some 400 of these resolutions had not been executed (i.e., the land actually turned over to the village)—wherefore the figure for *Total Land Given to Villages* (7,066.9 hects.) in the present table is greater than the figure obtained (6,232.9 hects.) by subtracting *Public Lands* (Table 21) plus *Confirmations* (Table 19) from the total of all definitive distributions given in basic Table 19.

† No data given.

TABLE 23

NUMBER OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS AFFECTED BY DEFINITIVE GRANTS IN EJIDOS CLASSIFIED BY SIZE AND STATES, 1915-1933, AND FARMS OF MORE THAN 1,000 HECTARES AFFECTED COMPARED WITH ALL FARMS OF MORE THAN 1,000 HECTARES*

STATES	TOTAL FARMS AFFECTED	UP TO 500	501 TO 1,000	1,001 TO 5,000	5,001 TO 10,000	10,001 TO 100,000	MORE THAN 100,000	TOTAL FARMS AFFECTED 1,001 HECTARES OR MORE	ALL FARMS 1,001 HECTARES OR MORE (1923)†	FARMS AFFECTED 1,001 HECTARES OR MORE AS PER CENT OF ALL FARMS 1,001 HECTARES OR MORE
Ags.	87	14	20	24	12	16	1	53	68	77.9
B. C.	16	2	7	7	..	..	..	7	453	1.5
Camp.	140	34	16	61	14	15	..	90	314	28.7
Coah.	177	34	22	43	20	52	6	121	703	17.2
Col.	38	11	7	9	5	6	..	20	91	22.0
Chis.	153	60	26	49	13	5	..	67	783	8.6
Chih.	316	81	39	88	28	66	14	196	843	23.3
D. F.	59	37	9	12	1	..	..	13	‡	....
Dgo.	323	52	22	111	48	82	8	249	777	32.0
Gto.	454	109	106	197	21	20	1	239	485	49.3
Gro.	351	103	78	123	39	8	..	170	291	58.4
Hgo.	364	111	87	125	21	20	..	166	262	63.4
Jal.	602	162	128	198	66	48	..	312	780	40.0
Mex.	422	135	74	161	29	23	..	213	242	88.0
Mich.	431	105	84	190	27	25	..	242	411	58.9
Mor.	78	25	11	27	3	12	..	42	‡	....
Nay.	65	14	7	18	4	22	..	44	161	27.3
N. L.	132	22	23	45	16	26	..	87	471	18.5

Oax.	102	36	19	28	11	7	1	47	224	21.0
Pue.	745	224	159	315	21	26	..	362	475	76.2
Qro.	73	10	7	34	8	14	..	56	152	36.8
Q. R.‡	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	....	....	....
S. L. P.	233	57	21	66	25	64	..	155	344	45.1
Sin.	114	46	15	39	10	4	..	53	641	8.3
Son.	104	20	9	30	21	23	1	75	599	12.5
Tab.	19	4	5	6	2	2	..	10	131	7.6
Tamps.	264	51	25	93	28	64	3	188	677	27.8
Tlax.	209	65	53	79	10	2	..	91	89	102.2§
Ver.	855	374	156	246	45	34	..	325	684	47.5
Yuc.	803	185	192	382	32	12	..	426	707	60.3
Zac.	198	33	26	49	69	19	2	139	923	15.1
TOTALS	7,927	2,216	1,453	2,855	649	717	37	4,258	12,782	33.3

* Statistics of the *Departamento Agrario*, except columns 9 and 10.

† Statistics of Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution*, p. 483. The year 1923 is the only year for which figures are available on which to base an approximate estimate of the number of privately-owned farms by size before the 1915 agrarian reform went into effect.

‡ No data given.

§ This indicates either that the data for 1923 was incomplete or that since 1923 there has been an increase in the number of farms of more than 1,000 hectares due to subdivision of large properties, etc.

TABLE 21

PUBLIC LANDS INCLUDED IN DEFINITIVE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN EJIDOS BY STATES AND CLASSES OF LAND, 1915-1933*

(In Hectares)

STATES	IRRIGATED	NON-IRRIGATED	BRUSH	PASTURE	MOUNTAIN	OTHER AND UNCLASSIFIED	TOTAL
Ags.	....	691	43	360	....	....	1,094
B.C.	725	....	597	1,826	1,390	5,904	10,442
Camp.	....	14,258	....	21,686	32,261	5,819	74,024
Coah.	....	1,342	....	3,371	12,618	5,031	22,362
Col.	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Chis.	....	8,643	3,198	13,859	13,523	20,167	59,390
Chih.	1,235	2,044	92,009	70,184	9	139,992	305,473
F.	....	....	....	....	....	554	554
o.	463	778	....	17,153	7,072	95,965	61,431
.	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
	....	101	....	150	427	3,031	3,709
	....	200	204	187	100	....	691
	97	133	503	326	....	2,053	3,112
	50	798	....	1,546	106	1,185	3,685
	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
	....	775	....	320	5,029	....	6,124
	5	274	6,000	4,296	....	....	10,575
	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
	....	....	....	....	....	150	150
	43	551	....	....	....	....	594
	....	548	....	618	....	....	1,166
	....	....	....	....	....	3,020	3,020
	....	1,074	....	12,208	....	4,986	18,268
	....	12,492	....	3,178	....	9,325	24,995
	250	1,525	....	23,107	24,202	26,420	75,504
	....	8,773	324	225	....	1,651	10,973
	762	186	3,511	4,876	191	2,049	11,575
	326	455	....	451	....	12	1,244
	...	5,420	6,939	....	....	1,912	14,271
	..	9,836	9,979	10,252	....	63,870	93,937
	.	7,720	....	11,414	852	22,502	42,488
		78,617	123,307	201,593	97,780	355,598	860,851

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[For Table 22 see p. 614]

TABLE 24

AVERAGE AREA OF ALL LAND AND AVERAGE AREA OF ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CROP LAND PER EJIDATARIO, BY STATES IN ASCENDING ORDER, 1933

STATES	AVERAGE NO. HECTARES OF ALL LANDS PER EJIDATARIO*	STATES	AVERAGE NO. HECTARES OF CROP LAND PER EJIDATARIO†
D. F.	1.2	D. F.	0.7
Tlax.	2.7	Oax.	1.3
Mex.	3.3	Mex.	1.3
Oax.	5.0	Tlax.	1.7
Mich.	5.2	B. C.	1.8
Pue.	5.6	Pue.	1.8
Ver.	5.8	Mich.	2.2
Gto.	5.9	Hgo.	2.4
Jal.	6.0	Qro.	2.6
Hgo.	6.6	S. L. P.	2.8
Col.	7.7	Nay.	2.8
B. C.	7.9	Jal.	2.9
Mor.	9.0	Ver.	3.0
Chis.	9.9	Gro.	3.2
Ags.	10.4	Gto.	3.2
Gro.	10.6	Tamps.	3.3
Qro.	10.8	Mor.	3.5
Nay.	12.7	Col.	3.8
Tab.	13.9	Dgo.	3.9
Tamps.	15.1	Q. R.	3.9
Yuc.	17.7	N. L.	4.1
S. L. P.	18.5	Chis.	4.4
Coah.	18.7	Son.	4.6
Camp.	19.2	Yuc.	4.9
N. L.	20.1	Coah.	5.2
Zac.	20.7	Zac.	5.3
Dgo.	21.5	Ags.	5.4
Q. R.	23.0	Tab.	7.5
Sin.	24.2	Sin.	8.1
Son.	26.2	Chih.	10.6
Chih.	49.9	Camp.	11.1
	10.1		3.0

* Based on data in Table 19.

† Based on data in Tables 19 and 27.

TABLE 25

DEFINITIVE GRANTS OF IRRIGATION WATERS TO EJIDOS BY STATES, 1915-1933*

STATES	NO. OF EJIDOS	IRRIGATED AREA (HECTARES)	ANNUAL VOLUME OF WATER (MILLIONS OF CUBIC METERS)
Ags.	9	1,527	12.4
B. C.	..	....	....
Camp.	1	150	4.8
Coah.	11	4,486	76.9
Col.	2	225	6.2
Chis.	..	....	....
Chih.	8	5,195	86.2
D. F.	9	683	8.8
Dgo.	14	2,586	64.7
Gto.	29	11,184	125.2
Gro.	4	211	3.2
Hgo.	41	3,070	25.9
Jal.	15	2,912	30.2
Mex.	72	6,037	59.2
Mich.	32	9,240	63.3
Mor.	83	20,101	598.7
Nay.	..	....	....
N. L.	7	1,813	22.8
Oax.	17	2,230	24.4
Pue.	87	11,291	178.7
Qro.	6	672	6.2
Q. R.	..	....	....
S. L. P.	12	4,698	161.9
Sin.	..	....	....
Son.	3	7,861	179.0
Tab.	..	....	....
Tamps.	38	7,511	163.3
Tlax.	26	3,164	37.5
Ver.	1	810	4.4
Yuc.	..	....	....
Zac.	1	201	1.3
TOTALS	528†	107,858	1,945.2

* Statistics of the *Departamento Agrario*. These statistics include all grants officially recognized by the Agrarian Department, and do not include provisional grants made by the Ministry of Agriculture and/or the Governors of the various states.

† To this total should be added 12 ejidos for which no data are available with respect to the area irrigated or the annual volume of water, as follows: Ags. 2; Coah. 1; Chih. 3; Hgo. 1; Mich. 2; Mor. 1; Pue. 1; Qro. 1.

TABLE 26

DEFINITIVE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN EJIDOS BY COMMUNITIES OF SPECIFIED SIZE COMPARED WITH ALL COMMUNITIES IN THE CLASSES INDICATED, 1915-1933*

POPULATION	COMMUNITIES RECEIVING DEFINITIVE GRANTS		NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES IN THE REPUBLIC	NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES RECEIVING GRANTS AS PER CENT OF ALL COMMUNITIES
	NUMBER†	PER CENT OF TOTAL		
1 to 100	‡	....	49,817	....
101 to 500	2,179	53.8	18,559	11.7
501 to 1,000	1,054	26.0	3,418	30.8
1,001 to 2,000	593	14.6	1,529	38.8
2,001 to 3,000	146	3.6	427	34.1
3,001 to 4,000	52	1.3	141	36.9
4,001 to 5,000	12	0.3	94	12.8
More than 5,000	13	0.3	217	6.0
TOTALS	4,049§	100.0	74,202	5.5

* Data in columns 1 and 2 of the *Departamento Agrario;* in column 3 of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† The original data for this column were in terms of the number of heads of agrarian families. The figures here, obtained by multiplying the number of heads of families by four in order to get total population, in some cases represent under and in other cases over estimates of the actual population and hence of the number of villages in each population group.

‡ Theoretically there are no communities in this group due to the fact that the law has always made it a condition for a petition for land that a community should have at least 20 heads of families qualifying as prospective ejidatarios. Actually a number of villages with populations less than 100 have received land.

§ Data lacking for 41 of the total of 4,090 communities in definitive possession of land on December 31, 1933.

TABLE 27

TOTAL AREA IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH TOTAL TERRITORIAL AREA AND TOTAL ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CROP LAND COMPARED WITH ESTIMATED ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CROP LAND IN EJIDOS, BY STATES, 1933

(Area in 000's of Hectares)

STATES	TOTAL AREA IN EJIDOS AS PER CENT OF TERRITORIAL AREA*	ESTIMATED CROP LAND IN EJIDOS			ESTIMATED CROP LAND IN EJIDOS AS PER CENT OF TOTAL CROP LAND§		
		ESTIMATE A†	ESTIMATE B‡	AVERAGE of A and B	ESTIMATE A	ESTIMATE B	AVERAGE of A and B
Ags.	12.6	47.8	36.3	42.1	35.9	27.2	31.6
B. C.	0.1	6.5	0.2	3.4	2.6	0.1	1.4
Camp.	4.3	149.8	102.2	126.0	8.7	6.0	7.4
Coah.	1.7	78.3	63.2	70.7	11.4	9.2	10.3
Col.	3.7	8.8	10.3	9.6	6.9	8.0	7.5
Chis.	1.3	42.1	46.2	44.1	2.9	3.2	3.1
Chih.	4.7	190.6	299.3	245.0	11.1	17.4	14.3
D. F.	14.1	13.7	9.2	11.5	42.5	28.6	35.6
Dgo.	4.6	106.0	98.5	102.3	10.9	10.1	10.5
Gto.	4.6	75.8	76.9	76.4	7.5	7.6	7.6
Gro.	4.7	89.6	88.4	89.0	9.2	9.0	9.1
Hgo.	13.1	104.8	92.9	98.8	20.2	17.9	19.1
Jal.	3.7	150.2	139.1	144.6	10.4	9.6	10.0
Mex.	18.1	172.1	143.0	157.6	31.3	26.0	28.7
Mich.	3.3	81.1	83.7	82.4	9.8	10.1	10.0
Mor.	47.4	98.4	85.4	91.9	93.1	80.8	87.0
Nay.	5.1	37.4	24.7	31.0	14.3	9.4	11.9
N. L.	1.8	25.2	21.8	23.5	3.3	2.8	3.1
Oax.	1.3	31.0	34.3	32.7	2.6	2.9	2.8
Pue.	14.3	122.2	186.1	154.1	12.6	19.2	15.9
Qro.	8.0	26.8	17.0	21.9	12.2	7.8	10.0
Q. R.	....¶	±	0.4	0.4	....	10.8	10.8
S. L. P.	11.4	91.1	126.7	108.9	11.5	16.0	13.8
Sin.	2.4	66.1	27.5	46.8	11.1	4.6	7.9
Son.	1.0	29.7	33.2	31.4	5.7	6.3	6.0
Tab.	0.6	21.3	7.6	7.6**	3.6	1.3	1.3**
Tamps.	2.0	24.9	45.0	35.0	2.4	4.4	3.4
Tlax.	17.6	47.9	42.5	45.2	25.4	22.5	24.0

TABLE 27—*Continued*

(Area in 000's of Hectares)

States	Total Area in Ejidos as Per Cent of Territorial Area*	Estimated Crop Land in Ejidos			Estimated Crop Land in Ejidos as Per Cent of Total Crop Land§		
		Estimate A†	Estimate B‡	Average of A and B	Estimate A	Estimate B	Average of A and B
Ver.	3.3	122.3	124.7	123.5	5.3	5.4	5.4
Yuc.	10.1	150.2	67.8	109.0	26.7	12.1	19.4
Zac.	6.7	131.5	118.2	124.9	16.4	14.7	15.6
Totals	3.9	2,343.4	2,252.4	2,291.2	10.0	9.7	9.9

* Based on data in Tables 19 and 6.

† *Estimate A* in column 4 was made by adding to column 6 of Table 22 all *Public Lands* classified as *Irrigated* and *Non-Irrigated* in Table 21, plus 30% of the grants by *Confirmation* given in Table 19. (The figure of 30% was selected because this is approximately the proportion of crop lands in ejidos as compared with all lands in ejidos as revealed by the 1930 census—see column 7 of Table 77). Note that *Estimate A* errs on the side of being too high in that it includes 400 grants (see footnote * of Table 22) which do not appear in basic Table 19. This explains why it is possible for the *Estimated Crop Land in Ejidos—Estimate A* to be greater than the total area of all ejido grants given in Table 19 for the state of Tabasco.

‡ *Estimate B* was made by applying to the total area in all ejido grants in Table 19 the percentages given in column 7 of Table 77 and then weighting the resultant figures for each state so that the total for all states would be equal to the figure obtained by applying the percentage for the whole Republic given in column 7 of Table 77, to the total area of all grants given in Table 19.

§ For absolute numbers of total actual and potential crop land, see Table 13.

¶ Less than 0.1%.

= Data not available.

** See footnote †.

[For Table 28 see p. 628]

TABLE 29

DEGREE OF COMPARABILITY OF 1930 CENSUS DATA COVERING ALL EJIDOS BOTH PROVISIONAL AND DEFINITIVE CONSTITUTED UP TO MAY 15, 1930 WITH DATA OF THE AGRARIAN DEPARTMENT COVERING ONLY EJIDOS DEFINITELY CONSTITUTED UP TO DECEMBER 31, 1933*

STATES	CASES				AREA (000's OF HECTARES)				PERSONS			
			Difference				Difference				Difference	
	1930	1933	No.	Per Cent	1930	1933	No.	Per Cent	1930	1933	No.	Per Cent
Ags.	64	79	15	23.4	71.0	84.4	13.4	18.9	2,920	7,862	4,942	169.3
B. C.	10	10	..	..	16.7	15.1	—1.6	—9.5	650	1,926	1,276	196.3
Camp.	60	58	—2	—3.3	227.2	218.3	—8.9	—3.9	6,039	11,377	5,338	88.4
Coah.	65	90	25	38.5	195.2	256.7	61.5	31.5	6,267	13,734	7,467	119.1
Col.	12	15	3	25.0	15.9	19.4	3.5	22.0	683	2,519	1,836	268.8
Chis.	67	52	—15	—22.4	104.5	98.9	—5.6	—5.4	9,679	10,027	348	3.6
Chih.	150	123	—27	—18.0	1,148.5	1,149.5	1.0	0.1	16,082	23,052	6,970	43.3
D. F.	61	61	....	....	21.3	20.9	—0.4	—1.8	17,041	17,714	673	3.9
Dgo.	108	120	12	11.1	640.2	568.3	—71.9	—11.2	15,653	26,422	10,769	68.8
Gto.	148	133	—15	—10.1	154.0	141.1	—12.9	—8.4	13,042	23,897	10,855	83.2
Gro.	266	225	—41	—15.4	382.9	303.4	—79.5	—20.8	22,880	28,552	5,672	24.8
Hgo.	222	234	12	5.4	267.5	273.7	6.3	2.3	35,360	41,691	6,331	17.9
Jal.	204	197	—7	—3.4	302.0	295.9	—6.1	—2.0	24,275	49,692	25,417	104.7
Mex.	389	416	27	6.9	355.9	386.8	30.9	8.7	84,436	119,146	34,710	41.1
Mich.	183	167	—16	—8.7	208.3	195.7	—12.6	—6.0	23,795	38,014	14,219	59.8
Mor.	176	176	....	....	203.7	235.3	31.6	15.5	17,697	26,211	8,514	48.1
Nay.	31	39	8	25.8	112.8	140.3	27.5	24.4	3,517	11,011	7,494	213.1
N. L.	48	65	17	35.4	94.0	116.1	22.1	23.5	3,755	5,772	2,017	53.7

Oax.	87	109	22	25.3	87.1	125.3	38.2	43.9	12,990	24,841	11,851	91.2
Pue.	403	423	20	4.9	462.6	485.6	23.0	4.9	63,301	86,135	22,834	36.1
Qro.	47	52	5	10.6	78.3	92.0	13.8	17.6	5,164	8,565	3,401	65.9
Q. R.	4	2	—2	—50.0	8.5	2.3	—6.1	—72.3	574	102	—472	—82.2
S. L. P.	274	273	—1	—0.4	811.8	719.8	—92.0	—11.3	32,732	38,851	6,119	18.7
Sin.	31	33	2	6.5	140.1	139.0	—1.2	—0.8	3,651	5,751	2,100	57.5
Son.	38	47	9	23.7	188.1	179.7	—8.4	—4.5	4,071	6,850	2,779	68.3
Tab.	18	15	—3	—16.7	17.5	14.1	—3.4	—19.2	1,697	1,014	—683	—40.2
Tamps.	137	141	4	2.9	163.7	159.1	—4.6	—2.8	7,945	10,570	2,625	33.0
Tlax.	105	112	7	6.7	62.7	70.8	8.1	12.9	18,205	26,282	8,077	44.4
Ver.	387	346	—41	—10.6	270.8	238.0	—32.8	—12.1	35,871	41,099	5,228	14.6
Yuc.	199	126	—73	—36.7	928.8	390.8	—538.0	—57.9	28,913	22,114	—6,799	—23.5
Zac.	195	151	—44	—22.6	603.1	491.5	—111.7	—18.5	16,307	23,784	7,477	45.9
TOTALS	4,189	4,090	—99	—2.4	8,344.7	7,624.8	—719.8	—8.6	535,192	754,577	219,385	41.0

* Data of the *Departamento Agrario* and of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

TABLE

NUMBER, VALUE AND AREA OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS COMPARED

(Areas in 000's of Hectares and

STATES	ALL FARM PROPERTIES†			PRIVATE FARMS† ‡		
	No.	Area	Value	No.	Area	Value
Ags.	2,661	478.0	12,742	2,597	407.1	10,595
B. C.	3,539	2,428.5	94,793	3,529	2,411.8	94,710
Camp.	1,105	3,782.4	47,077	1,045	3,555.1	45,558
Coah.	6,011	14,866.1	149,976	5,946	14,670.8	145,620
Col.	901	496.3	18,196	889	480.4	17,246
Chis.	17,548	4,134.8	74,801	17,481	4,030.2	72,505
Chih.	13,744	20,635.2	147,339	13,594	19,486.7	133,823
D. F.	5,145	83.9	38,817	5,084	62.6	33,835
Dgo.	7,545	9,968.9	110,439	7,437	9,328.7	102,492
Gto.	22,944	2,715.3	142,377	22,796	2,561.3	129,546
Gro.	17,393	3,678.6	52,692	17,127	3,295.7	46,239
Hgo.	34,280	1,292.0	75,432	34,058	1,024.5	62,771
Jal.	50,082	5,527.8	196,162	49,878	5,225.8	177,317
Mex.	51,087	1,631.6	114,822	50,698	1,275.7	95,658
Mich.	30,413	3,058.7	158,078	30,230	2,850.4	140,424
Mor.	3,483	344.7	28,157	3,307	141.0	10,725
Nay.	3,056	1,547.7	24,533	3,025	1,434.9	21,930
N. L.	13,899	5,946.7	51,019	13,851	5,852.7	50,220
Oax.	63,254	4,650.3	83,555	63,167	4,563.3	80,677
Pue.	81,836	2,520.3	135,545	81,433	2,057.8	113,589
Qro.	5,794	877.5	30,722	5,747	799.3	28,839
Q. R.	122	1,353.3	42,208	118	1,344.8	42,130
S. L. P.	18,216	5,705.8	64,447	17,942	4,894.0	53,935
Sin.	13,819	2,807.9	60,208	13,788	2,667.8	58,669
Son.	10,084	6,620.5	67,206	10,046	6,432.5	64,035
Tab.	14,101	1,304.6	37,511	14,083	1,287.1	37,166
Tamps.	10,985	7,091.8	75,909	10,848	6,928.1	71,185
Tlax.	13,901	328.2	30,195	13,796	265.5	23,881
Ver.	65,811	5,824.5	230,450	65,424	5,553.7	214,205
Yuc.	8,354	3,091.3	138,463	8,155	2,162.5	117,028
Zac.	22,988	6,701.2	53,484	22,793	6,098.1	47,546
TOTALS	614,101	131,494.5	2,587,353	609,912	123,149.8	2,344,100

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Does not include 244,108 properties of less than 1 hectare each, totalling 100,070 hectares.

‡ Includes a relatively small number of "unofficial ejidos"—i. e., communal or semi-communal village properties predating the agrarian reform of 1915.

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WITH NUMBER, VALUE AND AREA OF EJIDOS, BY STATES, 1930*

Values in 000's of Pesos)

STATES	PRIVATE FARMS AS PER CENT OF ALL FARM PROPERTIES			EJIDOS§			EJIDOS AS PER CENT OF ALL FARM PROPERTIES		
	No.	Area	Value	No.	Area	Value	No.	Area	Value
Ags.	97.6	85.2	83.2	64	71.0	2,146	2.4	14.9	16.9
B. C.	99.7	99.3	99.9	10	16.7	81	0.3	0.7	0.1
Camp.	94.6	94.0	96.8	60	227.2	1,518	5.4	6.0	3.2
Coah.	98.9	98.7	97.1	65	195.2	4,357	1.1	1.3	2.9
Col.	98.7	96.8	94.8	12	15.9	951	1.3	3.2	5.2
Chis.	99.6	97.5	96.9	67	104.5	2,296	0.4	2.5	3.1
Chih.	98.9	94.4	90.8	150	1,148.5	13,517	1.1	5.6	9.2
D. F.	98.8	74.6	87.2	61	21.3	4,983	1.2	25.4	12.8
Dgo.	98.6	93.6	92.8	108	640.2	7,948	1.4	6.4	7.2
Gto.	99.4	94.3	91.0	148	154.0	12,831	0.7	5.7	5.7
Gro.	98.5	89.6	81.6	266	382.9	6,453	1.5	10.4	18.4
Hgo.	99.4	79.3	83.2	222	267.5	12,661	0.7	20.7	16.8
Jal.	99.6	94.5	90.4	204	302.0	18,845	0.4	5.5	9.6
Mex.	99.2	78.2	83.3	389	355.9	19,164	0.8	21.8	16.7
Mich.	99.4	93.2	88.8	183	208.3	17,654	0.6	6.8	11.2
Mor.	95.0	40.9	38.1	176	203.7	17,432	5.1	59.1	61.9
Nay.	99.0	92.7	89.4	31	112.8	2,602	1.0	7.3	10.6
N. L.	99.7	98.4	98.4	48	94.0	799	0.4	1.6	1.6
Oax.	99.9	98.1	96.6	87	87.1	2,878	0.1	1.9	3.4
Pue.	99.5	81.7	83.8	403	462.6	21,956	0.5	18.4	16.2
Qro.	99.2	91.1	93.9	47	78.3	1,882	0.8	8.9	6.1
Q. R.	96.7	99.4	99.4	4	8.5	78	3.3	0.6	0.6
S. L. P.	98.5	85.8	83.7	274	811.8	10,512	1.5	14.2	16.3
Sin.	99.8	95.0	95.0	31	140.1	1,538	0.2	5.0	5.0
Son.	99.6	97.2	95.3	38	188.1	3,171	0.4	2.8	4.7
Tab.	99.9	98.7	99.1	18	17.5	345	0.1	1.3	0.9
Tamps.	98.8	97.7	93.8	137	163.7	4,724	1.3	2.3	6.2
Tlax.	99.2	80.9	79.1	105	62.7	6,314	0.8	19.1	20.9
Ver.	99.4	95.4	93.0	387	270.8	16,245	0.6	4.7	7.1
Yuc.	97.6	70.0	84.5	199	928.8	21,434	2.4	30.1	15.5
Zac.	99.2	91.0	88.9	195	603.1	5,939	0.9	9.0	11.1
TOTALS	99.3	93.7	90.6	4,189	8,344.7	243,252	0.7	6.3	9.4

§ Includes all ejidos (both provisional and definitive) constituted up to May, 1930.

TABLE 28

AVERAGE AREA OF ALL LAND, AVERAGE AREA ESTIMATED ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CROP LAND AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF EJIDATARIOS PER EJIDO VILLAGE, BY STATES IN ASCENDING ORDER, 1933

STATES	TOTAL AVERAGE AREA PER EJIDO VILLAGE*	STATES	AVERAGE AREA OF CROP LAND PER EJIDO VILLAGE†	STATES	AVERAGE NUMBER OF EJIDATARIOS PER EJIDO VILLAGE‡
D. F.	359	D. F.	188	Q. R.	51
Tlax.	632	Q. R.	207	Tab.	68
Ver.	688	Tamps.	248	Tamps.	75
Mex.	930	Oax.	300	N. L.	89
Tab.	941	B. C.	337	Ags.	100
Ags.	1,031	Ver.	357	Ver.	119
Gto.	1,061	N. L.	361	Gro.	127
Tamps.	1,128	Pue.	364	S. L. P.	142
Pue.	1,148	Mex.	379	Son.	146
Oax.	1,149	Gro.	396	Mor.	149
Hgo.	1,170	S. L. P.	399	Coah.	153
Mich.	1,172	Tlax.	404	Zac.	157
Q. R.	1,174	Qro.	421	Qro.	165
Col.	1,194	Hgo.	422	Col.	168
Mor.	1,337	Mich.	494	Sin.	174
Gro.	1,349	Tab.	504	Yuc.	176
Jal.	1,502	Mor.	522	Hgo.	178
B. C.	1,514	Ags.	533	Gto.	180
Qro.	1,770	Gto.	574	Chih.	185
N. L.	1,787	Col.	638	B. C.	193
Chis.	1,902	Son.	669	Chis.	193
S. L. P.	2,637	Jal.	734	Camp.	196
Coah.	2,852	Coah.	786	Pue.	204
Yuc.	3,102	Nay.	796	Dgo.	220
Zac.	3,255	Zac.	827	Mich.	228
Nay.	3,598	Chis.	849	Tlax.	235
Camp.	3,766	Dgo.	852	Jal.	252
Son.	3,823	Yuc.	865	Oax.	265
Sin.	4,212	Sin.	1,419	Nay.	282
Dgo.	4,697	Chih.	1,992	Mex.	286
Chih.	9,345	Camp.	2,172	D. F.	290
	1,864		560		185

* Based on data in Table 19. Note that the absolute number of villages is obtained by subtracting amplifications from the total of all cases given in Table 19.

† Based on data in Tables 19 and 27.

‡ Based on data in Table 19.

[For Table 29 see p. 624]

TABLE 31

PARCELIZATION OF EJIDOS UNDER THE LAW OF EJIDO PATRIMONY, UP TO AUGUST 9, 1934*

STATES	NO. OF EJIDOS AFFECTED	INDIVIDUAL TITLES GRANTED
Ags.	1	276
B. C.	..	....
Camp.	..	....
Coah.	3	203
Col.	..	....
Chis.	..	....
Chih.	6	844
D. F.	27	4,619
Dgo.	4	1,170
Gto.	3	824
Hgo.	55	11,861
Jal.	2	662
Mex.	105	22,878
Mich.	4	1,200
Mor.	1	89
N. L.	3	365
Nay.	..	....
Oax.	1	180
Pue.	19	5,360
Qro.	..	....
Q. R.	..	....
S. L. P.	4	451
Sin.	1	185
Son.	..	....
Tamps.	2	328
Tab.	..	....
Tlax.	16	2,340
Ver.	4	261
Yuc.	..	....
Zac.	..	....
TOTALS	261	54,096

* Statistics of the *Departamento Agrario*.

TABLE 32

MOVEMENT OF EJIDO PETITIONS UP TO DECEMBER 31, 1933*

YEARS	PETITIONS PRESENTED TO STATE AGRARIAN COMMISSIONS		DEFINITIVE ACTION BY PRESIDENTIAL DECREE						PETITIONS PENDING RESOLUTION
			TOTAL PETITIONS ACTED ON		PETITIONS GRANTED		PETITIONS DENIED		
	No.	Cumulative No.	No.	Cumulative No.	No.†	Cumulative No.	No.	Cumulative No.	
1915	356‡	356	....	....	....	....	....	....	356
1916	396	752	4	4	1	1	3	3	748
1917	516	1,268	69	73	42	43	27	30	1,195
1918	318	1,586	116	189	71	114	45	75	1,397
1919	221	1,807	167	356	89	203	78	153	1,451
1920	328	2,135	172	528	119	322	53	206	1,607
1921	1,042	3,177	220	748	164	486	56	262	2,429
1922	536	3,713	102	850	81	567	21	283	2,863
1923	847	4,560	238	1,088	198	765	40	323	3,472
1924	648	5,208	348	1,436	291	1,056	57	380	3,772
1925	767	5,975	589	2,025	444	1,500	145	525	3,950
1926	504	6,479	528	2,553	364	1,864	164	689	3,926
1927	554	7,033	622	3,175	471	2,335	151	840	3,858
1928	621	7,654	514	3,689	392	2,727	122	962	3,965
1929	1,344	8,998	1,034	4,723	868	3,595	166	1,128	4,275

1930	1,320	10,318	513	5,236	421	4,016	92	1,220	5,082
1931	1,362	11,680	469	5,705	388	4,404	81	1,301	5,975
1932	1,357	13,037	287	5,992	199	4,603	88	1,389	7,045
1933	1,215	14,252	378	6,370	306	4,909	72	1,461	7,882§
TOTALS	14,252		6,370		4,909		1,461		

* Data of the *Departamento Agrario*.

† Does not include *confirmations*. Note that the totals in this column do not correspond to the totals of definitive possessions (minus *confirmations*) given in Table 19 due to the fact that there is always a "lag" between the signing of a presidential decree granting a village land and the actual delivery of the land.

‡ Includes 9 petitions presented in the year 1914.

§ Includes petitions pending action before both the State and National Agrarian Commissions and hence does not correspond to the total given in column 7 of Table 20.

TABLE 33

STATUS OF EJIDO PETITIONS BY STATES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1933*

STATES	PETITIONS PRESENTED TO STATE AGRARIAN COMMISSIONS	PETITIONS ACTED ON BY NATIONAL AGRARIAN COMMISSION				PETITIONS PENDING RESOLUTION‡
		Total Petitions Acted on	Petitions Granted†	Petitions Denied		
				No.	As Per Cent of Total	
Ags.	193§	112	83	29	25.9	81
B. C.	25	14	10	4	28.6	11
Camp.	85§	73	66	7	9.6	12
Coah.	285	170	113	57	33.5	115
Col.	54	26	18	8	30.8	28
Chis.	497	75	65	10	13.3	422
Chih.	478	202	150	52	25.7	276
D. F.	118	127¶	66	61	48.0	....
Dgo.	450	241	176	65	27.0	209
Gto.	698	196	168	28	14.3	502
Gro.	804	268	255	13	4.8	536
Hgo.	645	353	274	79	22.4	292
Jal.	647	323	225	98	30.3	324
Mex.	1,047	663	507	156	23.5	384
Mich.	890	272	201	71	26.1	618
Mor.	199§	211¶	184	27	12.8	....
Nay.	150	83	52	31	37.3	67
N. L.	314	111	77	34	30.6	203
Oax.	533	216	125	91	42.1	317
Pue.	1,094	649	500	149	22.9	445
Qro.	236	86	60	26	30.2	150
Q. R.	24§	4	3	1	25.0	20
S. L. P.	572	372	308	64	17.2	200
Sin.	311	102	51	51	50.0	209
Son.	232	92	75	17	18.5	140
Tab.	129	18	17	1	5.5	111
Tamps.	365	200	170	30	15.0	165
Tlax.	234	204	125	79	38.7	30

TABLE 33—*Continued*

States	Petitions Presented to State Agrarian Commissions	Petitions Acted on by National Agrarian Commission				Petitions Pending Resolution‡
		Total Petitions Acted on	Petitions Granted†	Petitions Denied		
				No.	As Per Cent of Total	
Ver.	2,205	501	415	86	17.2	1,704
Yuc.	229	177	173	4	2.2	52
Zac.	509	229	197	32	14.0	280
Totals	14,252	6,370	4,909	1,461	22.9	7,882

* Data of the *Departamento Agrario.*

† Does not include *confirmations*. Note that the totals in this column do not correspond to the totals of definitive possessions (minus *confirmations*) given in Table 19 due to the fact that there is always a "lag" between the signing of a presidential decree granting a village land and the actual delivery of the land.

‡ Includes petitions pending action before both the State and National Agrarian Commissions and hence does not correspond to the totals given in column 7 of Table 20.

§ Greater than the *Estimated Communities With Rights* given in Table 34 due to the fact that a number of communities not having rights under the law made petitions.

¶ Greater than the number of petitions presented because on occasion several communities made joint petitions which were acted on separately.

TABLE 34

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES WITH LEGAL RIGHTS TO PETITION FOR EJIDO LANDS COMPARED WITH THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ALL COMMUNITIES*

STATES	TOTAL COMMUNITIES (1930 CENSUS)	ESTIMATED COMMUNITIES WITHOUT RIGHTS†			ESTIMATED COMMUNITIES WITH RIGHTS	
		With Population of 100 or Less	All Others	Total	Number	As Per Cent of Total Communities
Ags.	574	418	1	419	155	27.0
B. C.	1,303	1,204	8	1,212	91	7.0
Camp.	480	394	2	396	84	17.5
Coah.	1,854	1,359	2	1,361	493	26.6
Col.	276	205	2	207	69	25.0
Chis.	6,489	5,524	1	5,525	964	14.9
Chih.	3,577	2,857	4	2,861	716	20.0
D. F.	222	79	1	80	142	64.0
Dgo.	2,576	1,848	3	1,851	725	28.1
Gto.	4,233	2,418	1	2,419	1,814	42.9
Gro.	2,356	1,066	2	1,068	1,288	54.7
Hgo.	2,809	1,426	5	1,431	1,378	49.1
Jal.	7,570	5,862	1	5,863	1,707	22.5
Mex.	2,353	980	1	981	1,372	58.3
Mich.	5,218	3,428	3	3,431	1,787	34.2
Mor.	243	51	1	52	191	78.6
Nay.	899	655	2	657	242	26.9
N. L.	3,268	2,774	1	2,775	493	15.1
Oax.	2,486	768	4	772	1,714	68.9
Pue.	2,174	657	1	658	1,516	69.7
Qro.	912	424	1	425	487	53.4
Q. R.	139	126	3	129	10	7.2
S. L. P.	2,632	1,523	1	1,524	1,108	42.1
Sin.	2,569	1,805	3	1,808	761	29.6
Son.	2,441	1,991	4	1,995	446	18.3
Tab.	2,058‡	1,724‡	2	1,726	332	16.1
Tamps	3,166	2,756	4	2,760	406	12.8
Tlax.	435	172	1	173	262	62.2

TABLE 34—*Continued*

States	Total Communities (1930 Census)	Estimated Communities Without Rights†			Estimated Communities With Rights	
		With Population of 100 or Less	All Others	Total	Number	As Per Cent of Total Communities
Ver.	5,037	2,768	5	2,773	2,264	44.9
Yuc.	1,649	1,250	2	1,252	397	24.1
Zac.	2,202	1,305	1	1,306	896	40.7
Totals	74,200§	49,817	73	49,890	24,310	32.8

* Columns 1 and 2 based on data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† See p. 195 of text.

‡ Figures of the 1921 census used because the 1930 census does not give detailed data for this state for distribution of communities by size.

§ Total does not agree with corresponding total in Table 1 because of the substitution of 1921 census data for that of 1930 in the case of the state of Tabasco. Note also that this column does not include places listed in the 1930 census as "temporarily inhabited" and "censused with other communities."

TABLE 35

NATIONAL LANDS, 1912, 1923 AND 1933

(In 000's of Hectares)

STATES	1912*	1923†	1933‡
B. C.	1,500	11,282	13,000
Camp.	1,544	1,452	2,000
Coah.	995	1,462	250
Chis.	281	524	3,000
Chih.	3,103	4,869	5,000
Dgo.	1,165	1,076	1,100
Gto.	....	1	1
Gro.	1,100	958	1,000
Hgo.	2	....	....
Jal.	....	109	54
Nay.	1,600	2,152	1,500
N. L.	....	....	100
Q. R.	3,820	14	2,000
S. L. P.	92	94	100
Sin.	168	472	500
Son.	5,350	4,455	7,000
Tab.	366	658	1,000
Tamps.	....	391	4
Ver.	1,410	56	1,000
Yuc.	185	391	1,000
Zac.	141	103	200
TOTALS	22,822	30,518	39,809

* Data from *Memoria de la Secretaría de Fomento*, 1912-1913, pp. 475-477.

† Statistics of the *Dirección de Población Rural, Terrenos Nacionales y Colonización.*

‡ Statistics from *Sugestiones para la elaboración del Plan Sexenal, 1934-1939*, Secretaría de Agricultura, 1933.

TABLE 36

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND UNDER THE "HOMESTEAD" LAW OF AUGUST 2, 1923*

STATES	AREA IN HECTARES	NO. OF SETTLERS
Ags.	23,315	36
B. C.	68,325	522
Camp.	3,070	54
Coah.	59,088	270
Chis.	254,642	2,932
Chih.	315,714	1,283
Dgo.	118,481	1,184
Gro.	1,314	29
Jal.	1,684	21
Mor.	195	6
Nay.	31,360	48
N. L.	14,919	36
Pue.	352	39
Q. R.	6,488	146
S. L. P.	17,035	29
Sin.	17,796	105
Son.	451,055	1,237
Tab.	44,975	528
Tamps.	96,728	395
Ver.	7,663	153
Yuc.	8,454	55
Zac.	20,835	51
TOTALS	1,563,488	9,159

* Statistics of the *Dirección de Población Rural, Terrenos Nacionales y Colonización*. Include all land distributed up to December 31, 1933.

TABLE 37

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND UNDER THE COLONIZATION LAW OF APRIL 5, 1926*

COLONY AND STATE	HECTARES AVAILABLE FOR COLONIZATION	HECTARES COLONIZED	NUMBER OF COLONISTS	HECTARES PER COLONIST
1. Progreso y anexas (B. C.)	16,206	16,188	925	17.5
2. Carlos Pacheco (B. C.)	15,000	10,120	506	20.0
3. Santa Clara (Chih.)	120,000	8,400	20	420.0
4. Sta. Catalina del Alamo y anexas (Dgo.)	415,000	54,480	1,362	40.0
5. El Ojo (Dgo.)	6,000	3,450	345	10.0
6. Tecocomulco (Hgo.)	14,611	5,800	58	100.0
7. Cocinillas (Hgo.)	4,032	4,032	41	25 to 133
8. Corralillos (Hgo.)	850	850	34	25.0
9. Santa Ana Chichicuautla (Hgo.)	619	619	17	20 to 40
10. San Francisco Londres (Hgo.)	5,618	5,618	49	30.0
11. Texcaltitla (Hgo.)	480	400	10	40.0
12. Tezontlalpa (Mex.)	685	304	16	19.0
13. El Zapote (Mich.)	1,000	480	48	10.0
14. La Huerta (Mich.)	8,179	8,179	117	2 to 80
15. Paso de Lagarto y Cienega Grande (Oax.)	3,600	2,312	370	6.3
16. El Centenario (Ver.)	21,147	21,147	70	300.0
17. Paraíso Nuevo y Santecomapan (Ver.)	160,000	4,600	40	115.0
TOTALS	795,778	146,979	4,068	

* Data of the *Dirección de Población Rural, Terrenos Nacionales y Colonización.* The colonies numbered 1, 2, 13, 14, 16 and 17 are located on national lands; all others are located on privately-owned lands. All figures as of December 31, 1933.

TABLE 38

STATUS OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION COMMISSION, 1933*
(Area in Hectares)

PROJECT	AMOUNT INVESTED† (000's OF PESOS)	ESTIMATED IRRIGABLE AREA WHEN COMPLETED	PRESENT IRRIGABLE AREA	AREA IN POSSESSION OF BENEFICIARIES	AREA UNDER CULTIVATION	TOTAL NO. OF BENEFICIARIES
No. 1. Calles (Aguascalientes)	11,396	8,000	4,394	5,716	3,401	255
No. 2. Río Mante (Tamaulipas)	5,979	17,000	6,677	17,000	6,367	120
No. 3. Río Tula (Hidalgo)	3,791	27,500	22,000	27,500	13,578	9,000
No. 4. Río Salado (Coah. and N. L.)	26,100	56,000	33,779	38,867	31,484	1,500
No. 5. Río Conchos (Chihuahua)	6,658	53,000	11,716	17,106	13,959	720
No. 6. Río S. Diego (Coahuila)	1,470	6,000	4,473	4,334	3,582	185
No. 7. Río Sabinas (Coahuila)	‡	2,015	1,851	377	845	45
No. 8. Metztitlán (Hidalgo)	473	....	....	....	....	....
No. 9. Valle de Juárez (Chihuahua)	422	20,600	13,600	13,600	12,597	3,695
No. 10. Río Culiacán (Sinaloa)	2,317	50,000	7,500	10,000	7,000	154
No. 11. Río Lerma (Gto. and Mich.)	661	55,000	40,000	40,000	‡	‡
TOTALS	60,267	295,115	145,990	175,000	92,813	15,674§

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Figures cover only actual construction costs up to the end of 1933. In addition the National Irrigation Commission spent some 25.8 million-pesos for indemnification for expropriated lands, in engineering studies, administration and operation, etc.

‡ Data not available.

§ Of this number 2,859 were new settlers colonized on systems 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10. On systems 2, 3, 9 and 11 no colonization has been undertaken because the land was already in possession of the present beneficiaries.

TABLE 39

NUMBER AND AGGREGATE AREA OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS CLASSIFIED BY STATES AND SIZE, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

STATES	TOTAL FARMS		1 TO 50 HECTARES		51 TO 100 HECTARES		101 TO 200 HECTARES		201 TO 500 HECTARES	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Ags.	2,597	407.1	1,900	23.1	192	13.9	220	31.7	159	51.2
B. C.	3,529	2,411.8	1,603	27.8	339	27.0	401	63.1	589	208.2
Camp.	1,045	3,555.1	565	5.4	49	3.7	39	6.2	60	23.0
Coah.	5,946	14,670.8	3,183	47.3	660	51.4	517	77.2	497	164.4
Col.	889	480.4	577	7.8	83	6.5	61	8.7	59	20.1
Chis.	17,481	4,030.2	12,671	135.2	1,102	82.9	1,014	151.9	1,180	389.6
Chih.	13,594	19,486.7	9,458	100.3	780	59.5	798	120.5	824	304.3
D. F.	5,084	62.6	4,983	17.3	48	3.6	23	3.3	15	4.4
Dgo.	7,437	9,328.7	5,129	56.7	539	38.2	378	52.7	369	127.8
Gto.	22,796	2,561.3	18,432	176.3	1,451	106.2	1,118	159.6	901	281.4
Gro.	17,127	3,295.7	14,958	126.4	731	54.4	460	68.8	418	140.5
Hgo.	34,058	1,024.5	32,190	181.5	673	49.4	455	66.7	385	128.8
Jal.	49,878	5,225.8	40,181	483.0	3,948	285.1	2,522	360.6	1,833	577.3
Mex.	50,698	1,275.7	48,511	228.1	876	64.8	513	74.5	412	133.8
Mich.	30,230	2,850.4	26,599	218.0	1,410	104.3	887	129.0	648	213.0
Mor.	3,307	141.0	3,186	17.1	41	2.8	30	3.9	24	8.1
Nay.	3,025	1,434.9	2,499	22.7	126	9.1	84	12.3	96	33.5
N. L.	13,851	5,852.7	9,795	126.7	1,053	80.8	890	130.7	787	263.2
Oax.	63,167	4,563.3	61,194	215.9	454	34.9	400	63.6	395	133.3
Pue.	81,433	2,057.8	78,567	381.9	1,038	77.2	721	108.0	547	179.4
Qro.	5,747	799.3	4,985	38.8	230	16.8	160	23.5	153	48.6

Q. R.	118	1,344.8	94	1.4	7	0.5	2	0.3	3	1.3
S. L. P.	17,942	4,894.0	15,326	124.1	817	60.5	670	106.6	516	165.0
Sin.	13,788	2,667.8	11,943	126.3	535	40.3	367	55.5	312	101.1
Son.	10,046	6,432.5	7,070	64.7	565	43.7	350	53.7	825	317.3
Tab.	14,083	1,287.1	11,558	178.7	1,080	79.6	640	89.9	451	139.2
Tamps.	10,848	6,928.1	6,006	90.1	1,252	94.6	1,066	158.0	1,024	336.6
Tlax.	13,796	265.5	13,464	40.7	68	5.1	67	10.0	76	25.1
Ver.	65,424	5,553.7	55,583	557.4	3,752	274.4	2,510	360.4	1,998	632.3
Yuc.	8,155	2,162.5	5,537	82.1	696	51.5	506	76.4	669	224.9
Zac.	22,793	6,098.1	18,485	228.1	1,729	129.1	1,081	156.9	829	269.8
TOTALS	609,912	123,149.8	526,232	4,130.9	26,324	1,951.8	18,950	2,784.1	17,054	5,646.5

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Figures do not include farms of less than one hectare and ejido lands. (However, a relatively small number of "unofficial ejidos"—i.e., communal or semi-communal village properties predating the agrarian reform of 1915—are included.)

Farms means units of agricultural exploitation irrespective of ownership. The total number of farms within any given classification, therefore, does not correspond to the number of property owners, but only indicates the theoretically maximum number of such owners.

TABLE 39—*Continued*

States	501 to 1,000 Hectares		1,001 to 5,000 Hectares		5,001 to 10,000 Hectares		More than 10,000 Hectares	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Ags.	64	44.6	47	95.4	10	65.6	5	81.4
B. C.	237	175.6	331	679.7	17	117.0	12	1,113.5
Camp.	72	57.8	143	340.0	53	381.1	64	2,737.9
Coah.	259	197.4	455	1,059.8	124	888.1	251	12,185.2
Col.	37	27.4	47	101.7	16	114.2	9	194.2
Chis.	684	479.3	753	1,577.1	48	314.7	29	899.5
Chih.	432	323.0	814	1,871.7	172	1,163.2	316	15,544.3
D. F.	3	2.1	11	25.5	1	6.4	....	....
Dgo.	213	159.4	463	1,177.3	152	1,088.3	194	6,628.3
Gto.	438	306.2	383	792.2	50	320.2	23	419.2
Gro.	195	153.3	274	627.9	43	310.4	48	1,814.0
Hgo.	173	124.6	161	304.4	19	137.4	2	31.6
Jal.	643	456.7	592	1,218.3	104	705.4	55	1,139.5
Mex.	178	128.0	187	383.3	13	94.1	8	169.1
Mich.	277	208.3	312	687.3	57	387.6	40	902.9
Mor.	15	10.3	4	12.6	4	32.8	3	53.4
Nay.	62	44.3	93	236.8	31	216.3	34	859.9
N. L.	499	370.1	570	1,201.0	142	967.5	115	2,712.7
Oax.	233	175.3	316	760.9	85	615.4	90	2,564.0
Pue.	213	157.7	296	660.0	36	274.1	15	219.5
Qro.	82	58.1	108	240.7	15	99.7	14	273.1

Q. R.	3	2.2	2	4.2	....	....	7	1,334.9
S. L. P.	212	156.2	267	601.6	51	364.3	83	3,315.7
Sin.	186	140.6	324	784.9	75	549.5	46	869.8
Son.	343	246.5	637	1,494.2	149	1,074.0	107	3,138.5
Tab.	182	124.0	150	291.4	14	90.7	8	293.7
Tamps.	583	425.7	698	1,524.3	128	894.4	91	3,404.3
Tlax.	55	39.4	63	126.6	3	18.7	....	....
Ver.	759	538.7	674	1,382.9	89	602.1	59	1,205.4
Yuc.	328	243.9	368	774.1	35	219.8	16	489.7
Zac.	248	178.4	285	609.3	49	377.7	87	4,148.8
TOTALS	7,908	5,754.9	9,828	21,646.8	1,785	12,490.8	1,831	68,744.0

TABLE 40

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER AND AGGREGATE AREA OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS CLASSIFIED BY STATES AND SIZE, 1930*

STATES	1 TO 50 HECTARES		51 TO 100 HECTARES		101 TO 200 HECTARES		201 TO 500 HECTARES		501 TO 1,000 HECTARES		1,001 TO 5,000 HECTARES		5,001 TO 10,000 HECTARES		MORE THAN 10,000 HECTARES	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Ags.	73.1	5.7	7.4	3.4	8.5	7.8	6.1	12.6	2.5	11.0	1.8	23.4	0.4	16.1	0.2	20.0
B. C.	45.4	1.2	9.6	1.1	11.4	2.6	16.7	8.6	6.7	7.3	9.4	28.2	0.5	4.9	0.3	46.1
Camp.	54.1	0.2	4.7	0.1	3.7	0.2	5.7	0.6	6.9	1.6	13.7	9.6	5.1	10.7	6.1	77.0
Coah.	53.5	0.3	11.0	0.4	8.7	0.5	8.4	1.1	4.4	1.3	7.7	7.2	2.1	6.1	4.2	83.1
Col.	64.9	1.6	9.3	1.4	6.9	1.8	6.6	4.2	4.2	5.7	5.3	21.2	1.8	23.8	1.0	40.3
Chis.	72.5	3.4	6.3	2.1	5.8	3.8	6.7	9.7	3.9	11.9	4.3	39.1	0.3	7.8	0.2	22.2
Chih.	69.6	0.5	5.7	0.3	5.9	0.6	6.1	1.6	3.2	1.7	6.0	9.6	1.3	6.0	2.2	79.7
D. F.	98.0	27.7	0.9	5.7	0.5	5.3	0.4	7.1	0.05	3.3	0.2	40.7	0.01	10.2	....	....
Dgo.	69.0	0.6	7.2	0.4	5.1	0.6	5.0	1.4	2.9	1.7	6.2	12.6	2.0	11.7	2.6	71.0
Gto.	80.9	6.9	6.4	4.1	4.8	6.2	4.0	11.0	1.9	12.0	1.7	30.9	0.2	12.5	0.1	16.4
Gro.	87.3	3.8	4.3	1.7	2.7	2.1	2.4	4.3	1.1	4.7	1.6	19.1	0.3	9.3	0.3	55.0
Hgo.	94.5	17.7	2.1	4.8	1.3	6.5	1.2	12.6	0.4	12.2	0.5	29.7	0.05	13.4	0.01	3.1
Jal.	80.6	9.2	7.9	5.5	5.1	6.9	3.7	11.0	1.3	8.8	1.7	23.3	0.2	13.5	0.1	21.8
Mex.	95.7	17.9	1.7	5.1	1.0	5.8	0.8	10.5	0.4	10.0	0.4	30.0	0.02	7.4	0.01	13.3
Mich.	88.0	7.6	4.8	3.7	2.9	4.5	2.1	7.5	0.9	7.3	1.0	24.1	0.2	13.6	0.1	31.7
Mor.	96.3	12.1	1.3	2.0	0.9	2.8	0.8	5.8	0.5	7.3	0.1	8.9	0.1	23.2	0.09	37.9
Nay.	82.6	1.6	4.2	0.6	2.8	0.9	3.2	2.3	2.0	3.1	3.1	16.5	1.0	15.0	1.1	60.0
N. L.	70.6	2.2	7.7	1.4	6.4	2.2	5.8	4.6	3.4	6.3	4.2	20.5	1.0	16.5	0.9	46.3
Oax.	96.9	4.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.4	0.6	2.9	0.4	3.8	0.4	16.7	0.1	13.5	0.2	56.2

Pue.	96.5	18.6	1.2	3.8	0.9	5.2	0.7	8.7	0.3	7.7	0.4	32.1	0.04	13.3	0.01	10.6
Qro.	86.7	4.9	4.0	2.1	2.8	2.9	2.7	6.1	1.4	7.3	1.9	30.1	0.3	12.5	0.2	34.1
Q. R.	79.9	0.1	5.9	0.03	1.9	0.02	2.4	0.1	2.6	0.2	1.4	0.3	....	....	5.9	99.3
S. L. P.	85.4	2.5	4.6	1.2	3.7	2.2	2.9	3.5	1.2	3.2	1.4	12.3	0.3	7.4	0.5	67.7
Sin.	86.6	4.7	3.9	1.6	2.7	2.1	2.3	3.8	1.3	5.4	2.3	29.4	0.4	20.4	0.5	32.6
Son.	70.4	1.2	5.6	0.9	3.5	0.9	8.2	4.9	3.4	3.8	6.3	23.2	1.5	16.3	1.1	48.8
Tab.	82.1	13.9	7.7	6.2	4.5	7.0	3.2	10.8	1.3	9.4	1.1	22.8	0.09	7.1	0.05	22.8
Tamps.	55.4	1.3	11.5	1.5	9.8	2.2	9.4	4.9	5.4	6.1	6.4	22.0	1.2	12.9	0.8	49.1
Tlax.	97.6	15.3	0.4	1.9	0.4	3.8	0.7	9.4	0.4	14.8	0.5	47.7	0.02	7.1	....	....
Ver.	85.0	10.0	5.7	4.9	3.8	6.4	3.1	11.4	1.2	9.7	1.0	24.9	0.1	10.9	0.09	21.8
Yuc.	67.9	3.8	8.5	2.4	6.3	3.5	8.2	10.4	4.0	11.3	4.5	35.8	0.4	10.2	0.2	22.6
Zac.	81.1	3.7	7.6	2.1	4.7	2.6	3.6	4.4	1.1	2.9	1.3	10.0	0.2	6.2	0.4	68.1
TOTALS	86.3	3.4	4.3	1.6	3.1	2.3	2.8	4.4	1.3	4.9	1.6	17.6	0.3	10.0	0.3	55.8

* Based on Table 39.

[For Table 41 see p. 652]

TABLE 42

NUMBER AND AGGREGATE VALUE OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS CLASSIFIED BY STATES AND VALUE, 1930*

(Values in 000's of Pesos)

STATES	TOTAL PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS		1 TO 1,000 PESOS		1,001 TO 5,000 PESOS		5,001 TO 15,000 PESOS		15,001 TO 50,000 PESOS		50,001 TO 100,000 PESOS	
	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
Ags.	2,597	10,595	1,524	557	726	1,694	224	1,928	94	2,330	14	1,068
B. C.	3,529	94,711	1,327	607	1,181	2,927	644	5,017	173	4,756	78	5,843
Camp.	1,045	45,558	422	172	244	658	140	1,238	129	3,603	46	3,239
Coah.	5,946	145,620	2,745	1,066	1,719	4,023	653	5,681	463	12,424	127	8,944
Col.	889	17,246	362	148	281	678	110	1,014	80	2,204	22	1,613
Chis.	17,481	72,505	12,387	3,497	3,210	7,390	1,078	9,424	566	14,957	137	9,518
Chih.	13,594	133,823	7,936	2,924	3,713	8,412	1,103	9,386	523	13,843	149	10,645
D. F.	5,084	33,835	3,432	1,382	1,041	2,231	288	2,575	192	5,323	65	4,675
Dgo.	7,437	102,492	5,113	1,779	1,219	2,633	444	3,892	339	8,987	132	9,353
Gto.	22,796	129,546	16,093	4,502	3,809	8,736	1,440	12,455	949	25,726	269	18,347
Gro.	17,127	46,239	15,206	3,103	1,297	2,779	360	3,036	153	4,135	55	3,878
Hgo.	34,058	62,771	29,579	6,234	3,079	6,591	773	6,517	416	11,050	109	7,519
Jal.	49,878	177,317	34,905	11,160	10,378	23,177	2,910	24,691	1,184	31,017	259	17,992
Mex.	50,698	95,659	44,660	11,541	4,449	9,119	821	7,076	474	12,608	141	10,028
Mich.	30,230	140,424	22,173	7,985	5,619	11,965	1,359	11,838	697	18,993	193	13,510
Mor.	3,307	10,725	2,736	652	420	902	87	727	40	1,238	7	441
Nay.	3,025	21,930	2,188	615	499	1,117	167	1,428	98	2,573	27	1,845
N. L.	13,851	50,220	9,302	3,406	3,134	6,856	885	7,705	387	10,521	78	5,233
Oax.	63,167	80,677	60,272	6,917	1,726	3,766	557	4,843	366	10,010	108	7,420
Pue.	81,433	113,589	73,494	18,492	6,045	11,887	1,020	8,689	547	14,933	158	11,239

Qro.	5,747	28,839	4,589	1,112	726	1,614	193	1,488	123	3,393	59	4,437
Q. R.	118	42,130	53	23	32	83	22	168	3	96	2	162
S. L. P.	17,942	53,934	14,921	3,330	2,020	4,559	576	4,814	277	7,224	67	4,873
Sin.	13,788	58,669	10,813	3,050	1,912	4,244	593	5,084	308	8,279	88	6,278
Son.	10,046	64,035	6,185	2,445	2,447	5,401	750	6,560	423	11,234	105	7,062
Tab.	14,083	37,166	9,902	3,734	3,029	6,415	746	6,194	318	8,147	55	3,908
Tamps.	10,848	71,185	6,534	2,515	2,783	6,388	911	7,703	427	11,640	96	6,731
Tlax.	13,796	23,881	12,815	3,032	637	1,259	143	1,270	101	2,828	42	3,038
Ver.	65,424	214,205	46,727	14,822	13,387	29,272	3,330	28,065	1,367	36,406	329	22,916
Yuc.	8,155	117,028	5,701	1,513	1,197	2,821	468	4,026	332	8,874	139	10,088
Zac.	22,793	47,546	19,422	4,937	2,567	5,236	479	3,912	204	5,447	46	3,359
TOTALS	609,912	2,344,100	483,517	127,251	84,526	184,833	23,274	198,446	11,753	314,797	3,202	225,202

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Figures do not include farms of less than one hectare and ejido lands. (However, a relatively small number of "unofficial ejidos"—i.e., communal or semi-communal village properties predating the agrarian reform of 1915—are included.)

Farms means units of agricultural exploitation irrespective of ownership. The total number of farms within any given classification, therefore, does not correspond to the number of property owners, but only indicates the theoretically maximum number of such owners.

TABLE 42—*Continued*

States	100,001 to 200,000 Pesos		200,001 to 500,000 Pesos		500,001 to 700,000 Pesos		700,001 to 1,000,000 Pesos		More than 1,000,000 Pesos	
	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
Ags.	7	886	8	2,133	..	....	..	....	..	....
B. C.	88	12,124	28	6,892	2	1,097	4	3,366	4	52,082
Camp.	24	3,221	24	6,786	5	2,917	3	2,432	8	21,291
Coah.	85	12,004	102	32,827	24	13,829	14	11,647	14	43,175
Col.	15	2,045	12	3,709	4	2,419	2	1,622	1	1,794
Chis.	59	8,005	36	11,008	3	1,573	1	764	4	6,369
Chih.	87	12,165	47	13,857	11	6,796	4	3,164	21	52,630
D. F.	41	5,844	20	6,728	1	628	3	2,588	1	1,862
Dgo.	89	12,777	72	22,526	10	6,281	6	4,913	13	29,350
Gto.	127	17,418	89	26,235	11	6,683	4	3,299	5	6,144
Gro.	30	4,223	11	3,475	4	2,421	4	3,647	7	15,542
Hgo.	58	7,764	36	10,485	2	1,332	5	4,103	1	1,174
Jal.	128	18,054	89	26,447	9	5,139	9	7,624	7	12,016
Mex.	83	11,600	51	15,461	9	5,433	4	3,606	6	9,188
Mich.	88	12,374	68	20,101	12	7,063	6	5,254	15	31,341
Mor.	7	1,028	5	1,586	2	1,173	1	909	2	2,070
Nay.	22	3,069	20	6,230	3	1,728	..	....	1	3,325
N. L.	42	6,260	19	5,984	2	1,128	1	962	1	2,165
Oax.	69	9,750	46	13,728	9	5,048	7	5,888	7	13,308
Pue.	104	14,467	50	16,384	6	3,610	4	3,099	5	10,789
Qro.	25	3,547	24	6,820	3	1,785	3	2,332	2	2,312
Q. R.	..	.....	..	.....	..	.....	..	.....	6	41,597
S. L. P.	40	5,711	30	8,845	4	2,136	3	2,572	4	9,871

Sin.	38	5,159	21	6,033	5	2,869	3	2,198	7	15,476
Son.	92	13,095	31	8,022	8	4,806	3	2,150	2	3,260
Tab.	22	2,849	7	2,104	1	508	1	836	2	2,469
Tamps.	61	8,541	21	6,671	6	3,392	3	2,748	6	14,858
Tlax.	37	5,055	19	6,165	2	1,235	..	.....	..	.....
Ver.	156	21,781	93	29,192	12	7,058	16	13,331	7	11,362
Yuc.	143	20,604	147	46,670	16	9,475	7	5,767	6	7,190
Zac.	38	5,423	24	7,268	2	1,284	7	5,388	4	5,292
TOTALS	1,905	266,843	1,250	380,374	188	110,846	128	106,207	169	429,301

TABLE

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER AND AGGREGATE VALUE

STATES	1 TO 1,000 PESOS		1,001 TO 5,000 PESOS		5,001 TO 15,000 PESOS		15,001 TO 50,000 PESOS		50,001 TO 100,000 PESOS	
	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
Ags.	58.7	5.3	28.0	16.0	8.6	18.2	3.6	22.0	0.4	10.0
B. C.	37.6	0.5	33.4	3.1	18.3	5.3	4.9	5.0	2.2	6.2
Camp.	40.3	0.3	23.4	1.5	13.5	2.7	12.3	7.9	4.5	7.1
Coah.	46.2	0.8	28.9	2.9	11.0	3.9	7.8	8.4	2.2	6.3
Col.	40.7	0.9	31.6	3.9	12.4	5.9	9.0	12.8	2.4	9.4
Chis.	70.9	4.8	18.4	10.2	6.2	13.0	3.2	20.6	0.8	13.1
Chih.	58.4	2.1	27.3	6.2	8.1	7.0	3.9	10.3	1.1	8.0
D. F.	67.4	4.3	20.5	6.7	5.7	7.6	3.8	15.7	1.3	13.8
Dgo.	68.7	1.8	16.4	2.4	6.0	3.9	4.6	8.9	1.8	9.1
Gto.	70.6	3.4	16.6	6.7	6.3	9.6	4.2	19.9	1.2	14.2
Gro.	88.8	6.8	7.6	6.1	2.1	6.6	0.9	8.9	0.3	8.4
Hgo.	86.9	9.9	9.0	10.2	2.3	10.4	1.2	17.6	0.3	12.0
Jal.	70.0	6.1	20.8	13.1	5.8	13.9	2.4	17.5	0.5	10.2
Mex.	88.1	12.1	8.8	9.5	1.6	7.4	0.9	13.2	0.3	10.4
Mich.	73.4	5.7	18.6	8.4	4.5	8.4	2.3	13.7	0.6	9.6
Mor.	82.7	6.1	12.7	8.4	2.7	6.8	1.3	11.5	0.2	4.2
Nay.	72.3	2.8	16.5	5.1	5.4	6.5	3.4	11.7	0.9	8.4
N. L.	67.2	6.7	22.6	13.6	6.4	15.3	2.8	21.0	0.6	10.4
Oax.	95.4	8.5	2.7	4.7	0.9	6.0	0.6	12.4	0.2	9.2
Pue.	90.3	16.3	7.5	10.5	1.2	7.7	0.6	13.2	0.2	9.9
Qro.	79.9	3.9	12.6	5.6	3.5	5.2	2.0	11.6	1.0	15.4
Q. R.	44.9	0.1	27.2	0.02	18.6	0.4	2.4	0.3	1.8	0.5
S. L. P.	83.2	6.2	11.3	8.5	3.1	8.9	1.5	13.3	0.5	9.0
Sin.	78.4	5.2	13.9	7.2	4.3	8.7	2.2	14.1	0.6	10.7
Son.	61.6	3.8	24.4	8.4	7.5	10.4	4.1	17.4	1.1	11.1
Tab.	70.2	10.1	21.5	17.3	5.5	16.7	2.2	21.9	0.4	10.4
Tamps.	60.2	3.5	25.6	9.0	8.4	10.8	3.9	16.4	0.9	9.4
Tlax.	92.9	12.7	4.6	5.4	1.0	5.3	0.8	11.8	0.3	12.7
Ver.	71.0	6.9	20.5	13.7	5.1	13.1	2.1	17.0	1.0	10.7
Yuc.	69.9	1.3	14.7	2.4	5.3	3.4	4.3	7.6	1.8	8.6
Zac.	85.5	10.3	11.0	11.0	2.1	8.2	0.9	11.5	0.2	7.1
TOTALS	79.4	5.4	13.9	7.9	3.7	8.5	1.9	13.4	0.5	9.6

* Based on Table 42.

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OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS CLASSIFIED BY STATES AND VALUE, 1930*

STATES	100,001 TO 200,000 PESOS		200,001 TO 500,000 PESOS		500,001 TO 700,000 PESOS		700,001 TO 1,000,000 PESOS		MORE THAN 1,000,000 PESOS	
	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
Ags.	0.3	8.5	0.4	20.0	....	..	....	..	....	....
B. C.	2.5	12.8	0.8	7.3	0.1	1.2	0.1	3.6	0.1	55.0
Camp.	2.3	7.1	2.3	15.0	0.5	6.4	0.2	5.3	0.7	46.7
Coah.	1.4	8.2	1.6	22.4	0.5	9.5	0.2	8.0	0.2	29.6
Col.	1.7	11.9	1.4	21.5	0.5	14.0	0.2	9.4	0.1	10.3
Chis.	0.3	11.0	0.2	15.2	0.02	2.2	0.01	1.1	0.02	8.8
Chih.	0.6	9.1	0.3	10.5	0.05	5.1	0.03	2.5	0.2	39.2
D. F.	0.8	17.3	0.4	19.9	0.01	1.9	0.1	7.4	0.01	5.4
Dgo.	1.2	12.4	1.0	22.0	0.1	6.1	0.02	4.8	0.2	28.6
Gto.	0.6	13.4	0.4	20.3	0.1	5.2	0.02	2.6	0.02	4.7
Gro.	0.2	9.1	0.1	7.4	0.02	5.2	0.02	7.9	0.04	33.6
Hgo.	0.2	12.4	0.1	17.0	0.01	2.1	0.01	6.5	0.01	1.9
Jal.	0.3	10.2	0.2	15.0	0.02	2.9	0.02	4.3	0.02	6.8
Mex.	0.2	12.1	0.1	16.2	0.02	5.7	0.01	3.8	0.01	9.6
Mich.	0.4	8.8	0.2	14.3	0.03	5.0	0.01	3.7	0.04	22.4
Mor.	0.2	9.6	0.2	14.7	0.01	10.9	0.01	8.4	0.01	19.4
Nay.	0.7	14.0	0.7	28.4	0.1	7.9	....	..	0.03	15.2
N. L.	0.3	12.5	0.1	12.0	0.01	2.3	0.01	1.9	0.01	4.3
Oax.	0.1	12.1	0.1	17.0	0.01	6.3	0.01	7.3	0.01	16.5
Pue.	0.1	12.7	0.1	14.4	0.01	3.2	0.01	2.7	0.01	9.4
Qro.	0.4	12.3	0.4	23.7	0.1	6.2	0.1	8.1	0.03	8.0
Q. R.	..	....	..	....	....	..	....	..	5.1	98.7
S. L. P.	0.2	10.6	0.2	16.4	0.02	4.0	0.01	4.8	0.02	18.3
Sin.	0.3	8.7	0.2	10.3	0.03	4.9	0.02	3.8	0.1	26.4
Son.	0.9	20.5	0.3	12.5	0.1	7.5	0.02	3.4	0.01	5.0
Tab.	0.1	7.6	0.1	5.7	0.01	1.4	0.01	2.3	0.01	6.6
Tamps.	0.6	12.0	0.2	9.3	0.1	4.8	0.02	3.9	0.1	20.9
Tlax.	0.3	21.1	0.1	25.8	0.01	5.2	....	..	....	....
Ver.	0.2	10.2	0.1	13.6	0.01	3.3	0.02	6.2	0.01	5.3
Yuc.	1.8	17.6	1.8	40.0	0.2	8.1	0.03	4.9	0.1	6.1
Zac.	0.2	11.5	0.1	15.3	0.01	2.7	0.03	11.3	0.01	11.1
TOTALS	0.3	11.4	0.2	16.3	0.01	4.7	0.02	4.5	0.02	18.3

TABLE 41

NUMBER AND AREA OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO AREA*

AREA IN HECTARES	NUMBER OF FARMS				AGGREGATE AREA (000's OF HECTARES)			
	Absolute Number	Per Cent of Total	Cumulative Number	Cumulative Per Cent	Absolute Area	Per Cent of Total	Cumulative Area	Cumulative Per Cent
1 to 50	526,232	86.3	526,232	86.3	4,130.9	3.4	4,130.9	3.4
51 to 100	26,324	4.3	552,556	90.6	1,951.8	1.6	6,082.7	5.0
101 to 200	18,950	3.1	571,506	93.7	2,784.1	2.3	8,866.8	7.3
201 to 500	17,054	2.8	588,560	96.5	5,646.5	4.4	14,513.3	11.7
501 to 1,000	7,908	1.3	596,468	97.8	5,754.9	4.9	20,268.2	16.6
1,001 to 5,000	9,828	1.6	606,296	99.4	21,646.8	17.6	41,915.0	34.2
5,001 to 10,000	1,785	0.3	608,081	99.7	12,490.8	10.0	54,405.8	44.2
More than 10,000	1,831	0.3	609,912	100.0	68,744.0	55.8	123,149.8	100.0
	609,912	100.0			123,149.8	100.0		

* Based on Tables 39 and 40.

[For Table 42 see p. 646]

TABLE 44

NUMBER AND AGGREGATE VALUE OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO VALUE*

VALUE IN PESOS	NUMBER OF FARMS				AGGREGATE VALUE (000's OF PESOS)			
	Absolute Number	Per Cent of Total	Cumulative Number	Cumulative Per Cent	Absolute Value	Per Cent of Total	Cumulative Value	Cumulative Per Cent
1 to 1,000	483,517	79.4	483,517	79.4	127,251	5.4	127,251	5.4
1,001 to 5,000	84,526	13.9	568,043	93.3	184,833	7.9	312,084	13.3
5,001 to 15,000	23,274	3.7	591,317	97.0	198,446	8.5	510,530	21.8
15,001 to 50,000	11,753	1.9	603,070	98.9	314,797	13.4	825,327	35.2
50,001 to 100,000	3,202	0.5	606,272	99.4	225,202	9.6	1,050,529	44.8
100,001 to 200,000	1,905	0.3	608,177	99.7	266,843	11.4	1,317,372	56.2
200,001 to 500,000	1,250	0.2	609,427	99.9	380,374	16.3	1,697,746	72.5
500,001 to 700,000	188	0.01	609,615	99.91	110,846	4.7	1,808,592	77.2
700,001 to 1,000,000	128	0.02	609,743	99.93	106,207	4.5	1,914,799	81.7
More than 1,000,000	169	0.02	609,912	100.0	429,301	18.3	2,344,100	100.0
	609,912	100.0			2,344,100	100.0		

* Based on Tables 42 and 43.

TABLE 45

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE COMPARED WITH THE TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION AND LANDLESS ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE COMPARED WITH THE TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE, BY STATES, 1930*

(In 000's)

STATES	TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION†	ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE		LANDLESS PERSONS OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE				TOTAL	
				Tenants, Share-croppers and Caretakers§		Agricultural Laborers			
		No.‡	As Per Cent of Total Economically Active Population	No.	As Per Cent of Population Occupied in Agriculture	No.¶	As Per Cent of Population Occupied in Agriculture	No.	As Per Cent of Population Occupied in Agriculture
Ags.	39.5	22.7	57.6	0.2	0.7	17.2	75.7	17.4	76.4
B. C.	34.5	19.0	55.4	0.9	4.4	14.9	78.1	15.7	82.5
Camp.	26.1	17.5	67.1	0.2	0.9	10.4	59.5	10.6	60.4
Coah.	138.0	82.6	59.9	1.2	1.5	70.4	85.2	71.6	86.7
Col.	20.0	12.9	64.5	0.3	2.7	11.3	87.8	11.7	90.5
Chis.	166.7	134.8	80.8	1.9	1.4	107.6	79.8	109.5	81.2
Chih.	149.8	102.4	68.7	2.1	2.0	72.7	71.0	74.8	73.0
D. F.	394.1	42.5	10.8	0.2	0.5	20.3	47.9	20.5	48.4
Dgo.	130.0	99.3	76.4	0.3	0.3	76.2	76.7	76.5	77.0
Gto.	306.2	226.9	74.1	1.7	0.8	191.1	84.2	192.8	85.0
Gro.	196.7	176.0	89.5	0.9	0.5	136.0	77.3	136.8	77.8
Hgo.	209.2	167.2	79.9	1.0	0.6	97.8	58.5	98.8	59.1
Jal.	391.6	283.9	72.5	5.3	1.9	209.7	73.9	215.0	75.8

Mex.	302.8	239.4	79.1	5.1	2.1	104.2	43.5	109.3	45.6
Mich.	328.0	259.9	79.2	1.8	0.7	205.8	79.2	207.6	79.9
Mor.	43.9	36.1	82.2	0.3	0.8	15.1	41.8	15.3	42.6
Nay.	55.6	41.4	74.4	1.2	2.9	34.8	84.2	36.0	87.1
N. L.	132.1	79.2	59.9	1.2	1.5	61.5	77.8	62.8	79.3
Oax.	337.4	289.6	85.8	2.8	1.0	213.5	73.7	216.3	74.7
Pue.	348.5	261.1	74.9	1.7	0.7	116.4	44.6	118.1	45.3
Qro.	77.0	60.1	78.2	0.3	0.4	49.2	81.9	49.5	82.3
Q. R.	4.1	2.3	56.9	≐	1.3	1.7	70.5	1.7	71.8
S. L. P.	178.1	130.8	73.4	1.0	0.8	80.1	61.3	81.2	62.1
Sin.	126.2	94.9	75.2	1.1	1.1	77.5	81.6	78.5	82.7
Son.	100.0	64.1	64.1	2.1	3.3	50.0	78.0	52.1	81.3
Tab.	63.3	52.9	83.6	0.7	1.3	37.1	70.2	37.8	71.5
Tamps.	108.3	63.3	58.5	1.5	2.3	44.5	70.3	46.0	72.6
Tlax.	64.3	47.8	74.4	0.4	0.9	15.8	33.1	16.2	34.0
Ver.	430.3	326.0	75.8	12.9	4.0	224.7	68.9	237.6	72.9
Yuc.	124.4	81.2	65.3	1.0	1.3	44.1	54.4	45.2	55.7
Zac.	139.3	108.5	77.9	1.7	1.6	69.4	64.0	71.1	65.6
TOTALS	5,165.8	3,626.3	70.2	52.9	1.5	2,481.2	68.4	2,534.1	69.9

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Excluded from *Economically Active Population* are: housewives, domestic servants, non-productive persons (children, invalids, etc.), the unemployed and persons with occupation unknown.

‡ Includes: agriculture, forestry, livestock, fishing and hunting.

§ Not included here are those listed in the census as managers (*administradores*) for, although it may be assumed that in the majority of cases these individuals are landless, their economic position in Mexican agricultural economy is such as to place them in a different (higher) class than renters, share-croppers and laborers.

¶ Obtained by subtracting from column 2, column 4 plus those listed in the 1930 census as proprietors (i.e., landowners who were also personally engaged in farming), ejidatarios (provisional and definitive) and managers.

≐ Less than 100.

TABLE 46

POPULATION OF FIVE YEARS OF AGE AND OVER CLASSIFIED BY LANGUAGES SPOKEN, 1930*

STATES	TOTAL	SPANISH†		INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES ONLY		INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND SPANISH		FOREIGN LANGUAGES ONLY
		No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.§
Ags.	113,981	113,927	99.9	.....	....	49	‡	5
B. C.	82,089	80,682	98.3	32	‡	208	0.3	1,167
Camp.	71,758	40,433	56.3	16,233	22.6	15,091	21.1	1
Coah.	371,735	371,286	99.9	26	‡	395	0.1	28
Col.	54,339	54,288	99.9	.....	....	51	0.1	....
Chis.	441,255	301,709	68.4	89,213	20.1	50,319	11.5	14
Chih.	415,448	381,002	91.7	13,876	3.3	15,235	3.7	5,335
D. F.	1,076,276	1,061,243	98.6	13	‡	14,663	1.4	357
Dgo.	339,496	334,832	98.6	1,522	0.4	2,313	0.7	829
Gto.	831,917	826,968	99.4	305	‡	4,603	0.6	41
Gro.	537,146	422,031	78.4	79,585	14.8	35,525	6.8	5
Hgo.	565,507	375,370	66.4	115,852	20.5	74,282	13.1	3
Jal.	1,088,163	1,085,502	99.7	1,681	0.2	967	0.1	13
Mex.	825,249	640,589	77.7	61,858	7.4	122,798	14.9	4
Mich.	887,782	833,798	93.9	17,381	2.0	36,598	4.1	5
Mor.	109,812	94,154	85.7	1,015	1.0	14,643	13.3	....
Nay.	145,580	140,744	96.7	1,197	0.9	3,638	2.4	1
N. L.	358,174	358,025	99.9	1	‡	85	‡	63
Oax.	920,576	401,346	43.6	315,475	34.3	203,753	22.1	2
Pue.	970,079	659,456	68.3	176,204	18.2	134,403	13.5	16

Qro.	197,814	180,295	91.1	5,641	2.9	11,870	6.0	8
Q. R.	9,082	5,382	59.3	1,862	20.5	1,825	20.2	13
S. L. P.	481,631	421,990	87.7	36,766	7.4	22,866	4.9	9
Sin.	341,413	334,238	97.9	843	0.2	6,317	1.9	15
Son.	272,786	247,795	90.8	6,024	2.3	18,873	6.9	94
Tab.	182,260	163,926	89.9	3,921	2.2	14,412	7.9	1
Tamps.	293,139	292,888	99.9	.....	....	185	‡	66
Tlax.	172,050	140,984	81.9	9,576	5.7	21,490	12.4	....
Ver.	1,153,505	928,251	80.4	115,881	10.0	109,321	9.6	52
Yuc.	335,445	93,103	27.8	113,179	33.8	129,119	38.4	44
Zac.	383,088	383,029	99.9	.....	....	27	‡	32
TOTALS	14,028,575	11,769,266	83.9	1,185,162	8.4	1,065,924	7.6	8,223

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Includes "Spanish only" and "Spanish and one or more foreign languages."

‡ Less than 0.1%.

§ Percentages of those speaking foreign languages only are less than 0.1% in every state except B. C., Chih., and Dgo., where they are 1.4; 1.3; and 0.3 respectively. For the whole Republic the per cent is 0.1.

TABLE 47

POPULATION OF FIVE YEARS OF AGE OR OVER SPEAKING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS BY FAMILIES AND PRINCIPAL LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS, 1930*

FAMILIES AND DIALECTS	NUMBER	PER CENT OF TOTAL	FAMILIES AND DIALECTS	NUMBER	PER CENT OF TOTAL
YUMANA	*125*	†	MIXTECO-ZAPOTECANA	*501,131*	*22.3*
Cucapás	14		Mixteco	172,114	
Kilihuis	80		Zapoteco	216,825	
Huaipais	31		Amuzgo	8,247	
SERIANA	*160*	†	Trique	2,741	
Kunkaks	160		Chatino	11,739	
PIMANA	*68,210*	*3.0*	Mazateco	55,343	
Pápagos	535		Cuicateco	9,221	
Pimas	860		Chinanteco	24,073	
Yaquis	7,183		Ojiteco	172	
Mayos	26,815		Ixcateco	656	
Ocoronis	85		TOTONACANA	*94,211*	*4.2*
Tarahumaras	26,834		Totonacos	90,425	
Guarigias	1,120		Tepehuas	3,786	
Tepehuanes	4,738		ZOQUE-MIXEANA	*96,607*	*4.3*
Opatas	40		Zoques	20,969	
NAHUATLANA	*685,389*	*30.5*	Mixes	31,698	
Coras	2,365		Yavanas	91	
Huichols	3,716		Tlapanecos	16,479	
Tepecanos	99		Chochos	2,308	
Mexicanos	670,595		Popolocas	20,927	
Cuitlatecos	118		Huaves	4,135	
Chontal de Oaxaca	8,496		MAYA-QUICHEANA	*457,628*	*20.5*
TARASCANA	*44,371*	*2.0*	Huaxtecos	41,271	
Tarascos	44,371		Chontales de Tabasco	15,610	
ALGONQUINIANA	*495*	†	Maya	279,093	
Kikapoos	495		Chol	16,903	
ATAPASCANA	*451*	†′	Tzotzil	34,253	
Chichimecas jonaces	451		Tzeltal	40,342	
OTOMIANA	*299,291*	*13.2*	Tojilabal	8,471	
Otomies	218,811		Mame	21,685	
Mazahuas	77,715		Lacandón‡	.....	
Chichimecas pames	2,765		NONCLASSIFIED	*160*	†
MATLALTZINCANA	*1,167*	†	TOTAL	2,249,396§	
Matlaltzincas	1,167				

* Statistics from the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Less than 0.1%.

‡ Estimated number: 200.

§ Note that this total differs somewhat from the sum of columns 4 and 6 in Table 46 because in the present table *multi-linguales*—i.e., those speaking Spanish and two or more indigenous tongues are not included.

TABLE 48

ILLITERATE PERSONS TEN YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, 1910 COMPARED WITH 1930*

STATES	1910		1930		PER CENT OF DECREASE, 1930 OVER 1910
	Number (In 000's)	Per Cent of Total Population Over 10 Years	Number (In 000's)	Per Cent of Total Population Over 10 Years	
Ags.	55.2	61.7	48.0	50.0	11.7
B. C.	8.8	45.0	20.1	30.0	15.0
Camp.	41.0	64.0	32.1	53.6	10.4
Coah.	147.5	56.6	136.5	43.6	13.0
Col.	27.6	47.2	21.0	45.1	2.1
Chis.	259.5	86.6	282.5	77.9	8.7
Chih.	172.0	59.3	147.2	42.3	17.0
D. F.	185.9	33.2	215.6	23.1	10.1
Dgo.	252.1	72.4	154.0	54.0	18.4
Gto.	585.4	75.4	479.0	69.0	6.4
Gro.	347.8	86.0	353.3	79.4	6.6
Hgo.	335.9	75.7	338.0	72.1	3.6
Jal.	558.8	63.0	495.6	54.0	9.0
Mex.	510.0	74.2	473.1	69.7	4.5
Mich.	509.1	71.3	494.9	66.9	4.4
Mor.	84.4	64.1	56.2	60.5	3.6
Nay.	87.4	68.5	69.0	55.5	13.0
N. L.	136.6	52.2	114.6	37.8	14.4
Oax.	615.3	84.3	599.1	78.0	6.3
Pue.	608.0	77.6	551.0	67.9	9.7
Qro.	127.8	74.1	122.3	73.8	0.3
Q. R.	3.6	49.2	3.7	47.4	1.8
S. L. P.	330.8	74.9	266.8	66.7	8.2
Sin.	168.0	70.0	163.1	56.7	13.3
Son.	103.7	53.5	91.5	39.9	13.6
Tab.	94.4	75.3	96.3	65.5	9.8
Tamps.	107.6	61.2	98.8	40.2	21.0
Tlax.	87.9	67.7	84.9	59.5	8.2
Ver.	585.3	75.1	628.1	65.6	9.5
Yuc.	170.1	68.8	142.9	50.0	18.8
Zac.	221.4	65.2	183.3	57.8	7.4
TOTALS	7,537.4	69.7	6,962.5	59.3	10.4

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Illiteracy is defined as inability to either read or write. In the 1930 census 261,384 persons were reported as being able to read but not able to write.

TABLE 49

DEATHS: RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION FOR VARIOUS COUNTRIES, BY IMPORTANT CAUSES

PRINCIPAL CAUSES	MEXICO*	FRANCE†	UNITED STATES‡	URUGUAY§	SPAIN†
	5 Year Average 1926-30	2 Year Average 1927-28	5 Year Average 1926-30	3 Year Average 1928-30	3 Year Average 1927-29
Typhoid and Para-typhoid fever	23.4	5.2	5.2	9.3¶¶	19.1
Typhus	4.1	0.0	0.0	....	3.4
Malarial fever or cachexia	131.1	0.5	2.9	....	3.1
Small-pox	61.3	0.1	....	....	0.5
Measles	66.3	6.0	4.7	1.8	16.9
Scarlet fever	3.3	1.3	2.2	9.7	1.6
Whooping-cough	96.1	4.8	6.5	2.2	5.6
Diptheria	5.4	5.4	6.8	5.9	5.8
Influenza	40.8	27.0	90.2**	6.3	22.5
Dysentery	71.5	0.4±	....	0.2	4.4±
Erysipelas	11.8	0.0±	2.4	0.9	2.0±
Epidemic cerebro-spinal meningitis	0.3	0.0±	2.5††	0.7	0.5±
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	61.1	145.2	71.1‡‡	119.2	111.1
Other tuberculosis	6.5	25.5	7.9	17.4	17.5
Syphilis	10.1	....	....	3.6	2.7±
Cancer and other malignant tumors	14.7	96.0	96.0	77.7	69.4
Diabetes	2.7	....	18.5	4.6	....
Cerebral haemorrhage, apoplexy	20.3	97.4	81.9	25.3	119.6

Diseases of the heart	37.5	149.5	205.6	107.5	168.9±±
Diseases of the respiratory system ¶	384.7	77.7	44.2††§§	117.8	164.9±±
Diarrhoea and enteritis	409.4	....	27.9††	80.7	283.0***
Puerperal septicaemia	8.7	2.1	5.2	4.9	6.0
TOTAL DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES	2,552.5	1,660.0	1,180.1	1,056.8	1,842.1

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† *Annuaire Sanitaire International, 1929* and *1930. Organisation D'Hygiene, Societé Des Nacions.* Vols. V and VI, Geneve, 1930, 1932. Figures for Spain calculated according to 1930 population census.

‡ *Statistical Abstract of the United States—1931* and *1932*, U. S. Dept. of Commerce.

§ *Anuario Estadístico de la República Oriental del Uruguay.* Vols. XXXVII, XXXVIII and XXXIX. *Parte Ia. del Anuario. Imp. Nacional.* 1929, 1930 and 1931.

¶ Acute and Chronic Bronchitis, Bronchopneumonia and Pneumonia.

± 1928 only.

** Includes Influenza and Pneumonia.

†† Four year average only, 1926-29.

‡‡ Includes in addition Acute Disseminated Tuberculosis.

§§ Bronchitis and Bronchopneumonia only.

¶¶ Includes (a) Typhoid fever; (b) Abdominal typhus.

±± Figure for 1929 provisional.

*** Two year average only, 1927-28.

TABLE 50

INFANT MORTALITY, NUMBER AND RATES BY STATES, 1930*

STATES	NUMBER OF REGISTERED BIRTHS	NUMBER OF DEATHS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE	DEATHS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE PER 1,000 BIRTHS REGISTERED	NUMBER OF DEATHS ALL AGES	DEATHS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE AS PER CENT OF ALL DEATHS
Ags.	7,435	1,236	166.2	4,244	29.1
B. C.	5,662	529	93.4	1,950	26.9
Camp.	3,089	394	127.5	2,068	19.1
Coah.	19,817	3,291	166.1	11,021	29.9
Col.	2,481	433	174.5	1,991	21.7
Chis.	21,843	2,008	92.0	11,020	18.2
Chih.	20,906	2,708	129.5	9,681	28.0
D. F.	59,024	9,016	152.8	34,264	26.3
Dgo.	21,560	2,290	106.2	8,245	27.8
Gto.	58,895	10,072	171.1	33,481	30.1
Gro.	30,309	2,981	98.4	15,505	19.2
Hgo.	28,529	4,247	148.9	20,656	20.6
Jal.	59,259	9,986	168.5	37,571	26.6
Mex.	74,524	8,989	120.6	32,215	27.9
Mich.	50,194	6,737	134.1	27,804	24.2
Mor.	6,253	1,174	187.7	4,828	24.3
Nay.	7,802	1,117	143.4	3,969	28.1
N. L.	16,298	2,561	157.1	8,448	30.3
Oax.	49,069	5,488	111.8	29,930	18.3
Pue.	47,782	7,725	161.7	34,850	22.2
Qro.	10,230	1,829	178.8	8,589	21.3
Q. R.	410	44	107.3	235	18.7
S. L. P.	37,322	3,761	100.8	15,925	23.6
Sin.	20,059	1,871	93.3	7,661	24.4
Son.	12,006	1,752	146.0	5,776	30.3
Tab.	8,789	818	93.1	4,733	17.3
Tamps.	15,202	1,396	91.8	5,662	24.7
Tlax.	11,806	1,590	134.7	5,611	28.3
Ver.	71,201	5,244	73.7	27,887	18.8
Yuc.	16,147	2,655	164.4	13,258	20.0
Zac.	25,911	3,979	153.5	12,639	31.5
TOTALS	819,814	107,921	131.6	441,717	24.4

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. In connection with this table see footnote 49 on page 273 of the text.

TABLE 51

EXPENDITURES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, 1921-1934*

(In 000's of Pesos)

YEARS	TOTAL EXPENDITURES			EXPENDITURES ON RURAL EDUCATION†		
	Amount	As Per Cent of All Federal Expenditures‡	Index Number	Amount	As Per Cent of Total Expenditures	Index Number
1921	9,090	4.0	100			
1922	20,293	8.9	223			
1923	21,892	9.3	241			
1924	20,828	8.3	229			
1925	20,748	7.0	228			
1926	25,039	7.7	275			
1927	24,763	8.0	272			
1928	25,800	9.0	284	6,860	26.6	100
1929	27,434	10.0	302	7,554	27.5	110
1930	32,074	11.5	353	9,134	28.5	133
1931	31,360	13.9	345	9,688	30.9	141
1932	27,378	12.9	301	9,081	33.2	132
1933§	31,627	14.7	348	11,219	35.5	164
1934§	31,219	12.9	343	12,372	39.6	180

* Data of the *Secretaría de Educación Pública.*

† Includes *Departamento de Enseñanza Rural y Primaria Foránea* and *Departamento de Enseñanza Agrícola y Normal Rural.* Data not available before 1928.

‡ See Table 93.

§ Assigned budget.

TABLE 52

EQUIPMENT AND ACTIVITIES OF ELEMENTARY FEDERAL RURAL SCHOOLS, 1932*

	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	Per Cent OF TOTAL SCHOOLS†
EQUIPMENT:		
School agricultural lands	4,885‡	71.9
Shops (carpenter, blacksmith, etc.)	1,265	18.6
Baths	1,550	22.8
Outhouses	2,771	40.8
Libraries	3,121	45.9
Regional museums	1,668	24.5
Playgrounds	4,604	67.7
Open-air theaters	3,102	45.6
One room	5,585	82.2
Two or more rooms	1,211§	17.8
One teacher	5,507	81.0
Two or more teachers	1,289	19.0
ACTIVITIES:		
Raised fruit trees	1,757	25.9
Cultivated vegetable gardens	2,747	40.4
Kept bees	818	12.0
Kept rabbits	931	13.7
Kept chickens	3,068	45.1
Kept doves	2,164	31.8
Raised pigs	752	11.1
Had savings bank	2,024	29.8
Had children's coöperative societies	2,818	41.5
Had adult coöperative societies	1,587	23.4
Arts and crafts	3,070	45.2
Had child welfare committees	2,708	39.8
Organized anti-alcohol campaigns	5,950	87.6
Organized cleanliness campaigns	6,268	92.2
Had expositions or fairs	4,605	67.8
Established post-offices	699	10.3
Encouraged road building	894	13.2
Brought water into village	615	9.0
Held meetings of villagers	6,202	91.3
Had sports associations	3,663	53.9
Had education committees	6,191	91.1
One year course	742	10.9
Two year course	2,277	33.5

TABLE 52—*Continued*

	Number of Schools	Per Cent of Total Schools†
Activities—*Continued:*		
Three year course	2,296	33.8
Four year course or more	1,481	21.8
With night classes for adults	5,883	86.6

* Data of the *Secretaría de Educación Pública.*

† Total schools: 6,796.

‡ Of this number 1,312 schools were in possession of irrigated land and 3,573 of semi-arid land; 2,896 had plots of less than 2 hectares; and 1,989 plots of from 2 to 5 hectares. Of the total agricultural lands 3,914 hectares were cultivated or an average of 0.8 hectares for each school in possession of agricultural land.

§ Includes 17 schools for which data were not given.

TABLE 52a

FEDERAL RURAL SCHOOLS IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH TOTAL FEDERAL RURAL SCHOOLS AND TOTAL EJIDO COMMUNITIES, 1933*

STATES	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF EJIDO COMMUNITIES†	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN EJIDOS
Ags.	106	79	39
B. C.	23	13	..
Camp.	91	62	..
Coah.	204	109	48
Col.	97	18	7
Chis.	290	179	97
Chih.	287	230	89
Dgo.	179	178	47
Gto.	286	282	104
Gro.	331	342	26
Hgo.	335	334	9
Jal.	275	277	69
Mex.	410	566	17
Mich.	314	398	48
Mor.	171	177	6
Nay.	166	70	28
N. L.	304	89	31
Oax.	483	127	40
Pue.	541	617	33
Qro.	113	100	26
Q. R.	....	8	..
S. L. P.	357	352	108
Sin.	164	61	14
Son.	243	87	37
Tab.	201	33	..
Tamps.	222	205	2
Tlax.	107	112	17
Ver.	383	755	14
Yuc.	132	208	2
Zac.	221	298	103
TOTALS	7,036	6,366	1,061

* Data of the *Departamento Agrario* and the *Secretaría de Educación Pública*, not including the Federal District.

† Includes both provisional and definitive ejidos. See Tables 19 and 20.

TABLE 53

STATUS OF EJIDO BANKS, DECEMBER 31, 1932*

REGIONAL BANKS	NUMBER OF COOPERATIVES	NUMBER OF MEMBERS	CAPITAL SUPPLIED BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT†	CAPITAL SUPPLIED BY BY COOPERATIVES†	TOTAL CAPITAL†	LOANS OUTSTANDING DECEMBER 1932†
Chihuahua	39	2,736	50	56	106	117
Durango	88	7,880	168	78	246	270
Guanajuato	180	‡	177	80	257	701
Hidalgo	100	7,475	170	82	252	204
Jalisco	59	3,195	35	100	135	210
México	52	2,758	50	34	84	94
Michoacán	126	9,292	166	38	204	249
Morelos	23	‡	....	25	25	16
Puebla	102	4,724	50	6	56	217
TOTALS	769		866	499	1,366	2,078§

* Data of the *Comité Liquidador de los Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales*. Although the ejido banks were placed in liquidation in January 1931, actually the process of liquidation has been very slow so that these figures for December 1932 give an approximately accurate picture of the status of the banks at the time reorganization theoretically began.

† In thousands of pesos.

‡ Data not available.

§ This does not represent the total of all loans made during the whole period of operation of the banks, but only those outstanding as of December 31, 1932.

TABLE 54

OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL BANK OF AGRICULTURAL CREDIT, MARCH 10, 1926 TO DECEMBER 31, 1933*

(Amounts in 000's of Pesos)

YEARS	OPERATIONS WITH COOPERATIVE CREDIT SOCIETIES											
	OF EJIDATARIOS						OF NON-EJIDATARIOS†					
	Societies Founded		Societies Receiving Loans				Societies Founded		Societies Receiving Loans			
	No.	Members	No.	Members	Amount	As Per Cent of All Loans	No.	Members	No.	Members	Amount	As Per Cent of All Loans
1926	60	2,562	18	977	162	1.0	45	1,512	14	549	167	1.0
1927	65	3,173	34	1,811	291	3.4	39	1,554	50	2,032	939	10.9
1928	25	1,311	56	2,200	597	11.8	22	924	21	829	543	10.8
1929	51	2,259	50	2,387	1,153	37.1	22	1,016	24	921	678	21.9
1930	29	1,644	42	2,120	1,038	33.3	19	1,119	34	1,694	1,031	33.0
1931	9	1,107	5	853	516	26.3	10	260	3	161	167	8.5
1932	98	8,922	91	7,118	1,159	34.9	103	2,717	85	2,725	632	19.0
1933	241	17,517	136	10,033	1,154	52.2	50	934	78	1,678	1,049	47.5
TOTALS	578	38,495	432	27,499	6,071	13.8	310	10,036	309	10,589	5,204	11.8

* Data of the *Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola.*

† These were for the most part the so-called "small farmers" (*pequeños agricultores*).

TABLE 54—*Continued*

Years	Operations With Cooperative Credit Societies		Operations With Private Individuals			Total of All Loans	
	Total Loans to Coöperative Societies						
	Amount	As Per Cent of All Loans	Number of Loans‡	Amount	As Per Cent of All Loans	Amount	As Per Cent of All Loans
1926	329	2.0	329	16,325	98.0	16,654	37.8
1927	1,230	14.3	422	7,349	85.7	8,578	19.6
1928	1,141	22.6	188	3,927	77.4	5,067	11.4
1929	1,831	59.0	196	1,272	41.0	3,102	7.0
1930	2,069	66.3	274	1,050	33.7	3,119	7.2
1931	682	34.8	61	1,282	65.2	1,964	4.4
1932	1,791	53.9	19	1,534	46.1	3,325	7.6
1933	2,203	99.7	2	9	0.3	2,212	5.0
Totals	11,275	25.6	1,491	32,747	74.4	44,021	100.0

‡ These correspond roughly to the number of individuals receiving loans.

TABLE 55

SUPERVISION OF EJIDOS BY THE NATIONAL AGRARIAN DEPARTMENT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1933*

ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS†	NUMBER OF REGIONAL ORGANIZERS	NUMBER OF CHIEFS OF ZONE	NUMBER OF EJIDOS LISTED IN ZONES‡	AVERAGE NUMBER EJIDOS PER CHIEF OF ZONE
A	1	2	178	89.0
B	1	4	108	27.0
C	..	1	15	15.0
D	1	7	201	28.7
E	1	3	67	22.3
F	1	6	191	31.8
G	1	9	252	28.0
H	1	8	320	40.0
I	1	9	270	30.0
J	1	12	584	48.7
K	1	9	215	23.9
L	1	4	204	51.0
M	1	6	110	18.3
N	1	13	709	54.5
O	1	4	320	80.0
P	1	4	372	93.0
Q	1	3	69	23.0
R	..	3	112	37.3
S	1	5	244	48.8
TOTALS	17	112	4,541§	41.6

* Data of the *Departamento Agrario*.

† These correspond roughly to agricultural regions and may include parts of several states.

‡ Includes only ejidos under the administrative jurisdiction of the agents of the Agrarian Department.

§ The total number of ejidos in the Republic (provisional and definitive) on December 31, was 6,406.

TABLE 56

EXPENDITURES OF NATIONAL AND STATE AGRARIAN COMMISSIONS, 1918-1933
(In 000's of Pesos)

YEARS	NATIONAL AGRARIAN COMMISSIONS*	STATE AGRARIAN COMMISSIONS†
1918	360	....
1919	179	....
1920	444	....
1921	845	....
1922	1,188	564
1923	2,058	509
1924	3,067	443
1925	3,779	615
1926	2,505	417
1927	3,377	426
1928	2,685	442
1929	3,377	535
1930	3,826	466
1931	3,147	436
1932	2,656	493
1933	2,876‡	450‡
TOTALS	36,369	5,796

* Figures for 1921-23, inclusive, from unpublished study of Eduardo Villaseñor; for remaining years from the *Departamento de Presupuestos, Secretaría de Hacienda.*

† Figures for 1922-25, inclusive, from unpublished study of Eduardo Villaseñor; for remaining years from the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

‡ Estimated.

TABLE 57

VOLUME OF PRODUCTION—EIGHTEEN CROPS, 1901-1907*

(In Metric Tons)

CROPS	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	7 YEAR AVERAGE
Corn	2,305,433	1,926,527	2,241,781	2,174,016	2,134,868	2,715,075	5,075,085¶	2,653,255
Frijoles	236,036	199,281	182,990	162,143	149,082	177,924	169,078	182,362
Wheat	327,159	229,893	285,561	255,644	302,629	350,051	312,110	294,721
Cotton	22,364	22,529	36,641	54,913	147,743≠	58,517	33,632	53,763
Barley	149,768	117,156	175,627	142,553	128,224	147,585	210,093	153,001
Garbanzos	52,410	39,915	33,036	32,613	34,012	65,692	43,503	43,026
Henequen	81,678	54,598	135,577	101,393	81,368	64,669	113,090	90,339
Coffee	27,424	9,984≠	29,339	33,813	40,134	39,445	50,113	32,893
Sugar cane	2,224,260	2,745,686	1,485,683	1,392,585	1,687,056	1,806,622	2,762,019	2,014,844
Haba beans	12,310	12,107	63,274≠	11,112	13,052	12,477	23,667	21,143
Alfalfa†	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Rice‡	18,950	18,126	22,090	28,313	25,016	31,721	32,885	25,300
Tomatoes	3,783	3,538	4,606	4,794	4,665	7,449	10,102	5,562
Chile§	31,371	25,694	44,156	26,539	34,857	46,418	53,533	37,510
Tobacco	11,910	3,907	13,225	13,100	18,404	15,744	19,446	13,677
Bananas¶	66,361	19,058	25,303	70,963	54,265	35,800	36,511	44,037
Potatoes	9,139	9,435	14,678	14,334	12,983	25,140	16,958	14,667
Oranges	28,548	22,572	26,860	60,082	53,737	45,312	38,018	39,304

* *Anuario Estadística de la República Mexicana*, Dirección General de Estadística. (Various years.) Years are fiscal and should read 1900-01, etc.

† No statistics published.

‡ No indication as to whether this is paddy or cleaned rice.

§ *Chile seco* (dried chile only).

¶ All classes including roatán.

≠ No explanation is given in official publications for these sudden departures from "normal."

TABLE 58

VOLUME OF PRODUCTION—EIGHTEEN CROPS, 1927-1933*

(In Metric Tons)

CROPS	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	7 YEAR AVERAGE
Corn	2,058,934	2,172,845	1,468,805	1,376,763	2,138,677	1,973,469	1,923,865	1,873,337
Frijoles	189,899	176,134	94,970	82,577	135,960	131,840	185,849	142,451
Wheat	323,607	300,211	308,447	311,517	441,607	262,853	329,898	325,449
Cotton	38,862	60,376	53,344	38,487	45,581	22,015	56,465	45,019
Barley	97,683	86,392	54,809	58,727	68,762	66,428	68,714	71,645
Garbanzos	80,537	64,316	69,134	49,294	83,948	43,674	48,424	62,761
Henequen	132,802	139,232	129,493	96,396	83,930	122,856	95,551	114,323
Coffee	42,417	41,986	39,125	37,903	32,874	43,748	36,824	39,268
Sugar cane	2,996,964	2,947,229	3,028,798	3,293,364	3,694,005	3,404,958	2,777,982	3,163,329
Haba beans	18,845	15,677	13,031	16,730	14,220	10,314	7,372	13,741
Alfalfa	1,702,889	1,769,022	1,875,176	1,668,140	1,636,884	1,648,535	1,527,719	1,689,766
Rice†	82,909	83,153	67,280	74,793	72,150	72,382	66,950	74,231
Tomatoes	83,552	88,830	94,823	81,312	77,474	86,386	66,351	82,675
Chile‡	7,678	7,101	4,858	4,258	5,214	6,333	7,637	6,154
Tobacco	10,054	12,607	12,932	10,492	11,423	11,141	9,753	11,200
Bananas§	282,263	315,020	330,215	306,478	302,635	305,302	359,730	314,520
Potatoes	53,341	54,172	39,292	45,578	49,475	51,509	51,613	49,283
Oranges	100,078	100,949	101,162	110,799	125,382	112,948	91,596	106,130

* Statistics of the *Dirección de Economía Rural.*

† *Arroz en palay* (paddy rice).

‡ *Chile seco* (dried chile only).

§ All classes including *roatán.*

TABLE 59

INDEX NUMBERS—VOLUME OF PRODUCTION EIGHTEEN CROPS, 1927-1933*

CROPS	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
Corn	100.0	105.5	71.3	66.9	103.9	95.8	93.4
Frijoles	100.0	92.8	50.0	43.5	71.6	69.4	97.9
Wheat	100.0	92.8	95.3	96.3	136.5	81.2	101.9
Cotton	100.0	155.4	137.3	99.0	117.3	56.6	145.3
Barley	100.0	88.4	56.1	60.1	70.4	68.0	70.3
Garbanzos	100.0	79.9	85.8	61.2	104.2	54.2	60.1
Henequen	100.0	104.8	97.5	72.6	63.2	92.5	71.9
Coffee	100.0	99.0	92.2	89.4	77.5	103.1	86.8
Sugar cane	100.0	98.3	101.1	110.0	123.3	113.6	92.7
Haba beans	100.0	83.2	69.1	88.8	75.5	54.7	39.1
Alfalfa	100.0	103.9	110.1	98.0	96.1	96.8	89.7
Rice	100.0	100.3	81.1	90.2	87.0	87.3	80.8
Tomatoes	100.0	106.3	113.5	97.3	92.7	103.4	79.4
Chile	100.0	92.5	63.3	55.5	67.9	82.5	99.5
Tobacco	100.0	125.4	128.6	104.4	113.6	110.8	97.0
Bananas	100.0	111.6	117.0	108.6	107.2	108.2	127.4
Potatoes	100.0	101.6	73.7	85.4	92.8	96.6	96.8
Oranges	100.0	100.9	101.1	110.7	125.3	112.9	91.5

* Based on data in Table 58.

TABLE 60

AREA UNDER CULTIVATION—EIGHTEEN CROPS, 1927-1933*
(In 000's of Hectares)

CROPS	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	7 YEAR AVERAGE
Corn	3,181	3,112	2,865	3,075	3,378	3,243	3,198	3,150
Frijoles	960	887	733	709	723	640	662	759
Wheat	531	519	523	492	607	447	475	513
Cotton	132	203	199	158	129	78	172	153
Barley	176	178	161	146	150	160	155	160
Garbanzos	122	118	109	93	123	77	81	103
Henequen	119	120	110	82	72	103	85	99
Coffee	87	88	91	88	87	83	84	87
Sugar cane	67	65	70	77	78	75	64	71
Haba beans	51	50	49	47	43	42	38	46
Alfalfa	48	47	50	43	40	43	37	44
Rice	50	45	35	37	36	34	33	39
Tomatoes	30	29	29	22	22	22	19	25
Chile†	16	14	12	10	11	13	14	23
Tobacco	17	18	16	13	14	13	13	15
Bananas‡	13	15	16	15	14	15	20	15
Potatoes	18	15	14	13	12	12	11	14
Oranges§	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5

* Statistics of the *Dirección de Economía Rural*.
† *Chile seco* (dried chile only).
‡ Estimated at rate of 500 *cepas* (plants) per hectare.
§ Estimated at rate of 300 trees per hectare.

TABLE 61

INDEX NUMBERS—AREA UNDER CULTIVATION—EIGHTEEN CROPS, 1927-1933*

CROPS	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
Corn	100.0	97.8	90.1	96.7	106.2	101.9	100.5
Frijoles	100.0	92.4	76.4	73.9	75.3	66.7	69.0
Wheat	100.0	97.7	98.5	92.7	114.3	84.2	89.5
Cotton	100.0	153.8	150.8	119.7	97.7	59.1	130.3
Barley	100.0	101.1	91.5	83.0	85.2	90.9	88.1
Garbanzos	100.0	96.7	89.3	76.2	100.8	63.1	66.4
Henequen	100.0	100.8	92.4	68.9	60.5	86.6	71.4
Coffee	100.0	101.1	104.6	101.1	100.0	95.4	96.6
Sugar cane	100.0	97.0	104.5	114.9	116.4	111.9	95.5
Haba beans	100.0	98.0	96.1	92.2	84.3	82.4	74.5
Alfalfa	100.0	97.9	104.2	89.6	83.3	89.6	77.1
Rice	100.0	90.0	70.0	74.0	72.0	68.0	66.0
Tomatoes	100.0	96.7	96.7	73.3	73.3	73.3	63.3
Chile	100.0	87.5	75.0	62.5	68.8	81.3	87.5
Tobacco	100.0	105.9	94.1	76.5	82.4	76.5	76.5
Bananas	100.0	115.4	123.1	115.4	107.7	115.4	153.8
Potatoes	100.0	83.3	77.8	72.2	66.7	66.7	61.1
Oranges	100.0	100.0	100.0	125.0	125.0	125.0	125.0

* Based on data in Table 60.

TABLE 62

AREA UNDER CULTIVATION—THIRTY-FOUR CROPS BY STATISTICAL ZONES, 1927-1933*
(In 000's of Hectares)

YEARS	NORTH	GULF	NORTH PACIFIC	SOUTH PACIFIC	CENTRAL	TOTALS	PER CENT WITH RELATION TO TOTAL AREA OF REPUBLIC
1927	1,161	494	377	456	3,210	5,697	2.9
1928	1,149	508	367	428	3,151	5,604	2.9
1929	1,023	490	348	406	2,888	5,155	2.6
1930	1,012	488	338	444	2,911	5,193	2.6
1931	1,173	488	361	491	3,105	5,618	2.9
1932	1,036	478	301	472	2,883	5,170	2.6
1933	1,189	463	332	475	3,078	5,537	2.8
AVERAGE	1,106	487	346	453	3,032	5,425	2.8

* Statistics of the *Dirección de Economía Rural*.
The 34 crops indicated include all principal crops except fruits.
For states included in the several statistical zones, see Fig. 40, Appendix A, p. 585.

TABLE 63

AVERAGE YIELD PER HECTARE VARIOUS CROPS IN REPRESENTATIVE COUNTRIES
(In Metric Quintals)

COUNTRY	CORN*	WHEAT†	BARLEY‡	RICE‡	COTTON‡
Mexico	6.1	6.0	4.6	18.4	2.6
United States	16.2	9.7	12.5	23.5	1.7
Canada	22.0	11.5	9.3	....	....
Argentina	19.0	8.0	10.8	20.7	....
Spain	15.0	8.9	11.7	62.9	0.7
Italy	15.5	13.0	11.2	49.1	2.3

* Mexico 7 year average 1925-31; other countries 4 year average 1927-30. Statistics from *Boletin del Departamento de Economía Agrícola*, No. 83, April 15, 1933.

† Mexico 7 year average 1925-31; other countries 3 year average 1928(29)-1930(31). Sources same as in footnote ‡.

‡ Mexico 7 year average 1925-31; other countries 1929(30) only. Statistics for Mexico from *Departamento de Economía Agrícola;* for other countries from *Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations, 1931.*

TABLE 64

IMPORTS OF CORN, WHEAT AND FLOUR, 1901-1907 AND 1927-1933*

YEARS	CORN	WHEAT†	FLOUR	TOTAL
	(In thousands of kilos)			
1901	30,027	3,558	4,195	45,780
1902	24,463	29,861	5,277	59,601
1903	3,610	42,180	4,560	50,350
1904	12,600	27,297	3,904	43,801
1905	12,096	5,279	5,127	22,502
1906	36,942	....	4,867	41,809
1907	52,823	....	4,011	56,834
1927	28,424	37,706	9,476	75,606
1928	9,991	47,437	7,286	64,714
1929	7,898	96,107	10,230	114,235
1930	79,315	69,527	5,440	154,282
1931	18,731	30,091	811	49,633
1932	37	67	75	179
1933	117	1,648	93	1,858
	(In thousands of pesos)			
1901	662	150	156	968
1902	520	896	223	1,639
1903	79	1,345	191	1,615
1904	294	770	177	1,241
1905	275	217	256	748
1906	1,780	....	648	2,428
1907	2,496	....	535	3,031
1927	2,229	4,399	1,724	8,352
1928	879	4,911	1,176	6,966
1929	712	9,170	2,715	12,597
1930	6,010	5,946	1,161	13,117
1931	1,169	1,931	284	3,384
1932	6	6	17	29
1933	13	174	25	212

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Years from 1901 to 1907 are fiscal and should read 1900-01, etc.

† 1901-07 listed as "wheat and other unspecified cereals."

TABLE 65

IMPORTS OF PRINCIPAL ANIMAL FOODSTUFFS, 1901-1907 AND 1927-1933*

YEARS	LARD AND LARD COMPOUND	FRESH EGGS	MEATS, FISH AND CONSERVED ANIMAL FOODS	MISCELLANEOUS DAIRY PRODUCTS
		(In thousands of kilos)†		
1901	4,349	100	2,816	947
1902	5,035	197	2,792	1,260
1903	2,687	294	3,748	1,327
1904	2,757	340	3,248	1,587
1905	3,971	502	3,989	2,104
1906	6,148	698	4,956	1,135
1907	7,726	713	6,376	1,198
1927	22,969	3,408	5,423	3,826
1928	28,958	2,656	5,422	3,544
1929	30,803	1,621	5,409	3,862
1930	35,122	2,959	3,611	3,437
1931	21,668	59	2,091	1,773
1932	17,147	17	713	1,398
1933	16,296	11	709	1,120
		(In thousands of pesos)		
1901	572	20	658	311
1902	767	38	717	372
1903	390	63	861	395
1904	352	70	763	450
1905	458	89	955	572
1906	1,644	300	2,333	813
1907	2,536	376	3,005	841
1927	13,654	1,955	4,808	3,067
1928	15,982	1,747	3,908	2,878
1929	16,516	1,160	3,879	3,064
1930	18,790	1,770	3,164	2,617
1931	10,117	36	1,756	1,309
1932	6,908	9	836	1,404
1933	7,755	8	867	1,129

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Years from 1901 to 1907 are fiscal and should read 1900-01, etc.

† No distinction is made between *kilo bruto* (weight including container) and *kilo legal* (weight without container).

TABLE 66

EXPORTS OF CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, 1901-1907 AND 1927-1933*

YEARS	HENEQUEN	OTHER HARD FIBERS	COFFEE	TOMATOES†	OTHER FRESH VEGETABLES	GARBANZOS	BANANAS‡
			(In thousands of Kilos)§				
1901	75,840	9,771	15,382	.....	1,311	6,738	.....
1902	91,944	12,475	22,203	.....	1,093	4,625	.....
1903	81,529	17,824	18,977	.....	942	6,619	.....
1904	103,363	17,837	18,461	.....	1,540	13,973	.....
1905	97,141	19,274	18,985	.....	1,177	11,309	.....
1906	97,408	20,291	19,258	.....	1,077	15,542	.....
1907	110,030	21,347	14,160	.....	999	22,670	.....
1927	126,864	25,176	26,092	57,361	14,151	29,685	4,681
1928	140,206	22,386	31,660	51,915	18,292	32,589	5,340
1929	115,739	22,581	29,876	28,897	14,837	32,269	5,686
1930	60,395	22,253	30,670	64,174	23,563	46,229	6,530
1931	67,292	17,326	27,312	51,537	20,076	15,953	5,152
1932	136,694	18,323	10,048	59,201	17,001	28,966	4,206
1933	99.853	15,198	41,256	21,237	9,145	32,530	5,795
			(In thousands of Pesos)				
1901	16,402	1,595	6,890	.....	176	1,221	.....
1902	29,210	1,745	10,229	.....	171	930	.....
1903	32,621	3,127	9,022	.....	261	1,431	.....
1904	31,525	3,210	8,676	.....	326	2,952	.....
1905	29,389	3,496	9,257	.....	270	2,254	.....
1906	29,437	3,668	9,289	.....	323	2,961	.....
1907	31,440	3,813	7,238	.....	320	4,085	.....
1927	33,866	7,737	28,935	19,565	5,434	6,152	7,907
1928	36,148	6,962	35,196	18,247	7,432	6,905	9,528
1929	32,265	7,081	32,184	9,841	5,097	6,632	8,096
1930	15,272	6,630	27,557	16,082	6,471	8,498	10,076
1931	10,428	4,727	19,343	13,346	5,719	2,612	7,107
1932	14,709	2,387	14,367	13,450	5,256	3,836	4,154
1933	16,948	2,144	26,887	4,278	2,526	4,333	5,467

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Years from 1901 to 1908 are fiscal and should read 1900-01, etc.

† 1901-07 not listed separately from other fresh vegetables.

‡ 1901-07 not listed separately.

§ Except bananas which are given in bunches.

[For Table 67 see p. 684]

TABLE 68

EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF COTTON, SUGAR AND RICE, 1901-1907 AND 1927-1933*

YEAR	RAW COTTON AND LINTERS			SUGAR RAW AND REFINED			RICE		
	Exports	Imports	Net†	Exports	Imports	Net†	Exports	Imports	Net†
				(In thousands of kilos)					
1901	230	9,672	—9,442	375	991	—616	527	....	527
1902	344	6,476	—6,132	1,603	1,081	595	847	....	847
1903	135	17,055	—16,920	8,003	873	7,130	842	....	842
1904	18	14,285	—14,240	16,313	1,287	15,026	421	....	421
1905	260	18,689	—18,429	38,701	698	38,003	207	....	207
1906	674	6,999	—6,325	5,072	3,110	1,962	476	1,275	—799
1907	11,277	639	10,638	7,049	3,571	3,478	562	2,101	—1,539
1927	28,007	255	27,752	3,830	557	3,273	11,057	1,210	9,847
1928	27,656	264	27,392	105	421	—316	7,298	1,580	5,718
1929	20,529	349	20,180	120	2,043	—1,923	7,838	1,015	6,823
1930	5,125	100	5,025	312	874	—562	131	989	—858
1931	12,739	119	12,620	26,908	189	26,719	4,452	469	3,983
1932	5,529	72	5,457	18,987	62	18,925	974	143	831
1933	2,626	8,209	—5,583	86,803	62	86,741	5,833	22	5,811
				(In thousands of pesos)					
1901	24	2,041	—2,017	38	80	—42	68	....	68
1902	30	1,301	—1,271	543	72	471	132	....	132
1903	17	3,181	—3,164	1,827	52	1,775	195	....	195

1904	2	3,118	—3,116	2,594	74	2,520	65	....	65
1905	60	4,074	—4,014	5,717	57	5,660	31	....	31
1906	143	3,360	—3,217	674	376	298	91	150	—59
1907	4,423	369	4,054	1,164	441	723	111	249	—138
1927	16,888	183	16,705	666	93	573	2,290	285	2,005
1928	17,569	207	17,362	20	66	—46	1,564	349	1,215
1929	13,547	328	13,219	29	407	—378	1,374	210	1,164
1930	2,437	68	2,369	89	160	—71	16	189	—173
1931	5,136	111	5,025	4,554	36	4,518	847	99	748
1932	1,784	72	1,712	2,773	15	2,758	239	34	205
1933	686	6,260	—5,574	6,754	14	6,740	1,288	6	1,282

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Years from 1901 to 1907 are fiscal and should read 1900-01, etc.

† Minus sign indicates net imports.

TABLE 67

EXPORTS OF UNCURED HIDES AND SKINS, 1901-1907 AND 1927-1933*

YEARS	CATTLE HIDES	GOAT, DEER AND KID SKINS	TOTAL HIDES AND SKINS†
	(In thousands of Kilos)		
1901	4,711	2,594	7,585
1902	5,831	2,979	9,061
1903	6,717	3,285	10,192
1904	5,304	2,915	8,364
1905	5,952	2,957	9,018
1906	7,117	3,509	10,800
1907	8,943	3,878	13,232
1927	2,771	2,537	5,841
1928	3,546	2,812	6,638
1929	910	2,749	3,989
1930	698	2,105	3,076
1931	1,152	1,609	2,961
1932	1,216	879	2,379
1933	3,019	1,319	4,628
	(In thousands of Pesos)		
1901	1,967	2,905	4,974
1902	2,603	3,575	6,283
1903	3,180	4,173	7,366
1904	2,516	3,932	6,554
1905	2,701	3,964	6,740
1906	3,060	4,708	7,882
1907	4,141	4,524	8,875
1927	1,446	4,734	6,988
1928	1,783	5,372	7,638
1929	467	4,713	5,738
1930	112	3,682	4,232
1931	275	2,522	3,038
1932	231	889	1,461
1933	800	1,534	2,763

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Years from 1901 to 1907 are fiscal and should read 1900-01, etc.

† Columns 2 and 3 plus all other types of hides and skins.

[For Table 68 see p. 682]

TABLE 69

INDEX NUMBERS: IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL AND ANIMAL AND DAIRY PRODUCTS, 1927-1933*

PRODUCTS	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
Imports							
Corn	100	35.14	27.78	279.04	65.89	0.11	0.41
Wheat	100	125.80	254.88	184.31	79.80	0.17	4.37
Flour	100	76.88	107.95	57.40	8.55	0.79	0.98
Lard and lard compound	100	126.07	134.10	152.91	94.33	74.65	70.94
Fresh Eggs	100	77.93	47.56	86.82	1.73	0.49	0.32
Meats, Fish and conserved animal foods	100	99.98	99.74	66.58	38.55	13.14	13.07
Miscellaneous dairy products	100	92.62	100.94	89.83	46.34	36.53	29.27
Exports							
Henequen	100	110.51	91.23	47.60	53.04	107.74	78.70
Other hard fibers	100	88.91	89.69	88.38	68.81	72.77	60.36
Coffee	100	121.33	114.50	117.54	104.67	38.50	158.11
Tomatoes	100	90.50	50.37	111.87	89.84	103.20	37.02
Other fresh vegetables	100	129.26	104.84	166.51	141.86	120.13	64.62
Garbanzos	100	109.78	108.70	155.73	53.74	97.57	109.58
Bananas	100	114.07	121.46	139.50	110.06	89.85	123.79
Cattle Hides	100	127.96	32.84	25.18	41.57	43.88	108.94
Goat, deer and kid hides	100	110.83	108.35	82.97	63.42	34.64	51.99

* Based on data in Tables 64, 65, 66 and 67.

TABLE 70

LIVESTOCK POPULATION IN 1902 COMPARED WITH 1926 AND 1930*
(000's of Head)

CLASSES	NUMBER 1902	NUMBER 1926	PER CENT OF CHANGE 1926 OVER 1902	NUMBER 1930	PER CENT OF CHANGE	
					1930 Over 1902	1930 Over 1926
Cattle	5,142.5	5,584.9	8.6	10,083.0	96.1	80.5
Horses	859.2	1,035.8	20.6	1,887.5	119.7	82.2
Mules	334.4	686.2	105.2	751.3	124.7	9.5
Burros	288.0	850.0	195.1	2,159.7	649.9	154.1
Sheep	3,424.4	2,697.7	—21.2	3,673.9	7.3	36.2
Goats	4,206.0	5,424.0	29.0	6,544.1	55.6	20.7
Hogs	616.1	2,902.9	371.2	3,698.2	500.3	27.4

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

TABLE 71

Livestock Population by Statistical Zones, 1930*

(000's of Head)

Zone	Cattle		Horses		Mules		Burros		Sheep		Goats		Hogs	
	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total
North	2,736.1	27.1	748.1	39.6	281.2	37.4	694.8	32.2	1,389.8	37.8	4,105.4	62.7	674.8	18.2
Gulf	1,038.7	10.3	222.8	11.8	67.3	9.0	133.8	6.2	130.1	3.5	166.5	2.5	591.7	16.0
North Pacific	1,442.5	14.3	261.5	13.9	110.6	14.7	157.7	7.3	54.2	1.5	101.8	1.6	340.1	9.2
South Pacific	1,204.2	12.0	213.8	11.3	48.1	6.4	166.0	7.7	283.8	7.8	471.4	7.2	676.0	18.3
Central	3,661.5	36.3	441.3	23.4	244.2	32.5	1,007.5	46.6	1,816.0	49.4	1,699.1	26.0	1,415.7	38.3
Totals	10,083.0	100.0	1,887.5	100.0	751.3	100.0	2,159.7	100.0	3,673.9	100.0	6,544.1	100.0	3,698.2	100.0

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

TABLE 72

HECTARES HARVESTED AND PRODUCTION OF CORN ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF KILOGRAMS PRODUCED PER HECTARE, BY STATISTICAL ZONES, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares and Production in 000's of Kilos)

ZONES	LESS THAN 200 KILOS PER HECTARE				200 TO 600 KILOS PER HECTARE				600 TO 1,000 KILOS PER HECTARE			
	Area		Production		Area		Production		Area		Production	
	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent
North	246.6	37.1	32,763.6	13.5	309.8	46.4	111,596.3	46.0	79.0	11.9	59,371.4	24.4
Gulf	1.1	0.5	177.6	0.1	53.3	21.0	26,165.0	11.2	109.6	43.4	91,732.5	39.5
North Pacific	0.4	0.2	55.2	†	98.1	47.9	43,165.2	30.8	71.3	34.9	52,212.2	37.3
South Pacific	30.9	7.0	3,448.5	1.2	132.8	30.0	61,740.7	20.5	219.4	49.4	163,405.3	54.4
Central	250.8	15.2	37,124.0	5.1	1,033.6	62.5	370,743.3	51.0	262.9	15.9	200,632.7	27.6
TOTALS	529.9	16.4	73,568.9	4.4	1,627.5	50.6	613,410.4	37.3	742.1	23.0	567,354.2	34.6

TABLE 72—*Continued*

Zones	More than 1,000 Kilos				Totals	
	Area		Production		Area	Production
	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent	Hectares	Kilos
North	30.4	4.6	39,056.7	16.1	665.8	242,788.0
Gulf	88.6	35.1	114,628.6	49.2	252.6	232,703.7
North Pacific	34.7	17.0	44,751.8	31.9	204.6	140,184.5
South Pacific	60.1	13.6	71,879.1	23.9	443.2	300,473.6
Central	105.7	6.4	118,139.9	16.3	1,653.0	726,640.0
Totals	319.6	9.9	388,456.2	23.7	3,219.1	1,642,789.7

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. It should be noted that the year covered by the agricultural census (May 1929-May 1930) was a "bad" corn year. According to the data of the *Dirección de Economía Rural* in the year 1929, as compared with the average for the seven preceding years, the acra under cultivation in corn was 10.2% less; average production per hectare 28.5% less; and total production 35.9% less.

† Less than 0.1%.

TABLE 73

HECTARES HARVESTED AND PRODUCTION OF WHEAT ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF KILOGRAMS PRODUCED PER HECTARE, BY STATISTICAL ZONES, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares and Production in 000's of Kilos)

ZONES	LESS THAN 200 KILOS PER HECTARE				200 TO 600 KILOS PER HECTARE				600 TO 1,000 KILOS PER HECTARE			
	Area		Production		Area		Production		Area		Production	
	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent
North	7.8	7.3	1,296.8	2.2	57.3	52.6	22,318.5	37.0	38.8	35.7	29,616.7	49.5
Gulf	1.2	76.9	230.5	70.2	0.4	22.9	95.3	28.8	....	....	.....	....
North Pacific	0.1	‡	8.3	‡	8.4	18.4	3,953.2	9.1	12.6	27.7	10,258.0	23.6
South Pacific	†	‡	2.3	‡	9.4	95.0	3,895.4	92.1	0.5	4.9	322.2	7.6
Central	20.9	6.1	3,086.7	2.2	247.0	76.2	94,725.8	66.5	53.1	16.7	38,651.3	27.2
TOTALS	30.0	6.2	4,624.7	1.8	322.4	65.7	124,988.2	49.9	105.0	21.4	78,848.3	31.4

TABLE 73—*Continued*

Zones	More than 1,000 Kilos				Totals	
	Area		Production		Area	Production
	Hectares	Per Cent	Kilos	Per Cent	Hectares	Kilos
North	5.0	4.4	6,778.8	11.3	108.9	60,010.8
Gulf	†	0.2	2.4	1.0	1.6	328.2
North Pacific	24.6	53.9	29,287.1	67.3	45.7	43,506.6
South Pacific	0.1	0.1	11.7	0.3	9.9	4,231.6
Central	3.4	1.0	5,882.6	4.1	324.4	142,346.5
Totals	33.0	6.7	41,962.6	16.9	490.4	250,423.7

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† Less than 100 hectares.

‡ Less than 0.1 per cent.

TABLE 74

COMPARISON OF CAPITAL INVESTED IN EJIDOS AND IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, 1930*

ITEMS	TOTAL IN 000's OF PESOS	IN EJIDOS		IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS	
		IN 000's of Pesos	Per Cent of Total	IN 000's of Pesos	Per Cent of Total
Land	2,277,060	233,276	10.2	2,043,784	89.8
Buildings	160,439	5,078	3.2	155,361	96.8
Hydraulic Works	126,441	4,825	3.8	121,616	96.2
Railways and Roads	23,412	73	0.3	23,339	99.7
Machinery, Utensils, Implements and Tools	70,810	3,897	5.5	66,913	94.5
TOTALS	2,658,162	247,149	9.3	2,411,013	90.7

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

TABLE 75

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND IMPLEMENTS ON EJIDOS COMPARED WITH THOSE ON PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, 1930*

ITEMS	TOTAL	ON PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS		ON EJIDOS	
		No.	Per Cent of Total	No.	Per Cent of Total
Plows	904,563	735,308	81.3	169,255	18.7
Sowers	22,417	20,681	92.3	1,736	7.7
Reapers	8,287	8,015	96.7	272	3.3
Thrashers	4,220	4,112	97.4	108	2.6
Wagons and carts	106,163	94,578	89.1	11,585	10.9
Trucks	4,217	4,074	96.6	143	3.4
Tractors	3,973	3,900	98.2	73	1.8
Decorticators†	1,505	1,502	99.8	3	0.2
Other fixed motors	8,554	8,523	99.6	31	0.4

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

† For *henequén, lechuguilla* and *ixtle.*

[For Table 76 see p. 696]

TABLE 77

ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CROP LAND IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CROP LAND IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, BY STATES, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

STATES	TOTAL LAND IN EJIDOS	CROP LAND IN EJIDOS†			CROP LAND IN EJIDOS AS PER CENT OF TOTAL LAND IN EJIDOS			TOTAL LAND IN PRIVATE FARMS¶	CROP LAND IN PRIVATE FARMS			CROP LAND IN PRIVATE FARMS AS PER CENT OF TOTAL LAND IN PRIVATE FARMS		
		Actual ‡	Potential§	Total	Per Cent Actual	Per Cent Potential	Per Cent Total		Actual‡	Potential§	Total	Per Cent Actual	Per Cent Potential	Per Cent Total
Ags.	71.0	26.8	5.9	32.7	37.8	8.3	46.1	407.1	84.9	15.7	100.6	20.9	3.9	24.7
B. C.	46.7	0.3	=	0.3	1.5	0.1	1.6	2,411.8	134.6	112.2	246.8	5.6	4.7	10.2
Camp.	227.2	97.0	12.8	109.8	42.7	5.6	48.3	3,555.1	545.0	1,060.5	1,605.4	15.3	29.8	45.2
Coah.	195.2	37.8	11.8	49.6	19.4	6.0	25.4	14,670.8	383.3	253.5	636.8	2.6	1.7	4.3
Col.	15.9	7.1	1.6	8.7	44.5	10.3	54.8	480.4	84.3	34.7	119.0	17.6	7.2	24.8
Chis.	104.5	36.3	14.1	50.4	34.8	13.5	48.2	4,030.2	807.6	587.9	1,395.4	20.0	14.6	34.6
Chih.	1,148.5	108.7	200.1	308.8	9.5	17.4	26.9	19,486.7	541.9	874.0	1,415.9	2.8	4.5	7.3
D. F.	21.3	9.5	0.2	9.7	44.7	1.0	45.7	62.6	22.3	0.2	22.5	35.7	0.3	36.0
Dgo.	640.2	89.8	24.8	114.6	14.0	3.9	17.9	9,328.7	421.1	438.1	859.1	4.5	4.7	9.2
Gto.	154.0	80.9	5.8	86.7	52.6	3.7	56.3	2,561.3	845.9	79.8	925.7	33.0	3.1	36.1
Gro.	382.9	94.2	21.1	115.3	24.6	5.5	30.1	3,295.7	624.4	238.7	863.1	19.0	7.2	26.2
Hgo.	267.5	84.2	9.5	93.7	31.5	3.5	35.0	1,024.5	383.0	42.0	424.9	37.4	4.1	41.5
Jal.	302.0	131.5	15.1	146.6	43.6	5.0	48.6	5,225.8	1,093.2	210.3	1,303.5	20.9	4.0	24.9

Mex.	355.9	123.2	12.6	135.8	34.6	3.6	38.2	1,275.7	378.5	36.1	414.6	29.7	2.8	32.5
Mich.	208.3	82.9	9.1	92.0	39.8	4.4	44.2	2,850.4	626.1	106.9	733.0	22.0	3.8	25.7
Mor.	203.7	70.4	6.0	76.3	34.5	2.9	37.5	141.0	25.1	4.3	29.4	17.8	3.0	20.8
Nay.	112.8	16.2	4.3	20.5	14.4	3.8	18.2	1,434.9	132.5	109.5	242.0	9.2	7.6	16.9
N. L.	94.0	9.8	8.3	18.2	10.5	8.9	19.4	5,852.7	260.0	488.7	748.7	4.4	8.4	12.8
Oax.	87.1	23.5	1.2	24.6	27.0	1.4	28.3	4,563.3	776.8	388.6	1,165.4	17.0	8.5	25.5
Pue.	462.6	171.9	11.1	183.0	37.2	2.4	39.6	2,057.8	651.2	132.6	783.8	31.7	6.4	38.1
Qro.	78.3	14.6	0.3	15.0	18.7	0.4	19.1	799.3	194.7	9.5	204.2	24.4	1.2	25.5
Q. R.	8.5	1.5	....	1.5	18.2	....	18.2	1,344.8	2.2	0.1	2.3	0.2	**	0.2
S. L. P.	811.8	105.1	42.4	147.5	13.0	5.2	18.2	4,894.0	334.5	308.9	643.3	6.8	6.3	13.1
Sin.	140.1	24.6	4.1	28.7	17.5	2.9	20.5	2,667.8	386.6	181.4	567.9	14.5	6.8	21.3
Son.	188.1	30.0	5.8	35.8	16.0	3.1	19.1	6,432.5	194.9	293.7	488.6	3.0	4.6	7.6
Tab.	17.5	9.7	....	9.7	55.4	....	55.4	1,287.1	490.4	92.5	582.9	38.1	7.2	45.3
Tamps.	163.7	27.3	20.6	47.8	16.7	12.6	29.2	6,928.1	149.3	819.7	969.0	2.2	11.8	14.0
Tlax.	62.7	37.5	1.3	38.8	59.9	2.1	62.0	265.5	146.2	3.7	149.9	55.0	1.4	56.4
Ver.	270.8	118.5	28.1	146.6	43.7	10.4	54.1	5,553.7	1,170.9	998.8	2,169.7	21.1	18.0	39.1
Yuc.	928.8	166.5	....	166.5	17.9	....	17.9	2,162.5	280.7	115.1	395.8	13.0	5.3	18.3
Zac.	603.1	103.1	46.7	149.8	17.1	7.7	24.8	6,098.1	405.3	247.8	653.1	6.7	4.1	10.7
TOTALS	8,344.7	1,940.5	524.7	2,465.2	23.3	6.3	29.5	123,149.8	12,577.2	8,285.0	20,862.3	10.2	6.7	16.9

* Statistics of the *Dirección General de Estadística*.

† Includes all ejidos (both provisional and definitive) constituted up to May 1930.

‡ Defined as land cultivated at any time during the five years preceding the census of May 15, 1930.

§ Defined as land "easily susceptible to being opened to cultivation."

¶ Includes a relatively small number of "unofficial ejidos"—i.e., communal or semi-communal village properties predating the agrarian reform of 1915; but does not include 100,070 hectares in properties of less than 1 hectare each.

± Less than 100.

** Less than 0.1 per cent.

TABLE 76

Classes of Land in Ejidos Compared With Those in Privately-Owned Farms, 1930*

(Areas in 000's of Hectares)

Classes of Land	Total		Ejidos			Private Farms		
	Area	Per Cent of Total	Area	Per Cent of Total	Per Cent of All Land in Ejidos	Area	Per Cent of Total	Per Cent of All Land in Private Farms
Crop Land								
Irrigated	1,677.1	1.3	218.8	13.0	2.6	1,458.3	87.0	1.2
Humid	1,304.2	1.0	91.2	7.0	1.1	1,213.1	93.0	1.0
Semi-Arid	11,497.2	8.7	1,627.9	14.2	19.5	9,869.3	85.8	8.0
Orchard	39.2	†	2.6	6.6	†	36.6	93.4	†
Total Crop Land	14,517.7	11.0	1,940.5	13.4	23.2	12,577.2	86.6	10.2
Forest	25,855.5	19.7	920.2	3.6	11.1	24,935.3	96.4	20.2
Pasture	66,492.9	50.6	3,557.4	5.4	42.6	62,935.5	94.6	51.1
Exploitable Wild Plants‡	3,934.8	3.0	147.2	3.7	1.8	3,787.5	96.3	3.1
Waste§	20,693.6	15.7	1,779.4	8.6	21.3	18,914.2	91.4	15.4
Total All Classes	131,494.5	100.0	8,344.7		100.0	123,149.8		100.0

* Based on Tables 11 and 15.

† Less than 0.1%.

‡ *Guayule, maguey de ixtle, napaleras* and other similar uncultivated plants.

§ Includes rivers, lakes, canals, roads, swamps and all classes of barren land.

[For Table 77 see p. 694]

TABLE 78

LAND CULTIVATED IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH LAND CULTIVATED IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, BY STATES, 1930*

(In 000's of Hectares)

STATES	IN EJIDOS†			IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS‡		
	Crop Land§	Cultivated Land¶	Cultivated Land as Per Cent of Crop Land	Crop Land§	Cultivated Land¶	Cultivated Land as Per Cent of Crop Land
Ags.	26.8	17.7	66.0	84.9	69.7	82.1
B. C.	0.2	0.1	0.5	134.6	83.3	61.9
Camp.	97.0	7.0	7.2	545.0	34.9	6.4
Coah.	37.8	9.3	24.6	383.3	208.9	54.5
Col.	7.1	1.0	14.1	84.3	20.2	24.0
Chis.	36.3	19.9	54.8	807.6	158.6	19.6
Chih.	108.7	61.7	56.8	541.9	234.2	43.2
D. F.	9.5	6.3	66.3	22.3	19.3	86.5
Dgo.	89.8	76.0	84.6	421.1	229.3	54.5
Gto.	80.9	35.9	44.4	845.9	589.4	69.7
Gro.	94.2	54.9	58.3	624.4	202.0	32.4
Hgo.	84.2	64.3	76.4	383.0	216.4	56.5
Jal.	131.5	58.4	44.4	1,093.2	602.8	55.1
Mex.	123.2	83.6	67.9	378.5	285.2	75.4
Mich.	82.9	45.3	54.6	626.1	366.6	58.6
Mor.	70.4	29.2	41.5	25.1	12.8	51.0
Nay.	16.2	10.2	63.0	132.5	62.6	47.2
N. L.	9.8	4.4	44.9	260.0	148.2	57.0
Oax.	23.5	18.3	77.9	776.8	286.6	36.9
Pue.	171.9	135.1	78.6	651.2	466.0	71.6
Qro.	14.6	6.3	43.2	194.7	134.5	69.1
Q. R.	1.5	1.0	66.7	2.2	1.0	45.5
S. L. P.	105.1	70.1	66.7	334.5	156.0	46.6
Sin.	24.6	11.4	46.3	386.6	217.2	56.2
Son.	30.0	15.4	51.2	194.9	120.3	61.7
Tab.	9.7	3.6	37.1	490.4	68.3	13.9
Tamps.	27.3	16.8	61.5	149.3	91.8	61.5
Tlax.	37.5	29.9	79.3	146.2	123.3	84.3
Ver.	118.5	78.2	66.0	1,170.9	342.2	29.2
Yuc.	166.5	66.5	39.9	280.7	238.3	84.9
Zac.	103.1	75.7	73.4	405.3	281.8	69.5
TOTALS	1,940.5	1,112.9	57.4	12,577.2±	6,074.4	48.3

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. The year 1930 means the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930.

† Includes all ejidos (both provisional and definitive) constituted up to May 1930.

‡ *Privately-Owned Farms* means all farms of more than one hectare other than ejidos.

§ *Crop Land* means land cultivated at any time during the five years preceding the census.

¶ *Cultivated Land* includes: harvested land, orchards, land cultivated for two or more crops and cultivated land not harvested because of frosts, drought, etc.

± See footnote † of Table 11.

TABLE 79

CROP LAND HARVESTED IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH CROP LAND HARVESTED IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, BY STATES, 1930*

(In 000's of Hectares)

STATES	IN EJIDOS†			IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS‡		
	Crop Land in Hectares§	Hectares Harvested	Harvested Land as Per Cent of Crop Land	Crop Land in Hectares§	Hectares Harvested	Harvested Land as Per Cent of Crop Land
Ags.	26.8	4.8	17.7	84.9	33.2	39.1
B. C.	0.2	0.1	52.3	134.6	80.3	59.6
Camp.	97.0	6.5	6.7	545.0	30.7	5.6
Coah.	37.8	4.4	11.5	383.3	171.6	44.6
Col.	7.1	0.6	8.8	84.3	15.9	18.9
Chis.	36.3	15.8	43.4	807.6	150.6	18.6
Chih.	108.7	37.4	34.4	541.9	165.5	30.5
D. F.	9.5	5.5	57.9	22.3	18.2	81.7
Dgo.	89.8	48.7	54.3	421.1	204.5	48.6
Gto.	80.9	33.4	41.5	845.9	460.5	54.4
Gro.	94.2	49.2	52.2	624.4	148.1	23.7
Hgo.	84.2	44.6	52.9	383.0	170.0	44.4
Jal.	131.5	47.1	35.8	1,093.2	462.5	42.3
Mex.	123.2	52.7	42.8	378.5	234.7	62.0
Mich.	82.9	38.5	46.4	626.1	327.2	52.3
Mor.	70.4	29.0	41.2	25.1	12.2	48.5
Nay.	16.2	9.8	60.4	132.5	59.6	45.0
N. L.	9.8	1.6	16.0	260.0	86.9	33.4
Oax.	23.5	15.3	65.2	776.8	261.4	33.5
Pue.	171.9	116.6	67.8	651.2	436.1	67.0
Qro.	14.6	3.4	23.3	194.7	110.8	56.9
Q. R.	1.5	0.6	36.5	2.2	0.3	11.6
S. L. P.	105.1	32.5	30.9	334.5	79.4	23.7
Sin.	24.6	7.0	28.6	386.6	200.6	51.9
Son.	30.0	12.8	42.6	194.9	106.3	54.6
Tab.	9.7	3.5	36.6	490.4	58.2	11.9
Tamps.	27.3	13.5	49.4	149.3	69.6	46.6
Tlax.	37.5	27.6	73.6	146.2	111.5	76.3
Ver.	118.5	66.6	56.2	1,170.9	296.8	20.3
Yuc.	166.5	66.4	39.9	280.7	236.4	84.2
Zac.	103.1	18.2	17.6	405.3	198.1	48.9
TOTALS	1,940.5	813.7	41.9	12,577.2¶	4,997.2	39.7

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. The year 1930 means the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930.

† Includes all ejidos (both provisional and definitive) constituted up to May 1930.

‡ *Privately-Owned Farms* means all farms of more than one hectare other than ejidos.

§ *Crop Land* means land cultivated at any time during the five years preceding the census.

¶ See footnote † of Table 11.

TABLE 80

CULTIVATED LAND HARVESTED IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH CULTIVATED LAND HARVESTED IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, BY STATES, 1930*
(In 000's of Hectares)

STATES	IN EJIDOS†			IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS‡		
	Hectares Cultivated§	Hectares Harvested	Harvested Land as Per Cent of Cultivated Land	Hectares Cultivated§	Hectares Harvested	Harvested Land as Per Cent of Cultivated Land
Ags.	17.7	4.8	26.8	69.7	33.2	47.7
B. C.	0.1	0.1	96.4	83.3	80.3	96.4
Camp.	7.0	6.5	92.8	34.9	30.7	88.0
Coah.	9.3	4.4	46.8	208.9	171.6	81.9
Col.	1.0	0.6	77.8	20.2	15.9	78.9
Chis.	19.9	15.8	79.3	158.6	150.6	94.9
Chih.	61.7	37.4	60.6	234.2	165.5	70.6
D. F.	6.3	5.5	87.3	19.3	18.2	94.7
Dgo.	76.0	48.7	64.1	229.3	204.5	89.2
Gto.	35.9	33.4	93.5	589.4	460.5	78.1
Gro.	54.9	49.2	89.6	202.0	148.1	73.3
Hgo.	64.3	44.6	69.3	216.4	170.0	78.5
Jal.	58.4	47.1	80.8	602.8	462.5	76.7
Mex.	83.6	52.7	63.0	285.2	234.7	82.3
Mich.	45.3	38.5	85.0	366.6	327.2	89.3
Mor.	29.2	29.0	99.4	12.8	12.2	95.4
Nay.	10.2	9.8	95.6	62.6	59.6	95.3
N. L.	4.4	1.6	35.8	148.2	86.9	58.6
Oax.	18.3	15.3	83.5	286.6	261.4	91.2
Pue.	135.1	116.6	86.3	466.0	436.1	93.6
Qro.	6.3	3.4	54.4	134.5	110.8	82.4
Q. R.	1.0	0.6	99.1	1.0	0.3	31.6
S. L. P.	70.1	32.5	46.3	156.0	79.4	50.9
Sin.	11.4	7.0	61.6	217.2	200.6	92.3
Son.	15.4	12.8	83.1	120.3	106.3	88.4
Tab.	3.6	3.5	99.2	68.3	58.2	85.3
Tamps.	16.8	13.5	80.1	91.8	69.6	75.8
Tlax.	29.9	27.6	92.4	123.3	111.5	90.5
Ver.	78.2	66.6	85.3	342.2	296.8	86.7
Yuc.	66.5	66.4	99.8	238.3	236.4	99.2
Zac.	75.7	18.2	24.0	281.8	198.1	70.3
TOTALS	1,112.9	813.7	73.1	6,074.4	4,997.2	82.3

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. The year 1930 means the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930.

† Includes all ejidos (both provisional and definitive) constituted up to May 1930.

‡ *Privately-Owned Farms* means all farms of more than one hectare other than ejidos.

§ *Cultivated Land* includes: harvested land, orchards, land cultivated for two or more crops, and cultivated land not harvested because of frosts, drought, etc.

TABLE 81

VALUE OF PRINCIPAL CROPS PRODUCED IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH VALUE OF PRINCIPAL CROPS PRODUCED IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, BY STATES, 1930*
(Values in 000's of Pesos)

STATES	TOTAL VALUE	IN EJIDOS†		IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS‡	
		Value	As Per Cent of Total	Value	As Per Cent of Total
Ags.	988	196	19.8	792	80.2
B. C.	20,856	10	§	20,846	100.0
Camp.	1,822	393	21.6	1,429	78.4
Coah.	27,738	241	0.9	27,497	99.1
Col.	1,599	51	3.2	1,548	96.8
Chis.	14,328	984	6.9	13,344	93.1
Chih.	11,959	2,819	23.6	9,140	76.4
D. F.	2,899	550	19.0	2,349	81.0
Dgo.	10,680	1,217	11.4	9,463	88.6
Gto.	16,906	1,007	6.0	15,899	94.0
Gro.	6,783	1,558	23.0	5,225	77.0
Hgo.	14,144	2,084	14.7	12,060	85.3
Jal.	22,255	2,061	9.3	20,194	90.7
Mex.	15,688	2,489	15.9	13,199	84.1
Mich.	20,073	1,659	8.3	18,414	91.7
Mor.	6,246	4,622	74.0	1,624	26.0
Nay.	5,570	747	13.4	4,823	86.6
N. L.	4,902	82	1.7	4,820	98.3
Oax.	17,069	633	3.7	16,436	96.3
Pue.	24,790	4,140	16.7	20,650	83.3
Qro.	3,333	98	2.9	3,235	97.1
Q. R.	103	68	66.0	35	34.0
S. L. P.	8,465	1,973	23.3	6,492	76.7
Sin.	19,011	229	1.2	18,782	98.8
Son.	12,327	747	6.1	11,580	93.9
Tab.	4,243	255	6.0	3,988	94.0
Tamps.	7,699	798	10.4	6,901	89.6
Tlax.	7,037	1,373	19.6	5,664	80.4
Ver.	37,844	6,089	16.1	31,755	83.9
Yuc.	34,363	2,462	7.2	31,901	92.8
Zac.	3,532	274	7.8	3,258	92.2
TOTALS	385,252	41,909	10.9	343,343	89.1

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. The "principal crops" (covering 95 per cent of the total area harvested) considered were: corn, frijoles, wheat, tomatoes, barley, potatoes, alfalfa, cotton, bananas, rice, sugar cane, vanilla, coffee, *maguey de pulque, maguey de tequila, maguey de mescal*, henequen and *zapupe*. The year 1930 means the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930.

† Includes all ejidos (both provisional and definitive) constituted up to May 1930.

‡ *Privately-Owned Farms* means all farms of more than one hectare other than ejidos. The total value of the principal crops produced on privately-owned farms of less than one hectare was 6,021,456 pesos. § Less than 0.1%.

TABLE 82

INCOME OF EJIDATORIOS FROM CROPS AND FOREST PRODUCTS, BY STATES, 1930*

STATES	AMOUNT (000's of Pesos)	AVERAGE PER EJIDATARIO (IN PESOS)	
		Annual†	Daily
Ags.	198	67.80	0.19
B. C.	10	15.38	0.04
Camp.	419	69.38	0.19
Coah.	246	39.25	0.11
Col.	54	79.06	0.22
Chis.	1,147	118.50	0.33
Chih.	2,886	179.45	0.49
D. F.	552	32.39	0.09
Dgo.	1,225	78.25	0.22
Gto.	1,013	77.67	0.21
Gro.	1,690	73.86	0.20
Hgo.	2,110	59.67	0.16
Jal.	2,086	85.93	0.24
Mex.	2,583	30.70	0.08
Mich.	1,736	72.95	0.20
Mor.	4,623	261.23	0.72
Nay.	763	216.94	0.59
N. L.	82	21.83	0.06
Oax.	642	49.42	0.14
Pue.	4,195	66.27	0.18
Qro.	100	19.36	0.05
Q. R.	68	118.46	0.33
S. L. P.	2,072	63.30	0.17
Sin.	234	64.09	0.18
Son.	755	185.45	0.51
Tab.	261	153.80	0.42
Tamps.	817	102.83	0.28
Tlax.	1,382	75.91	0.21
Ver.	6,216	173.28	0.48
Yuc.	2,548	88.13	0.24
Zac.	290	17.82	0.05
TOTALS	43,005	80.35	0.22

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. Note that the values given here are estimated farm values and that the income is only nominally in cash since in most ejido communities the crops and forest products are largely consumed by the ejidatarios themselves.

† For the number of ejidatarios in 1930 see Table 29.

TABLE 83

PRODUCTION OF CORN IN EJIDOS COMPARED WITH PRODUCTION OF CORN IN PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS, BY STATES, 1930*

(Values in 000's of Pesos; Areas in 000's of Hectares)

STATES	ALL FARMS†				IN EJIDOS‡								
					Area Harvested			Production		Average Production Per Hectare in Kilos	Value		
	Area Harvested	Production in 000's of Kilos	Average Production Per Hectare in Kilos	Value	Hectares	As Per Cent of Total in Corn	As Per Cent of Total in All Crops§	000's of Kilos	As Per Cent of Total in Corn		Pesos	As Per Cent of Total of Corn	As Per Cent of Total of All Crops¶
Ags.	35,027	6,118	175	564	4,379	12.6	92.0	1,187	19.4	271	101	17.9	51.5
B. C.	1,325	1,308	964	178	77	5.8	57.9	51	3.9	663	5	2.8	50.0
Camp.	17,948	13,026	726	741	6,267	34.9	96.2	5,935	45.6	947	337	45.6	85.8
Coah.	46,849	21,531	460	1,979	1,557	3.3	35.8	789	3.7	507	73	3.7	30.3
Col.	14,133	16,200	1,146	957	543	3.8	86.7	588	3.6	1,082	35	3.7	68.6
Chis.	103,462	91,149	881	5,601	13,966	13.6	88.6	9,940	10.9	712	668	11.9	67.9
Chih.	133,716	61,398	459	4,641	21,693	16.2	58.0	11,990	19.4	553	956	20.6	33.9
D. F.	17,506	21,671	1,238	1,507	5,399	30.8	98.1	7,690	35.6	1,424	529	35.1	96.2
Dgo.	183,984	43,620	237	3,746	38,956	21.2	80.0	10,044	23.0	258	855	22.8	70.3
Gto.	380,046	98,391	259	9,171	26,259	6.9	78.2	7,870	8.0	300	645	7.0	64.1
Gro.	169,863	92,031	542	5,492	44,161	26.0	89.8	23,501	25.4	532	1,416	25.8	90.9
Hgo.	108,097	75,064	694	6,143	27,274	25.2	61.2	14,872	19.8	545	1,376	22.4	66.0
Jal.	404,013	189,431	469	13,816	38,336	9.4	81.3	23,364	12.3	609	1,613	11.7	78.3
Mex.	184,288	94,400	512	8,190	36,588	19.9	69.4	19,243	20.4	526	1,732	21.1	69.6
Mich.	243,412	138,590	569	10,528	25,314	10.4	65.8	12,973	9.4	513	948	9.0	57.1

Mor.	28,206	29,201	1,035	2,171	19,785	70.1	68.2	21,264	72.8	1,074	1,598	73.6	34.6
Nay.	46,034	50,529	1,098	3,154	7,704	16.7	78.7	8,720	17.3	1,132	588	18.6	78.7
N. L.	77,055	42,749	555	3,717	1,338	1.7	85.0	731	1.7	546	66	1.8	80.5
Oax.	229,134	143,581	627	9,929	14,752	6.4	96.5	8,459	5.9	573	565	5.7	89.3
Pue.	380,859	179,935	472	13,199	89,445	23.4	76.7	36,847	20.4	412	2,755	20.9	66.5
Qro.	97,175	16,812	173	1,672	3,175	3.3	93.2	829	4.9	261	86	5.1	87.8
Q. R.	730	1,175	1,610	82	510	69.9	90.6	884	75.2	1,733	59	72.0	86.8
S. L. P.	87,223	51,431	590	3,903	28,067	32.2	86.4	12,912	25.1	460	1,019	26.1	51.6
Sin.	141,345	78,375	554	6,269	6,512	4.6	92.5	2,403	3.1	369	206	3.3	90.0
Son.	37,079	26,069	703	1,988	6,929	18.7	54.2	4,922	18.9	710	411	20.7	55.0
Tab.	31,972	31,558	987	1,524	3,008	9.4	85.0	4,162	13.2	1,384	208	13.6	81.6
Tamps.	54,880	45,618	831	3,265	13,380	24.4	99.3	12,311	27.0	920	765	23.4	95.9
Tlax.	66,407	35,582	536	2,766	17,500	26.4	63.4	12,417	34.9	710	953	34.6	69.4
Ver.	224,836	211,984	943	14,251	43,177	19.2	64.8	43,781	20.7	1,014	3,011	21.1	49.4
Yuc.	61,870	54,907	887	3,500	31,818	51.4	47.9	25,185	45.9	792	1,620	46.3	65.8
Zac.	203,592	27,427	135	2,399	16,539	8.1	91.1	2,210	8.1	134	197	8.2	71.9
TOTALS	3,812,066	1,990,862	522	147,046	594,408	15.6	73.0	348,072	17.4	586	25,398	17.3	60.6

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística*. The year 1930 means the agricultural year May 1929-May 1930.

† Does not include farms of less than one hectare which in the year 1929-30 produced 52,522,842 kilograms of corn valued at 4,089,428 pesos.

‡ Includes all ejidos (both provisional and definitive) constituted up to May 1930.

§ Based on data in Table 79.

¶ Based on data in Table 81.

TABLE 83—*Continued*

States	In Privately-Owned Farms†								
	Area Harvested			Production		Average Production Per Hectare in Kilos	Value		
	Hectares	As Per Cent of Total in Corn	As Per Cent of Total in All Crops§	000's of Kilos	As Per Cent of Total in Corn		Pesos	As Per Cent of Total of Corn	As Per Cent of Total of All Crops¶
Ags.	30,648	87.4	92.3	4,931	80.6	161	463	82.1	58.5
B. C.	1,248	94.2	1.6	1,257	96.1	984	173	97.2	0.8
Camp.	11,681	65.1	38.1	7,091	54.4	607	404	54.4	28.3
Coah.	45,292	96.7	26.5	20,742	96.3	458	1,906	96.3	6.9
Col.	13,590	96.2	85.2	15,612	96.4	1,149	922	96.3	59.6
Chis.	89,496	86.4	59.4	81,209	89.1	907	4,933	88.1	37.0
Chih.	112,023	83.8	73.7	49,408	80.6	441	3,685	79.4	40.3
D. F.	12,107	69.2	66.4	13,981	64.4	1,155	978	64.9	41.6
Dgo.	145,028	78.8	70.9	33,576	77.0	232	2,891	77.2	30.6
Gto.	353,787	93.1	76.8	90,521	92.0	256	8,526	93.0	53.6
Gro.	125,702	74.0	84.9	68,530	74.6	545	4,076	74.2	78.0
Hgo.	80,823	74.8	47.5	60,192	80.2	745	4,767	77.6	39.5
Jal.	365,677	90.6	79.1	166,068	87.7	454	12,203	88.3	60.4
Mex.	147,700	80.1	62.9	75,158	79.6	509	6,458	78.9	48.9
Mich.	218,098	89.6	66.7	125,617	90.6	576	9,580	91.0	52.0

Mor.	8,421	29.9	69.2	7,937	27.2	942	573	26.4	35.3
Nay.	38,330	83.3	64.3	41,809	82.7	1,091	2,566	81.4	53.2
N. L.	75,717	98.3	87.1	42,018	98.3	555	3,651	98.2	75.7
Oax.	214,382	93.6	82.0	135,123	94.1	630	9,364	94.3	57.0
Pue.	291,414	76.6	66.8	143,088	79.6	491	10,445	79.1	50.6
Qro.	94,000	96.7	84.8	15,984	95.1	170	1,586	94.9	49.0
Q. R.	220	30.1	85.6	291	24.8	1,324	23	28.0	65.7
S. L. P.	59,156	67.8	74.5	38,519	74.9	651	2,884	73.9	44.4
Sin.	134,833	95.4	67.2	75,972	96.9	563	6,063	96.7	32.3
Son.	30,150	81.3	28.4	21,147	81.1	701	1,577	79.3	13.6
Tab.	28,964	90.6	49.7	27,397	86.8	946	1,316	86.4	33.0
Tamps.	41,500	75.6	59.6	33,307	73.0	802	2,500	76.6	36.2
Tlax.	48,907	73.6	43.8	23,164	65.1	474	1,813	65.4	32.0
Ver.	181,659	80.8	61.2	168,203	79.3	926	11,240	78.9	35.4
Yuc.	30,052	48.6	12.7	29,722	54.1	989	1,880	53.7	5.9
Zac.	187,053	91.9	94.4	25,217	91.9	135	2,202	91.8	67.6
TOTALS	3,217,658	84.4	64.4	1,642,790	82.6	511	121,649	82.7	35.4

TABLE 84

NUMBER OF KILOMETERS OF RAILWAYS IN MEXICO COMPARED WITH POPULATION AND AREA, BY STATES, 1929*

STATE	NUMBER OF KILOMETERS OF RAILROADS CONSTRUCTED†	POPULATION‡	KILOMETERS PER 1,000 INHABITANTS	AREA IN SQUARE KILOMETERS	KILOMETERS OF RAILROADS PER 1,000 SQUARE KILOMETERS OF AREA
D. F.	677.8	1,229,576	0.6	1,483	457.1
Tlax.	283.0	205,573	1.4	4,027	70.3
Mor.	355.9	132,723	2.7	4,964	61.7
Mex.	1,020.3	990,112	1.0	21,400	47.7
Hgo.	984.7	667,000	1.5	20,884	47.2
Ags.	203.9	132,900	1.5	6,472	31.5
Gto.	943.3	987,801	1.0	30,585	30.8
Pue.	1,009.7	1,150,425	0.9	33,995	29.7
Col.	142.1	61,923	2.3	5,205	27.3
Ver.	1,587.0	1,376,476	1.2	71,896	22.1
Yuc.	803.6	386,096	2.1	38,508	20.9
S. L. P.	1,150.8	579,831	2.0	63,241	18.2
Sin.	980.5	395,618	2.5	58,488	16.8
Coah.	2,303.9	436,425	5.3	150,395	15.3
Qro.	166.7	234,058	0.7	11,480	14.5
N. L.	937.7	417,491	2.2	65,103	14.4
Nay.	348.6	167,724	2.1	27,053	12.9
Mich.	761.1	1,048,381	0.7	60,083	12.7
Chih.	2,555.5	492,485	5.2	245,612	10.4
Jal.	808.8	1,225,213	0.6	80,683	10.0
Dgo.	1,226.9	404,364	3.0	123,520	9.9
Zac.	719.8	448,344	1.6	72,843	9.9
Tamps.	767.8	344,039	2.2	79,602	9.6
Son.	749.3	1,082,191	0.7	94,211	8.0
Oax.	1,464.2	316,271	4.6	182,553	8.0
Chis.	346.0	528,654	0.7	74,415	4.7
Camp.	99.2	84,630	1.2	50,952	1.9
B. C.	263.7	95,416	2.8	144,094	1.8
Gro.	103.5	641,690	0.2	64,458	1.6
Tab.	12.3	224,168	0.1	25,337	0.5
Q. R.		10,227		50,137	
TOTALS AND AVERAGES	23,777.5	16,527,825	1.4	1,969,154	12.1

* *Primer Censo Industrial de 1930*, Direccion General de Estadística, 1933, p. 104.

† Includes 523.3 kilometers of street railways and 405.6 kilometers of unexploited railways.

‡ Statistics subject to rectification.

TABLE 85

KILOMETERS OF RAILWAYS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES COMPARED WITH THE POPULATION AND AREA, 1929*

COUNTRY	KILOMETERS OF LINE (IN 000'S)	NUMBER OF INHABITANTS† (IN 000'S)	INHABITANTS PER KILOMETER OF LINE	AREA IN SQUARE KILOMETERS (IN 000'S)	SQUARE KILOMETERS OF AREA PER KILOMETER OF LINE
Mexico	23.8	16,527.8	694.4	1,969.2	82.8
United States	399.1	122,775.0	307.6	7,839.4	19.6
Canada	66.3	9,934.5	149.0	9,173.9	138.3
France	63.1	40,743.9	645.7	551.0	8.7
Spain	16.6	22,602.0	135.4	503.1	30.3
Argentina	39.3	11,470.9	291.7	2,797.1	71.1
Brazil	31.8	40,272.7	1,259.3	8,511.2	267.6
Chile	8.7	4,287.4	490.6	741.8	85.2
Peru	4.5	6,237.0	1,378.6	1,359.2	302.0

* Statistics based on data of the *Foreign Commerce Yearbook, 1931*, except Mexico for which figures are from *Primer Censo Industrial de 1930*, Dirección General de Estadística, 1933, p. 104.

† Population for 1930 or nearest census year.

TABLE 86

COMPARISON OF AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURING, MINING AND PETROLEUM FOR THE ITEMS INDICATED, 1929*

INDUSTRIES	GROSS VALUE OF PRODUCTION (MILLIONS OF PESOS)	THOUSANDS OF PERSONS OCCUPIED	VALUE PRODUCED PER PERSON OCCUPIED (PESOS)	CAPITAL INVESTMENT (MILLIONS OF PESOS)	VALUE OF PRODUCTION AS PER CENT OF CAPITAL INVESTMENT	CAPITAL INVESTMENT PER PERSON OCCUPIED (PESOS)
Agriculture (Crops, Livestock, and Forest Products)	722.5‡	3,626.3	199	3,695.0	19.6	1,019
Manufacturing	908.9§	318.8	2,851	979.5	92.8	3,072
Mining and Metallurgy	373.3	74.7	4,996	1,500.0¶	24.9	20,071
Petroleum†	92.0	12.1	7,670	≐		

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística* unless otherwise noted.

† Does not include refineries.

‡ Average for the years 1928-1930. The separate items in the figure given are: crop production 520.0; livestock 150.0; and forestry 52.5. Data from *México económico*, p. 14.

§ The cost of raw materials employed in manufacturing in 1929 was 314.2 million pesos.

¶ Estimated.

≐ No data available.

TABLE 87

CLASSIFICATION OF INDUSTRIES ACCORDING TO VALUE OF ANNUAL PRODUCTION AND NUMBER OF WORKERS, BY STATES, 1929*

STATES	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS	PRODUCTION			WAGE EARNERS		
		Value (000's of Pesos)	Rank	Per Cent of Total	Number	Rank	Per Cent of Total
D. F.	3,473	247,639	1	27.25	50,970	1	19.43
Ver.	3,802	102,113	2	11.23	31,199	2	11.90
N. L.	1,198	69,608	3	7.66	13,831	5	5.27
Pue.	3,622	62,195	4	6.84	21,691	3	8.27
Coah.	1,368	49,954	5	5.50	9,938	8	3.79
Gto.	3,049	38,206	6	4.20	12,242	6	4.67
Jal.	4,203	33,624	7	3.70	17,205	4	6.56
Mex.	3,379	31,248	8	3.44	8,665	10	3.30
Yuc.	1,401	26,778	9	2.95	7,352	13	2.80
Dgo.	1,099	25,109	10	2.76	6,234	16	2.38
Tamps.	473	22,872	11	2.52	3,461	18	1.32
Sin.	633	22,249	12	2.45	6,418	15	2.45
B. C. (N.)	98	21,933	13	2.41	830	30	0.31
Mich.	2,740	19,737	14	2.17	8,645	11	3.30
S. L. P.	1,433	18,590	15	2.04	9,093	9	3.47
Hgo.	1,373	18,002	16	1.98	6,629	14	2.53
Chih.	756	17,590	17	1.94	4,150	17	1.58
Son.	609	16,666	18	1.83	2,851	21	1.09
Chis.	2,059	10,952	19	1.20	8,589	12	3.27
Oax.	5,612	8,912	20	0.98	11,513	7	4.39
Tlax.	534	8,147	21	0.90	3,115	19	1.19
Qro.	618	7,152	22	0.79	2,834	22	1.08
Nay.	480	5,249	23	0.58	2,458	24	0.94
Zac.	1,190	5,132	24	0.56	2,589	23	0.99
Ags.	328	4,155	25	0.46	1,073	28	0.41
Gro.	1,421	3,076	26	0.34	3,095	20	1.18
Mor.	402	2,982	27	0.33	1,149	26	0.44
B. C. (S.)	91	2,969	28	0.33	1,055	29	0.40
Tab.	656	2,455	29	0.27	1,106	27	0.42
Col.	240	1,763	30	0.19	1,435	25	0.55
Camp.	426	1,698	31	0.19	823	31	0.31
Q. R.	25	149	32	0.02	26	32	0.01
TOTAL	48,793	908,904	..	100.00	262,264	..	100.00

* *Primer Censo Industrial de 1930*, Dirección General de Estadística, 1933, p. 83. Statistics do not include railways, mining, metallurgy, and petroleum extraction.

TABLE 88

PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF WORKERS AND THE VALUE OF PRODUCTION, 1929*

INDUSTRIES	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS	PRODUCTION			WAGE EARNERS		
		Value (000's of Pesos)	Rank	Per Cent of Total	No.	Rank	Per Cent of Total
Cotton textiles	520	102,049	1	11.23	39,128	1	14.92
Electric power plants	670	67,876	2	7.47	8,685	6	3.31
Flour mills	358	52,983	3	5.83	1,969	34	0.75
Sugar and Alcohol refineries	153	52,951	4	5.83	15,528	4	5.92
Corn mills†	3,770	43,832	5	4.82	5,812	11	2.22
Breweries	30	43,148	6	4.75	2,542	24	0.97
Cotton gins	133	40,620	7	4.47	2,009	32	0.77
Bakeries	3,478	35,550	8	3.91	7,642	7	2.91
Cigars and Cigarettes	138	35,396	9	3.89	3,910	16	1.49
Machine shops	984	30,458	10	3.35	15,660	3	5.97
Printing, Lithographing and Publishing	554	26,684	11	2.94	5,379	12	2.05
Shoes	3,177	24,229	12	2.67	8,788	5	3.35
Foundries	89	22,660	13	2.49	3,804	17	1.45
Soap	329	22,332	14	2.46	1,806	35	0.69
Coffee hulling‡	326	18,832	15	2.07	2,915	21	1.11
Woolen textiles	1,335	16,598	16	1.83	5,820	10	2.22
Carpentry and Cabinet-making	4,637	15,600	17	1.72	6,299	9	2.40
Ready-made clothing§	2,385	15,090	18	1.66	4,822	13	1.84
Vegetable oils	114	14,202	19	1.56	1,208	41	0.46
Tanning	1,488	13,840	20	1.52	2,925	20	1.12
Paper	7	13,750	21	1.51	2,217	29	0.84
Mineral Oils and Lubricants	3	12,478	22	1.37	2,605	23	0.99
Sisal mills¶	243	11,758	23	1.29	4,506	15	1.72
Underwear, stockings, shirts, etc.±	118	11,376	24	1.25	4,702	14	1.79
Planing mills	153	9,283	25	1.02	2,338	27	0.89
All others	23,601	155,329	..	17.09	99,245	..	37.85
TOTAL	48,793	908,904	..	100.00	262,264	..	100.00

* *Primer Censo Industrial de 1930*, Dirección General de Estadística, 1933, p. 79. Statistics do not include railways, mining, metallurgy, and petroleum extraction.

† *Molinos de nixtamal.* ‡ *Beneficiadoras de café.*

§ Not including work clothing. ¶ *Desfibradoras de henequén.* ± *Boneterías.*

TABLE 89

INDUSTRIES CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS, NUMBER OF WAGE EARNERS AND VALUE OF ANNUAL PRODUCTION, 1929*

ANNUAL PRODUCTION	ESTABLISHMENTS		WAGE EARNERS		VALUE OF ANNUAL PRODUCTION	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	In 000's of Pesos	Per Cent
Less than 500 pesos	21,032	43.1	27,386	10.4	3,779	0.4
500 to 5,000	17,955	36.8	37,419	14.3	32,372	3.6
5,001 to 20,000	5,830	12.0	28,984	11.1	59,562	6.6
20,001 to 50,000	1,996	4.1	21,521	8.2	62,526	6.9
50,001 to 100,000	781	1.6	16,400	6.3	55,388	6.1
100,001 to 500,000	894	1.8	48,216	18.4	196,430	21.6
500,001 to 1,000,000	171	0.4	27,253	10.4	119,497	13.2
1,000,0001 and over	134	0.3	55,085	21.0	379,350	30.7
TOTALS	48,793		262,264		908,904	

* Data of the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

TABLE 90

NOMINAL WAGES, COST OF LIVING AND REAL WAGES OF AGRICULTURAL LABORERS, 1903-1933*

(Base Year for Indices—1903)

YEARS	NOMINAL WAGES		INDEX OF COST OF LIVING‡	INDEX OF REAL WAGES§
	Average (Pesos)	Index†		
1903	0.34	100	100	100
1904	....	....	78	....
1905	....	....	104	....
1906	....	....	140	....
1907	0.40¶	118	139	85
1908	0.40	118	153	77
1909	0.40	118	160	74
1910	0.40	118	174	68
1911	....	....	274	....
1912	0.35	103	256	41
1913	....	....	220	....
1914	....	....	299	....
1915	....	....	....	....
1916	....	....	....	....
1917	0.80	235	441	53
1918	0.99	291	528	55
1919	0.78	229	280	82
1920	0.97	285	237	120
1921	0.91	268	266	102
1922	0.82	241	155	155
1923	0.94	276	190	146
1924	0.87	256	176	145
1925	0.90	265	196	135
1926	0.92	271	172	158
1927	0.99	291	155	188
1928	1.03	303	170	178
1929	0.93	274	177	154
1930	0.84	247	209	118
1931	0.81	238	177	135
1932	0.69	203	134	151
1933	0.68	194	122	159

* Data from Fernández y Fernández, *El salario agrícola en México.* (Unpublished).

† Arithmetical average of all states. In each state the arithmetical average was weighted in proportion to the number of agricultural workers as given in the 1930 census.

‡ Weighted averages based on the average retail cost of corn, frijoles and cloth (*manta*).

§ Obtained by dividing the index numbers for cost of living into the index numbers for nominal wages.

¶ Wage data for years 1907-1910 are an average of the estimates for the four-year period 1907-1910.

TABLE 91

NUMBER OF AUTOMOBILES AND PERSONS PER AUTOMOBILE IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	AUTOMOBILES* JANUARY 1, 1934	POPULATION 1930 OR NEAREST CENSUS YEAR† (IN 000's)	PERSONS PER AUTOMOBILE
Mexico	95,356	16,553	173.6
United States	22,771,854	122,775	5.4
Canada	1,041,593	9,935	9.5
France	1,881,885	40,744	21.6
Spain	155,700	22,602	145.2
Argentina	325,000	11,471	35.3
Brazil	163,200	40,273	110.9
Chile	34,000	4,287	126.1
Peru	13,151	6,237	474.3

* Data from the *American Automobile*, Vol. II, No. 3, March, 1934, p. 15.

† Data from the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1931, except Mexico for which the census of 1930 is used.

TABLE 92

GASOLINE CONSUMPTION, INCOME FROM GASOLINE TAX AND BUDGET OF THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY COMMISSION, 1925-1933*

YEARS	GASOLINE CONSUMPTION (000's OF LITERS)	INCOME FROM GASOLINE TAX (000's OF PESOS)	BUDGET OF NATIONAL HIGHWAY COMMISSION (000's OF PESOS)
1925	105,971	3,179	5,581
1926	179,812	5,394	10,985
1927	192,264	5,772	6,415
1928	218,699	6,580	9,836
1929	259,287	10,371	8,479
1930	326,470	13,059	15,467
1931	258,033	15,482	15,497
1932	273,977	16,439	7,883
1933	231,637	18,531	8,870
TOTALS	2,046,150	94,807	89,013

* Data of the *Dirección Nacional de Caminos.*

TABLE 93

INCOME AND EXPENDITURES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, 1920-1933*

(In 000's of Pesos)

YEARS	INCOME	EXPENDITURES
1920	238,243	131,966
1921	279,833	226,246
1922	286,846	228,093
1923	265,665	235,354
1924	268,657	251,121
1925	328,907	298,215
1926	309,165	324,938
1927	295,440	310,080
1928	299,753	287,244
1929	292,994	275,571
1930	277,542	279,122
1931	227,690	226,478
1932	197,777	211,625
1933	222,900	245,951

* Data for the years 1920-1923 from the *Memorias de la Secretaría de Hacienda;* for the remaining years from the *Dirección General de Estadística.*

APPENDIX B

CHECK LIST OF AGRARIAN REFORM LAWS

APPENDIX B

CHECK LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL LAWS, DECREES AND EXECUTIVE ORDERS CONCERNING THE AGRARIAN REFORM AND RELATED MATTERS JANUARY 1, 1915-JUNE 1, 1934[1]

I. BASIC LEGISLATION

1. Decreto de 6 de enero de 1915. Declara nulas todas las enajenaciones de tierras, aguas y montes pertenecientes a los pueblos, ortogadas en contravención a lo dispuesto a la Ley de 25 de junio de 1856. (Decree of January 6, 1915. Declaring null and void all alienations of lands, waters and pastures belonging to villages, authorized in violation of the Law of June 25, 1856.)
   Date: Jan. 6, 1915.
   Pub.: Jan. 9, 1915.
   Articles 7, 8, and 9 reformed by Decree of Sept. 19, 1916; but Decree of Nov. 22 (i.e., Dec. 10), 1921, declared said reforms abrogated by Article 27 of the Constitution; Art. 10 reformed by Decree of Dec. 23, 1931; whole Decree abrogated and incorporated in Art. 27 of Constitution by Decree of Dec. 30, 1933.
2. Artículo 27 Constitucional. (Article 27 of the Constitution.)
   Date: Feb. 5, 1917.
   Reformed by Decree of Dec. 30, 1933.
3. Decreto que reforma el artículo 27 de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos. (Decree reforming Article 27 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States.)
   Date: Dec. 30, 1933.
   Pub.: Jan. 8, 1934.

[1] The two dates given after the title of each law are first the "official" date (i.e., the date on which the law was signed by the president or other executive official); this is the date usually cited when reference is made to a law. The second date is the one on which the law was published in the *Diario Oficial*. This is usually, but not invariably, the date on which the law goes into effect. The material following the dates is a cross-indexed "history" of the law.

So far as the writer is aware, this is the most complete check list of the principal agrarian and related laws which has been compiled. Every effort has been exerted to avoid errors. Mexican legal procedure, however, is on occasions rather informal and it is not always possible to tell, for example, whether or not a law has been annulled, superseded, or merely forgotten. Because of overlapping in the laws themselves the classification given here is in some instances not exclusive.

"Abrogates Law of Jan. 6, 1915, its reforms and other legal regulations opposed to the present reform."

II. LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND TO VILLAGES

1. Acuerdo: Formación de la Comisión Nacional Agraria. (Resolution: Formation of the National Agrarian Commission.)
   Date: Jan. 19, 1916 (First).
   Signed by Minister of Government: Jan. 25, 1916.
   Reformed by Resolutions of April 27, 1917; Jan. 24, 1918; Sept. 24, 1923; annulled by Resolution of Dec. 9, 1924.
2. Acuerdo: Disposiciones relativo a la aplicación de la Ley de 6 de enero de 1916. (Resolution: Regulations concerning the application of the Law of January 6, 1915.)
   Date: Jan. 19, 1916 (Second).
   Pub.: Jan. 26, 1916.
   Abrogated by Art. 27 of the Constitution; see Decree of Dec. 10, 1921, Art. 2.
3. Decreto que reforma los artículos 7, 8 y 9 de la Ley de 6 de enero de 1915, sobre reivindicaciones y dotaciones de ejidos. (Decree reforming Articles 7, 8 and 9 of the Law of January 6, 1915, concerning restitution and dotation of ejidos.)
   Date: Sept. 19, 1916.
   Pub.: Sept. 28, 1916.
   Annulled by Article 27 of the Constitution; see Decree of Nov. 22 (i.e., Dec. 10), 1921.
4. Acuerdo relativo a la reorganización de la Comisión Nacional Agraria. (Resolution concerning the reorganization of the National Agrarian Commission.)
   Date: April 27, 1917.
   Pub.: May 22, 1917.
5. Acuerdo: Reforma a los acuerdos primero de 19 de enero de 1916 y 27 de abril de 1917. [Resolution: Reforming the resolutions of January 19, 1916 (First), and April 27, 1917.]
   Date: Jan. 24, 1918.
   Pub.: Jan. 26, 1918.
   Annulled by Resolution of Dec. 9, 1924.
6. Ley de Ejidos. (Law of Ejidos.)
   Date: Dec. 28, 1920.
   Pub.: Jan. 8, 1921.
   See Decree of May 29, 1922; abrogated by Law of Dec. 10, 1921.

7. Decreto abrogando la Ley de Ejidos de 28 de diciembre de 1920, y facultando al Ejecutivo de la Union para reorganizar y reglamentar en materia agraria. (Decree abrogating the Law of Ejidos of December 28, 1920, and empowering the Chief executive of the Union to reorganize and establish regulatory legislation in agrarian matters.)
   Date: Dec. 10, 1921 (Nov. 22, 1921).
   Pub.: April 18, 1922.
   See Decree of Sept. 19, 1916, and Agrarian Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922; annulled by Law of April 23, 1927, with the exception of Art. 4.
8. Reglamento Agrario. (Agrarian Regulatory Law.)
   Date: April 10, 1922.
   Pub.: April 18, 1922.
   See Decree of Dec. 10, 1921 (i. e., Nov. 22, 1921); Art. 26 rectified by Decree of April 28, 1922; Art. 27 rectified by Decree of April 28, 1922, and amplified by Decree of July 12, 1923; Art. 1, fr. VII amplified by Decree of Nov. 1, 1923; Art. 14, fr. V amplified by Decree of May 26, 1923; Art. 1, fr. VIII amplified by first Decree of July 28, 1924; entire Law amplified by second Decree of July 28, 1924; Arts. 11 and 27 reformed by first Decree of April 23, 1925; Arts. 1 and 2 modified by second Decree of April 23, 1925, but again declared in force by Decree of June 8, 1925; Arts. 22 and 28 reformed by Decree of Oct. 8, 1925; annulled *en toto* by Law of April 23, 1927.
9. Decreto que adiciona el artículo 14 del Reglamento Agrario de 10 de abril de 1922. (Decree amplifying Article 14 of the Agrarian Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922.)
   Date: May 26, 1923.
   Pub.: June 4, 1923.
   Annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.
10. Acuerdo por el cual se crea la Dirección de Cooperación Agrícola y Aprovechamiento de Ejidos. (Resolution creating the Office of Agricultural Coöperation and Development of Ejidos.)
    Date: June 28, 1923.
    Pub.: July 20, 1923.
    Annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.
11. Decreto por el cual se adiciona el artículo 27 del Reglamento Agrario de 10 de abril de 1922. (Decree amplifying Article 27 of the Agrarian Regulatory Law of Apil 10, 1922.)

Date: July 12, 1923.
Pub.: Aug. 2, 1923.
Annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.

12. Acuerdo que modifica el de 19 de enero de 1916, en la parte relativa al Secretario General de la Comisión Nacional Agraria. (Resolution modifying that of January 19, 1916, in matters relating to the General Secretary of the National Agrarian Commission.)
Date: Sept. 24, 1923.
Pub.: Nov. 24, 1923.
Annulled by Resolution of Feb. 10, 1925.

13. Decreto por el cual se determina quiénes pueden solicitar y obtener tierras por concepto de dotación o restitución de ejidos, con derecho preferente al aprovechamiento de aguas federales. (Decree determining who may solicit and obtain lands by restitution or dotation of ejidos with preferred right to the use of federal waters.)
Date: Nov. 1, 1923.
Pub.: Nov. 12, 1923.
See Agrarian Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922; annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.

14. Decreto adicionando el Reglamento de 10 de abril de 1922, en lo relativo a las personas que pueden solicitar y obtener tierras, por concepto de dotación o restitución. (Decree amplifying the [Agrarian] Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922, with reference to persons who may solicit and obtain lands by dotation and restitution.)
Date: July 28, 1924 (First).
Pub.: Aug. 12, 1924.
See Art. 1, fr. VIII, Agrarian Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922; annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.

15. Decreto determinando en que forma deberán tramitarse las solicitudes relacionadas con la ampliación de ejidos. (Decree determining the procedure with regard to petitions for amplifications of ejidos.)
Date: July 28, 1924 (Second).
Pub.: Aug. 12, 1924.
See Agrarian Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922; annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.

16. Acuerdo que da a conocer la forma en que quedará integrado la Comisión Nacional Agraria, a partir del 1 de enero de 1925. (Resolution determining the composition of the National Agrarian Commission, beginning January 1, 1925.)

Date: Dec. 9, 1924.
Pub.: Jan. 9, 1925.

See Resolutions of Jan. 19, 1916, April 27, 1917, and Jan. 24, 1918.

17. Decreto que reforma los artículos 11 y 27 del Reglamento Agrario, de 10 de abril de 1922, en lo relativo a la repartición de tierras en las regiones áridas o cerriles, y a la tramitación de los expedientes sobre dotación o restitución de ejidos. (Decree reforming Articles 11 and 27 of the Agrarian Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922, concerning the distribution of lands in arid or mountainous regions, and the procedure to be followed in cases of dotation or restitution of ejidos.)
Date: April 23, 1925 (First).
Pub.: May 8, 1925.

See Agrarian Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922, and Decree (Second) of July 28, 1924; annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.

18. Decreto que determina la forma en que se comprobará la categoría política de los pueblos, rancherías y demás núcleos de población existentes en las haciendas abandonadas. (Decree determining the form of proving the political category of villages, settlements, and other population groups existing on abandoned haciendas.)
Date: April 23, 1925 (Second).
Pub.: May 13, 1925.

See Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922; annulled by Decree of June 8, 1925.

19. Decreto que deroga el de 23 de abril de 1925, por el cual se reformaron los artículos 1 y 2 del Reglamento Agrario, que determinan las personas que pueden solicitar y obtener tierras por concepto de dotación o restitución de ejidos. (Decree annulling that of April 23, 1925, by which Articles 1 and 2 of the Agrarian Regulatory Law which determined the persons with rights to solicit and obtain lands by dotation or restitution of ejidos were reformed.)
Date: June 8, 1925.
Pub.: June 13, 1925.

See second Decree of April 23, 1925, and Regulatory Law of April 10, 1922; annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.

20. Decreto que reforma los artículos 22 y 28 del Reglamento Agrario de 10 de abril de 1922, relativos a la formación y comprobación de los censos agrarios. (Decree reforming Articles 22 and 28 of the Agrarian Regulatory Law of April

10, 1922, relating to the method of taking and verifying agrarian censuses.)
Date: Oct. 8, 1925.
Pub.: Oct. 23, 1925.
Annulled by Law of April 23, 1927.

21. Decreto que reglamenta el funcionamiento de las autoridades agrarias, en materia de restituciones y dotaciones de aguas. (Decree regulating the functions of agrarian authorities in matters relating to the restitution and dotation of waters.)
Date: April 8, 1926.
Pub.: May 7, 1926.
Annulled by Law of April 23, 1927(?)

22. Ley de Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas, reglamentaria del artículo 27 de la Constitución. (Law of Dotations and Restitutions of Lands and Waters, regulating Article 27 of the Constitution.)
Date: April 23, 1927.
Pub.: April 27, 1927.
"Annuls all the laws, decrees, and regulatory laws dictated in agrarian matters, as well as the resolutions and general circulars of the National Commission, with the exception of the following: Art. 4 of the Decree of Nov. 22, 1921, promulgated on Dec. 10, of that year, and the Law of Ejido Patrimony of Dec. 19, 1925, and its corresponding regulatory law which shall stand when not in opposition to the present Law"; Arts. 193 and 194 reformed by Decree of May 19, 1927; entire law reformed by Law of Aug. 11, 1927.

23. Decreto que reforma los artículos 193 y 194 de la Ley sobre Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas de 23 de abril de 1927. (Decree reforming Articles 193 and 194 of the Law of Dotations and Restitutions of Lands and Waters of April 23, 1927.)
Date: May 19, 1927.
Pub.: May 25, 1927.

24. Ley que reforma la de Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas, reglamentaria del artículo 27 Constitucional, de 23 de abril de 1927. (Law reforming that of Dotations and Restitutions of Lands and Waters, of April 23, 1927, regulatory of Article 27 of the Constitution.)
Date: Aug. 11, 1927.
Pub.: Aug. 18, 1927.
Amplified and reformed by second Decree of Jan. 19, 1929; incorporated in Law of March 21, 1929.

25. Reglamento del Registro Agrario. (Regulatory Law of the Agrarian Register.)
Date: April 24, 1928.
Pub.: May 16, 1928.
Annulled by Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934(?)

26. Decreto por el cual se adiciona y reforma la Ley de Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas, de 11 de agosto de 1927. (Decree amplifying and reforming the Law of Dotations and Restitutions of Lands and Waters, of August 11, 1927.)
Date: Jan. 17, 1929 (Second).
Pub.: Feb. 13, 1929.
Incorporated in Law of March 21, 1929.

27. Ley que refunde en la de Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas, las reformas y adiciones a la misma, contenidas en el Decreto del 17 de enero de 1929. (Law incorporating in the Law of Dotations and Restitutions of Lands and Waters, the reforms and additions to the same contained in the Decree of January 17, 1929.)
Date: March 21, 1929.
Pub.: June 1, 1929.
See Law of Aug. 11, 1927, and Decree of Jan. 17, 1929; reformed and amplified by Decree of Dec. 26, 1930; reformed by Decree of Dec. 27, 1932; see Decree of Dec. 28, 1933; annulled by Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934.

28. Acuerdo por el cual se fija un plazo para que presenten solicitudes de restitución o dotación de tierras los núcleos de poblaciòn del Estado de Aguascalientes. (Resolution determining a period in which petitions for the restitution or dotation of lands may be made by communities in the State of Aguascalientes.)[1]
Date: May 7, 1930.
Pub.: June 4, 1930.
Annulled by Resolution of July 14, 1933.

29. Decreto por el cual se modifica la Ley sobre Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas, de 21 de marzo de 1929. (Decree modifying the Law of Dotations and Restitutions of Lands and Waters, of March 21, 1929.)

[1] Similar resolutions were published for the following states: Tlaxcala (June 4, 1930); San Luis Potosí (June 18, 1930); Coahuila (Feb. 7, 1931); Zacatecas (Feb. 9, 1931); Querétaro (July 24, 1931). The resolutions for Querétaro, Coahuila, and Tlaxcala were first annulled by separate resolutions published on June 7, 1933, June 27, 1933, and June 29, 1933. Later (July 26, 1933) a blanket resolution was passed annulling the resolutions for Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosí, and Zacatecas as well as two similar unpublished resolutions for Morelos and the Federal District.

Date: Dec. 26, 1930.
Pub.: Jan. 23, 1931.
Annulled by Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934.

30. Decreto que reforma el artículo 10 de la Ley Agraria de 6 de enero de 1915. (Decree reforming Article 10 of the Agrarian Law of January 6, 1915.)
Date: Dec. 23, 1931.
Pub.: Jan. 15, 1932.

31. Decreto que reforma la Ley de Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas. (Decree reforming the Law of Dotations and Restitutions of Lands and Waters.)
Date: Dec. 27, 1932.
Pub.: Dec. 31, 1932.
See Law of March 21, 1929; annulled by Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934.

32. Acuerdo por el cual se derogan todas las disposiciones que conceden plazos a los núcleos de población para solicitar restitución o dotación de tierras y aguas. (Resolution annulling all dispositions which determine periods in which communities may petition for the restitution or dotation of lands and waters.)
Date: July 14, 1933.
Pub.: July 26, 1933.
See Resolution of May 7, 1930.

33. Decreto que concede un plazo para presentar alegatos contra las resoluciones agrarias provisionales. (Decree naming a period for the presentation of allegations against provisional agrarian resolutions.)
Date: Dec. 28, 1933.
Pub.: Jan. 8, 1934.
See Art. 87 of Law of March 21, 1929.

34. Decreto que crea el Departamento Agrario. (Decree creating the Agrarian Department.)
Date: Jan. 15, 1934.
Pub.: Jan. 17, 1934.
See Law of Ministries of State of Dec. 25, 1917, and Law of March 22, 1934.

35. Código Agrario de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos. (Agrarian Code of the United Mexican States.)
Date: March 22, 1934.
Pub.: April 12, 1934.
"Annuls all laws, decrees, circulars, and other dispositions promulgated in agrarian matters previous to this Code as well as those which oppose its application." See Regulatory

Law of April 24, 1928; Law of March 21, 1929; Decree of December 26, 1930; Decree of Dec. 27, 1932; and the following dispositions relating to the administration of ejidos and the parcelling of village lands (ejido patrimony): Law of Aug. 25, 1927; Decree of Dec. 26, 1930; and Decree of Dec. 27, 1932.

36. Ley de Secretarías de Estado, Departamentos Administrativos y demás Dependencias del Poder Ejecutivo Federal. (Law of Ministries of State, Administrative Departments and other Dependencies of the Federal Executive Power.)
Date: March 22, 1934.
Pub.: April 6, 1934.
See Law of Ministries of State of Dec. 25, 1917, and Decree of Jan. 15, 1934.

III. LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF EJIDOS AND THE PARCELLING OF VILLAGE LANDS

1. Decreto determinando en qué consiste la capacidad jurídica de las corporaciones de población para disfrutar en común las tierras y aguas que les pertenezcan, y manera de ejercitar los derechos relativos. (Decree determining the nature of the juridical capacity of civil corporations to enjoy the common use of the lands and waters belonging to them, and the manner of exercising the rights pertaining thereto.)
Date: July 16, 1925.
Pub.: July 31, 1925.
Annulled by Law of Dec. 19, 1925.

2. Ley Reglamentario sobre Repartición de Tierras Ejidales y Constitución del Patrimonio Parcelario Ejidal. (Law of the Division of Ejido Lands and the Constitution of the Ejido Patrimonial Parcel.)
Date: Dec. 19, 1925.
Pub.: Dec. 31, 1925.
See Decree of July 16, 1925; regulated March 4, 1926; annulled by Law of Aug. 25, 1927.

3. Reglamento de Ley sobre Repartición de Tierras y Constitución del Patrimonio Parcelario Ejidal. (Regulatory Law of the Law of Division of Lands and the Constitution of the Ejido Patrimonial Parcel.)
Date: March 4, 1926.
Pub.: April 5, 1926.

Regulations of Law of Dec. 19, 1925; annulled by Law of Aug. 25, 1927.

4. Ley que reforma la Reglamentario sobre Repartición de Tierras Ejidales y Constitución del Patrimonio Parcelario Ejidal de 19 de diciembre de 1925. (Law reforming the Law of the Division of Ejido Lands and the constitution of the Ejido Patrimonial Parcel, of December 19, 1925.)
   Date: Aug. 25, 1927.
   Pub.: Aug. 30, 1927.
   Art. 20, fr. VI clarified by Decree of Jan. 19, 1928; Arts. 1 and 32 reformed by Decree of Dec. 26, 1930; reformed and amplified by Decree of Dec. 27, 1932; annulled by Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934.
5. Decreto por el cual se autoriza la expedición de tarifas especiales para fijar el 15% sobre el producto liquido de las cosechas de los ejidatarios, establecido por la fracción VI del artículo 20 de la Ley sobre Repartición de Tierras Ejidales y Constitución del Patrimonio Parcelario Ejidal. (Decree authorizing special schedules for determining the 15% net profit of the harvests of the ejidatarios, established in fraction VI, Article 20 of the Law of the Division of Ejido Lands and the Constitution of the Ejido Patrimonial Parcel.)
   Date: Jan. 19, 1928.
   Pub.: Feb. 3, 1928.
   See Law of Aug. 25, 1927; annulled by Decree of Dec. 27, 1932.
6. Decreto por el cual se modifica la Ley Reglamentario sobre Repartición de Tierras Ejidales y Constitución del Patrimonio Parcelario Ejidal. (Decree modifying the Law of the Division of Ejido Lands and the Constitution of the Ejido Patrimonial Parcel.)
   Date: Dec. 26, 1930.
   Pub.: Jan. 23, 1931.
   See Law of Aug. 25, 1927; annulled by Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934.
7. Decreto que modifica la Ley del Patrimonio Ejidal y la de Ejidos, vigentes. (Decree modifying the Law of Ejido Patrimony and that of Ejidos, in force.)
   Date: Dec. 27, 1932.
   Pub.: Dec. 31, 1932.
   See Law of Aug. 25, 1927; annulled by Agrarian Code of March 22, 1934.

IV. LEGISLATION CONCERNING COMPENSATION IN EXPROPRIATION PROCEEDINGS

1. Decreto creando la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Decree creating the Agrarian Public Debt.)
   Date: Jan. 10, 1920.
   Pub.: Jan. 22, 1920.
   Regulated by Decree of Jan. 26, 1922; amplified by Resolution of May 4, 1923; Arts. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 11 reformed and/or amplified by first Decree of June 10, 1925.
2. Reglamento para la expedición y amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Regulatory Law for the issuing and amortization of Agrarian Public Debt Bonds.)
   Date: Jan. 26, 1922.
   Pub.: Jan. 28, 1922.
   Regulations of Decree of Jan. 10, 1920; Art. 2, fr. I reformed by Decree of March 28, 1923; Arts. 1, 2, 3, and 4 reformed and/or amplified by second Decree of June 10, 1925; Art. 4 reformed by Decree of Aug. 19, 1925; annulled, inclusive of reforms, by Regulatory Law of Dec. 31, 1925.
3. Decreto que reforma la fracción I del artículo 2 del Reglamento de la expedición y amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Decree reforming fraction I of Article 2 of the Regulatory Law for the issuing and amortization of Agrarian Public Debt Bonds.)
   Date: March 28, 1923.
   Pub.: April 16, 1923.
   See Regulatory Law of Jan. 26, 1922.
4. Acuerdo por el cual se determina en que forma deberán hacerse las indemnizaciones que corresponden por las expropiaciones agrarias efectuadas antes del 1 de mayo de 1917. (Resolution determining the procedure in the matter of indemnifications for agrarian expropriations effected prior to May 1, 1917.)
   Date: May 4, 1923.
   Pub.: May 12, 1923.
   See Decree of Jan. 10, 1920.
5. Decreto que reforma y adiciona la ley de 10 de enero de 1920, que creó la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Decree reforming and amplifying the law of January 10, 1920, which created the Agrarian Public Debt.)

Date: June 10, 1925 (First).
Pub.: June 19, 1925.
Arts. 3 and 8 reformed by Decree of April 10, 1930.

6. Decreto que reforma y adiciona varios artículos del Reglamento para la expedición y amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Decree reforming and amplifying various Articles of the Regulatory Law for the issuing and amortization of Agrarian Public Debt Bonds.)
Date: June 10, 1925 (Second).
Pub.: June 19, 1925.
See Regulatory Law of Jan. 26, 1922.

7. Decreto que reforma el artículo 4 del Reglamento para la expedición y amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria, relativo a la tramitación de las solicitudes de indemnización. (Decree reforming Article 4 of the Regulatory Law for the issuing and amortization of the Agrarian Public Debt Bonds, relating to the procedure in connection with requests for indemnification.)
Date: Aug. 19, 1925.
Pub.: Aug. 31, 1925.
See Regulatory Law of Jan. 26, 1922.

8. Acuerdo que autoriza la emisión de una primera serie de Bonos de la Deuda Agraria, con valor total de diez millones de pesos. (Resolution authorizing the emission of the first series of Bonds of the Agrarian Debt, with a total value of ten million pesos.)
Date: Dec. 31, 1925.
Pub.: Jan. 30, 1926.

9. Reglamento de la expedición y amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Regulatory Law for the issuing and amortization of Agrarian Public Debt Bonds.)
Date: Dec. 31, 1925.
Pub.: March 9, 1926.
See Regulatory Law of Jan. 26, 1922; Art. 2 and fr. II of Art. 9 and Art. 10 modified and annulled by Decree of June 18, 1926; Arts. 3 and 4 amplified by Decree of Dec. 8, 1927; Art. 2 modified by Decree of Nov. 22, 1928; Arts. 18, 20, and 21 modified by Decree of Dec. 29, 1928; Art. 2 modified by Decree of June 13, 1929.

10. Decreto que modifica el Reglamento de 31 de diciembre de 1925, en lo que se refiere a la presentación de solicitudes de indemnización por expropiación de tierras para ejidos. (Decree modifying the Regulatory Law of December 31, 1925, in the

sections referring to the presentation of petitions for indemnification for expropriations of lands for ejidos.)
Date: June 18, 1926.
Pub.: July 28, 1926.

11. Decreto que adiciona al Reglamento de la Expedición y Amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria, en lo relativo a indemnizaciones. (Decree amplifying the Regulatory Law for the Issuing and Amortization of Agrarian Public Debt Bonds, in the sections concerning indemnifications.)
Date: Dec. 8, 1927.
Pub.: Jan. 17, 1928.
See Regulatory Law of Dec. 31, 1925.

12. Decreto que adiciona el artículo 2 del Reglamento de la Expedición y Amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria, en lo relativo al término para presentar solicitudes de indemnización por la expropiación de tierras. (Decree amplifying Article 2 of the Regulations for the Issuing and Amortization of Agrarian Public Debt Bonds, in the sections relating to the period when requests for indemnification for the expropriations of lands may be presented.)
Date: Nov. 22, 1928.
Pub.: Dec. 14, 1928.
See Regulatory Law of Dec. 31, 1925.

13. Decreto que reforma los artículos 18, 20 y 21 del Reglamento para la Expedición y Amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Decree reforming Articles 18, 20, and 21 of the Regulatory Law for the Issuing and Amortization of the Agrarian Public Debt Bonds.)
Date: Dec. 29, 1928.
Pub.: Jan., 1929.
See Regulatory Law of Dec. 31, 1925.

14. Decreto que modifica el artículo 2 del Reglamento para la Expedición y Amortización de los Bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Decree modifying Article 2 of the Regulatory Law for the Issuing and Amortization of Agrarian Public Debt Bonds.)
Date: June 13, 1929.
Pub.: July 10, 1929.
See Regulatory Law of Dec. 31, 1925, and its reforms.

15. Decreto por el cual se modifica la Ley de 10 de junio [1925] reformatoria de la de 10 de enero de 1920, que creó la Deuda Pública Agraria. (Decree modifying the Law of June 10 [1925],

reforming that of January 10, 1920, which created the Public Agrarian Debt.)
Date: April 10, 1930.
Pub.: April 26, 1930.

16. Decreto que autoriza el pago de adeudos por Impuesto Extraordinaria sobre aguamiel y aprovechamiento de aguas con bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria y de la Deuda Bancaria. (Decree authorizing the payment of debts for the Extraordinary Tax on *aguamiel* and the use of waters in bonds of the Agrarian Public Debt and the Banking Debt.)
Date: July 6, 1932.
Pub.: July 8, 1932.
Reformed by Decree of July 20, 1932; Aug. 15, 1932; and Sept. 14, 1932.

17. Decreto por el cual se reforma el que autoriza el pago de adeudos por diferentes impuestos con bonos de la Deuda Pública Agraria y de la Deuda Bancaria. (Decree reforming that which authorizes the payment of debts for various taxes with bonds of the Agrarian Public Debt and the Banking Debt.)
Date: July 20, 1932.
Pub.: July 26, 1932.
See Decree of July 6, 1932.

18. Decreto que modifica el de 6 de julio 1932 relativo a la liquidación de adeudos que quedan hacerse efectivas con bonos de las Deudas Públicas Agraria y Bancaria. (Decree modifying that of July 6, 1932, concerning the payment of debts with bonds of the Public Agrarian and Banking Debts.)
Date: Aug. 15, 1932.
Pub.: Aug. 16, 1932.

19. Decreto que concede un último plazo para la liquidación de adeudos por diferentes impuestos con bonos de las Deudas Agraria y Bancaria. (Decree conceding a final term for the payment of debts for various taxes in bonds of the Agrarian and Banking Debts.)
Date: Sept. 14, 1932.
Pub.: Sept. 15, 1932.
See Decree July 6, 1932.

20. Decreto que autoriza al Ejecutivo de la Unión para emitir titulos de la Deuda Pública Interior hasta la cantidad de $60,000,000.00. (Decree authorizing the Chief Executive of the Union to issue bonds of the Interior Public Debt to the amount of 60,000,000.00 pesos.)

Date: Dec. 29, 1932.
Pub.: Dec. 31, 1932.

21. Decreto que autoriza a las Oficinas Recaudadoras de la Federación para recibir bonos de la Deuda Pública Interior, 40 años, y de la Deuda Pública Agraria, en pago de 75% de los adeudos que especifica. (Decree authorizing Federal Tax Offices to receive bonds of the Interior Public Debt, 40 years, and of the Agrarian Public Debt in payment of 75% of the debts specified.)
Date: Dec. 10, 1933.
Pub.: Dec. 15, 1933.

22. Decreto que autoriza la aceptación de bonos de la Deuda Política Interior y de la Deuda Pública Agraria en pago de rezagos por impuesto de timbre sobre portes y pasajes para empresas de automóbiles y camiones. (Decree authorizing acceptance of bonds of the Political Interior Debt and of the Agrarian Public Debt in payment of balances due for stamp taxes required of automobile and bus companies for freight and passengers carried.)
Date: May 2, 1934.
Pub.: May 21, 1934.

V. IRRIGATION AND NATIONAL WATERS LEGISLATION

1. Acuerdo que adiciona el Reglamento de 31 de enero de 1911, relativo al uso y aprovechamiento de aguas. (Resolution amplifying the Regulatory Law of January 31, 1911, concerning the use and development of waters.)
Date: Jan. 1, 1925.
Pub.: Feb. 10, 1925.
Annulled by Law of Aug. 6, 1929.

2. Decreto que reforma y adiciona el Reglamento de la Ley de Aguas vigente, en lo relativo a la forma en que se comprobarán los derechos para el aprovechamiento de aguas de jurisdicción federal. (Decree reforming and amplifying the Regulatory Law of the Waters Law in force, in the sections relating to the procedure for verifying rights to the use of federal waters.)
Date: Oct. 29, 1925.
Pub.: Nov. 26, 1925.
See Regulatory Law of Jan. 31, 1911; regulated April 15, 1926; Art. 2 amplified by Decree of June 23, 1927; annulled by Law of Aug. 6, 1929.

3. Ley sobre Irrigación con Aguas Federales. (Law concerning Irrigation with Federal Waters.)
   Date: Jan. 4, 1926.
   Pub.: Jan. 9, 1926.
   Art. 11 amplified by Decree of Jan. 28, 1926; Art. 18 regulated by Resolution of March 4, 1926; Arts. 1 and 2 regulated by Decree of June 4, 1926; Art. 4 regulated by Decree of June 12, 1926, and by Decree of Nov. 17, 1927; Arts. 1 and 2 amplified by the Decree of March 27, 1930.
4. Decreto autorizando a la Comisión Nacional de Irrigación para adquirir y administrar obras. (Decree authorizing the National Irrigation Commission to acquire and administer properties.)
   Date: Jan. 28, 1926.
   Pub.: Feb. 10, 1926.
   See Law of Jan. 4, 1926.
5. Reglamento del Decreto de 29 de octubre 1925, que reforma el Reglamento de la Ley de Aguas de 13 de diciembre de 1910. (Regulatory Law of the Decree of October 29, 1925, reforming the Regulatory Law of the Waters Law of December 13, 1910.)
   Date: April 15, 1926.
   Pub.: May 26, 1926.
   Annulled by Law of Aug. 6, 1929.
6. Decreto que adiciona el Reglamento de la Ley de Aguas, de 31 de enero de 1911, en lo relativo a la construcción de obras de irrigación. (Decree amplifying the Regulatory Law of the Waters Law of Jan. 31, 1911, in the sections relating to the construction of irrigation works.)
   Date: May 13, 1926.
   Pub.: June 1, 1926.
7. Decreto que declara de utilidad pública la construcción de obras de irrigación. (Decree declaring the construction of irrigation works to be of public utility.)
   Date: June 4, 1926.
   Pub.: July 5, 1926.
   See Law of Jan. 4, 1926.
8. Decreto por el cual se adiciona el de 29 de octubre de 1925, en lo relativo al establecimiento de zonas federales en las corrientes de los ríos declarados de propiedad nacional. (Decree amplifying that of October 29, 1925, with regard to establishing federal zones in the currents of the rivers declared to be national property.)

Date: June 23, 1927.
Pub.: July 11, 1927.
Annulled by Law of Aug. 6, 1929.

9. Decreto que reforma el Reglamento de la Ley de Aguas vigente, en lo relativo a las concesiones a los Gobiernos de los Estados, Distritos y Territorios Federales y a los Municipios de la República. (Decree reforming the Regulatory Law of the Waters Law in force in regard to concessions to the Governments of the States, Districts, and Federal Territories and to the Municipalities of the Republic.)
Date: Oct. 27, 1927.
Pub.: Nov. 26, 1927.
See Law of Jan. 31, 1911; annulled by Law of Aug. 6, 1929.

10. Decreto que reforma el de 12 de junio de 1926, relativo al otorgamiento de concesiones en las zonas sometidas al estudio de la Comisión Nacional de Irrigación. (Decree reforming that of June 12, 1926, relating to the granting of concessions in the zones under study by the National Irrigation Commission.)
Date: Nov. 17, 1927.
Pub.: Dec. 30, 1927.

11. Decreto que adiciona los artículos 56 y 59 del Reglamento de la Ley de Aguas vigente. (Decree amplifying Articles 56 and 59 of the Regulatory Law of the Waters Law in force.)
Date: Jan. 17, 1929 (First).
Pub.: Feb. 13, 1929.
See Regulatory Law of Jan. 31, 1911; annulled by Law of Aug. 6, 1929.

12. Ley de Aguas de Propiedad Nacional. (National Waters Law.)
Date: Aug. 6, 1929.
Pub.: Aug. 7, 1929.
"Annuls the Law of Waters under Federal Jurisdiction of December 13, 1910, and all other regulations concerning this subject"; regulated by Law of Jan. 31, 1930; Art. 35 regulated by Law of July 22, 1932; reformed by Decree of Dec. 28, 1933.

13. Reglamento de la Ley de Aguas de Propiedad Nacional. (Regulatory Law of the National Waters Law.)
Date: Jan. 31, 1930.
Pub.: Feb. 4, 1930.
Regulations of the Law of Aug. 6, 1929; modified and regulated by Decree of Aug. 12, 1932.

14. Decreto que declara de utilidad pública la adquisición de tierras comprendidas en los sistemas de riego que dependan de la Comisión Nacional de Irrigación. (Decree declaring of public utility the acquiring of lands included within the irrigation systems under the jurisdiction of the National Irrigation Commission.)
Date: March 27, 1930.
Pub.: April 23, 1930.
See Law of Jan. 4, 1926.

15. Reglamento del artículo 35 de la Ley de Aguas de propiedad nacional, de 6 de agosto de 1929. (Regulations of Article 35 of the National Waters Law of August 6, 1929.)
Date: July 22, 1932.
Pub.: Aug. 6, 1932.

16. Decreto que modifica y adiciona varios artículos del Reglamento de la Ley de Aguas vigente. (Decree modifying and amplifying various articles of the Regulatory Law of the Waters Law in force.)
Date: Aug. 12, 1932.
Pub.: Aug. 27, 1932.
See Regulatory Law of Jan. 31, 1930.

17. Decreto por el cual se reforma los artículos 32 y 47 de la Ley de Aguas de Propiedad Nacional vigente. (Decree reforming Articles 32 and 47 of the National Waters Law in force.)
Date: Dec. 28, 1933.
Pub.: Jan. 11, 1934.
See Law of Aug. 6, 1929.

VI. LEGISLATION CONCERNING SETTLEMENT ON PUBLIC LANDS

1. Decreto que faculta a todo mexicano mayor de dieciocho años, para la adquisición de tierras nacionales o baldías. (Decree enabling any Mexican over eighteen years of age to acquire national or public lands.)
Date: Aug. 2, 1923.
Pub.: Aug. 11, 1923.
Amplified by Decree of Sept. 11, 1924; declared inactive by Decree of June 10, 1926; reformed by Resolution of Aug. 16, 1928; but see Decree of March 6, 1930.

2. Decreto adicionando el de 2 de agosto de 1923, relativo a la apropiación de tierras libres. (Decree amplifying that of August 2, 1923, referring to the appropriation of free lands.)

Date: Sept. 11, 1924.
Pub.: Sept. 30, 1924.

3. Decreto que declara en suspenso la aplicación de la Ley de Tierra Libre, del 2 de agosto de 1923. (Decree declaring inactive the application of the Free Lands Law of August 2, 1923.)
Date: June 10, 1926.
Pub.: July 3, 1926.

4. Decreto por el cual se determina en qué condiciones podrán adquirirse en propiedad los terrenos nacionales sujetos a arrendamiento. (Decree determining the conditions under which title may be obtained to national lands subject to lease.)
Date: April 10, 1928.
Pub.: May 25, 1928.
Art. 6 modified by Decree of Nov. 1, 1928; Art. 2 reformed by Decree of May 27, 1929; annulled by first Decree of March 6, 1930.

5. Decreto por el cual se reforman los artículos 7, 22 y 24 de la Ley de Tierra Libre, de 2 de agosto de 1923. (Decree reforming Articles 7, 22, and 24 of the Free Lands Law of August 2, 1923.)
Date: Aug. 16, 1928.
Pub.: Oct. 6, 1928.
Annulled by Decree of March 6, 1930.

6. Decreto que modifica el artículo 6 del de 10 de abril de 1928, por el cual se determina en qué condiciones podrán adquirirse en propiedad los terrenos nacionales sujetos a arrendamiento. (Decree modifying Article 6 of the Decree of April 10, 1928, determining the conditions under which title may be obtained to national lands subject to lease.)
Date: Nov. 1, 1928.
Pub.: Dec. 19, 1928.
Art. 6 reformed by Decree of May 27, 1929; annulled by first Decree of March 6, 1930.

7. Decreto por el cual se reforma los de 10 de abril de 1928 y 1 de noviembre del mismo año, relativos al arrendamiento de terrenos nacionales. (Decree reforming those of April 10, 1928, and November 1, of the same year, relating to the leasing of national lands.)
Date: May 27, 1929.
Pub.: July 20, 1919.
Annulled by first Decree of March 6, 1930.

8. Decreto por el cual se previene que todo mexicano mayor de diez y ocho años tiene derecho a adquirir gratuitamente

terrenos nacionales. (Decree providing that any Mexican over eighteen years of age has the right to acquire gratuitously national lands.)
Date: March 6, 1930 (First).
Pub.: May 7, 1930.
See Decrees of April 10, 1928; Nov. 1, 1928, and May 27, 1929; reformed by Decree of March 2, 1934.

9. Decreto por el cual se modifica el de 2 de agosto de 1923, que faculta a todo mexicano mayor de dieciocho años, para adquirir tierras nacionales o baldías. (Decree modifying that of August 2, 1923, which enables any Mexican over eighteen years of age to acquire national or public lands.)[3]
Date: March 6, 1930 (Second).
Pub.: July 8, 1930.
See Resolution of Aug. 16, 1928.

10. Decreto que modifica el de 6 de marzo de 1930, por el cual se previene que todo mexicano mayor de 18 años tiene derecho a adquirir gratuitamente terrenos nacionales. (Decree modifying that of March 6, 1930, which provides that all Mexicans over eighteen years of age have the right to acquire gratuitously national lands.)
Date: March 2, 1934.
Pub.: March 14, 1934.

VII. LEGISLATION CONCERNING COLONIZATION

1. Ley Federal de Colonización. (Federal Colonization Law.)
Date: April 5, 1926.
Pub.: May 11, 1926.
See Law of Dec. 15, 1883; regulated Jan. 6, 1927; see Decree of Nov. 8, 1928.

2. Reglamento de la Ley de Colonización de 5 de abril de 1926. (Regulatory Law of the Colonization Law of April 5, 1926.)
Date: Jan. 6, 1927.
Pub.: Jan. 27, 1927.
Art. 16, fr. II reformed by Decree of Sept. 13, 1928.

3. Decreto que reforma la fracción II del artículo 16 del Reglamento de la Ley de Colonización. (Decree reforming fraction II of Article 16 of the Regulatory Law of the Colonization Law.)

[3] This decree was promulgated again July 17, 1930, and published on Aug. 9, 1930, under the title: Decreto por el cual se modifica la Ley de Tierras Libres de 2 de agosto de 1923.

Date: Sept. 13, 1928.
Pub.: Oct. 10, 1928.
See Regulatory Law Jan. 6, 1927.

4. Decreto por el cual se modifican los artículos 7 y 8 del Decreto de 24 de febrero de 1912, sobre enajenación de terrenos nacionales. (Decree modifying Articles 7 and 8 of the Decree of February 24, 1912, concerning the alienation of national lands.)
Date: Nov. 8, 1928.
Pub.: Dec. 18, 1928.
See Law of April 5, 1926.

5. Ley de nuevos Centros de Población Agrícola. (Law of New Centers of Agricultural Population.)
Date: Aug. 31, 1932.
Pub.: Sept. 9, 1932.

VIII. LEGISLATION CONCERNING AGRICULTURAL CREDIT

1. Ley sobre Bancos Refaccionarios. (Law of Mortgage Banks.)
Date: Sept. 29, 1924.
Pub.: Nov. 12, 1924.
Modified by Law of Dec. 24, 1924; annulled by Law of Aug. 31, 1926.

2. Ley General de Instituciones de Crédito y Establecimientos Bancarios. (General Law of Credit Institutions and Banks.)
Date: Dec. 24, 1924.
Pub.: Jan. 16, 1925.
See Law of March 19, 1897, and Law of Sept. 29, 1924; modified by Law of Feb. 10, 1926; annulled by Law of Aug. 31, 1926.

3. Decreto que concede a los particulares y a las sociedades mexicanas, que inviertan una cantidad no menor de $100,000.00, en refaccionar a cooperativas agrícolas, a ejidatarios o a pequeños propietarios agrícolas, los mismos beneficios que en materia de impuestos consigna a las instituciones de crédito la Ley General de Establecimientos Bancarios de 24 de diciembre de 1924. (Decree conceding to private persons and Mexican corporations investing no less than 100,000.00 pesos in mortgage loans to agricultural coöperatives, ejidatarios and small agriculturists the same benefits in the matter of taxation as are conceded to credit institutions by the General Banking Law of December 24, 1924.)

Date: July 31, 1925.
Pub.: Aug. 6, 1925.

4. Ley de Crédito Agrícola. (Law of Agricultural Credit.)
Date: Feb. 10, 1926.
Pub.: March 4, 1926.
Regulated by Law of March 8, 1926, and Decree of April 7, 1926; Art. 97 amplified by Decree of Aug. 20, 1927; annulled by Law of Jan. 2, 1931.

5. Reglamento para el Registro Público del Crédito Agrícola. (Regulations of the Public Registry of Agricultural Credit.)
Date: March 8, 1926.
Pub.: April 19, 1926.
See Law of Feb. 10, 1926; amplified by Decree of July 13, 1927.

6. Ley de Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales. (Law of Ejido Agricultural Banks.)
Date: March 16, 1926.
Pub.: April 9, 1926.
Regulated by Law of April 10, 1926; see Laws of April 16, 1926, and Jan. 2, 1931, and Decrees of Feb. 26, 1932, and Dec. 6, 1933.

7. Reglamento de la Ley de Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales. (Regulatory Law of the Law of Ejido Agricultural Banks.)
Date: April 10, 1926.
Pub.: April 22, 1926.
Regulations of the Law of March 16, 1926; Art. 53 modified by Resolution of May 7, 1926; see Law of Jan. 2, 1931, and Decree of Feb. 26, 1932.

8. Reglamento que normará la Constitución y Funcionamiento de las Sociedades Cooperativas Agrícolas Locales y de las Uniones de Sociedades Locales que se creen con Capital Particular. (Regulatory Law Governing the Establishing and Functioning of Local Coöperative Societies and of Unions of Local Associations organized with Private Capital.)
Date: April 16, 1926.
Pub.: May 6, 1926.
See Laws of March 16, 1926, and Jan. 21, 1927.

9. Acuerdo que modifica el artículo 53 del Reglamento de la Ley de Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales, relativo al monto de los tipos de interés. (Resolution modifying Article 53 of the Regulatory Law of the Law of Ejido Agricultural Banks, in the matter of interest rates.)

Date: May 7, 1926.
Pub.: June 24, 1926.
See Regulatory Law of April 10, 1926.

10. Decreto por el cual se determina que sean entregadas para su venta, al Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola, S.A., las propiedades rústicas no litigiosas que existan en poder de la Caja de Préstamos para Obras de Irrigación y Fomento de la Agricultura y Comisión Monetaria. (Decree determining that rural properties not subject to litigation in possession of the Bank for Irrigation Works and Agricultural Development and the Monetary Commission be turned over to the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, Inc. for sale.)
Date: Aug. 30, 1926.
Pub.: Oct. 29, 1926.

11. Ley General de Instituciones de Crédito y Establecimientos Bancarios. (General Law of Credit Institutions and Banks.)
Date: Aug. 31, 1926.
Pub.: Nov. 29, 1926.
See Law of Sept. 29, 1924, and Law of Dec. 24, 1924; Arts. 62 and 66 reformed by Decree of Aug. 17, 1927; Art. 91 clarified by Decree of Aug. 20, 1927; annulled by Law of June 28, 1932.

12. Ley General de Sociedades Cooperativas. (General Law of Coöperative Societies.)
Date: Jan. 21, 1927.
Pub.: Feb. 23, 1927.
See Law of April 16, 1926; annulled by Law of May 12, 1933, except Title IV.

13. Decreto por el cual se pone bajo la vigilancia de la Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería el control, organización y mejoramiento de la explotación agrícola-pecuaria de los terrenos ejidales. (Decree placing under the jurisdiction of the General Direction of Agriculture and Livestock the control, organization, and improvement of the agricultural exploitation of ejido lands.)
Date: June 23, 1927.
Pub.: July 14, 1927.

14. Decreto que modifica los artículos 62 y 66 de la Ley General de Instituciones de Crédito y Establecimientos Bancarios, en lo relativo al registro de los contratos de préstamo para explotaciones agrícolas, refacciones o habilitación o avío. (Decree modifying Articles 62 and 66 of the General Law of Credit

Institutions and Banks, in matters relating to the registration of loans for agricultural exploitations, equipment, or crop advances.)
Date: Aug. 17, 1927.
Pub.: Aug. 31, 1927.
See Law of Aug. 31, 1926.

15. Decreto que adiciona el artículo 97 de la Ley de Crédito Agrícola de 10 de febrero de 1926, relativo a la preferencia de los créditos constituidos originalmente a favor del Banco. (Decree amplifying Article 97 of the Law of Agricultural Credit of February 10, 1926, concerning the preference of credits originally constituted in favor of the Bank.)
Date: Aug. 20, 1927.
Pub.: Aug. 27, 1927.

16. Decreto por el cual se crea el Departamento de Organización Agraria y de Crédito Ejidal. (Decree creating the Department of Agrarian Organization and Ejido Credit.)
Date: Aug. 30, 1928.
Pub.: Oct. 5, 1928.
Annulled by Law of Jan. 2, 1931.

17. Ley de Crédito Agrícola Para Ejidatarios y Agricultores en Pequeño. (Law of Agricultural Credit for Ejidatarios and Small Agriculturists.)
Date: Jan. 2, 1931.
Pub.: Jan. 24, 1931.
See Law of Feb. 10, 1926, and Decree of Aug. 30, 1928; annulled by Law of Jan. 24, 1934, except Title III relating to warehouses.

18. Decreto por el cual se previene que los Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales y las Cooperativas Agrícolas locales deberán proceder a su liquidación. (Decree providing for the liquidation of Ejido Agrarian Banks and Local Agricultural Coöperatives.)
Date: Feb. 26, 1932.
Pub.: March 4, 1932.
See Laws of March 16, 1926, and Jan. 2, 1931; annulled by Decree of Dec. 6, 1933.

19. Ley General de Instituciones de Crédito. (General Law of Credit Institutions.)
Date: June 28, 1932.
Pub.: June 29, 1932.
See Law of Aug. 31, 1926.

20. Ley General de Sociedades Cooperativas. (General Law of Coöperative Societies.)
Date: May 12, 1933.
Pub.: May 30, 1933.
See Law of Jan. 21, 1927; regulated by Law of May 12, 1934.

21. Decreto por el cual se previene que el Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola, S.A., deberá continuar la liquidación de los Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales y las Cooperativas Agrícolas Locales. (Decree providing that the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, Inc., continue the liquidation of Ejido Agricultural Banks and Local Agricultural Coöperatives.)
Date: Dec. 6, 1933.
Pub.: Dec. 19, 1933.
See Decree of Feb. 26, 1932.

22. Ley de Crédito Agrícola. (Law of Agricultural Credit.)
Date: Jan. 24, 1934.
Pub.: Feb. 9, 1934.
See Law of Jan. 2, 1931.

23. Reglamento de la Ley General de Sociedades Cooperativas. (Regulatory Law of the General Law of Coöperative Societies.)
Date: May 12, 1934.
Pub.: May 21, 1934.
Regulatory Law of Law of May 12, 1933.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS LAWS

1. Ley de Tierras Ociosas. (Idle Lands Law.)
Date: June 23, 1920.
Pub.: June 28, 1920.

2. Decreto que faculta a los Gobiernos de los Estados de la República, para crear su Deuda Agraria. (Decree empowering the Governments of the States of the Republic to create their Agrarian Debt[s].)
Date: Jan. 7, 1925.
Pub.: Jan. 24, 1925.

3. Acuerdo que autoriza la creación de la Dirección de Escuelas Centrales y de Cooperación y Crédito Agrícola. (Resolution authorizing the creation of the Office of Regional Schools and of Coöperation and Agricultural Credit.)
Date: July 24, 1925.
Pub.: Aug. 20, 1925.

4. Decreto que faculta al Ejecutivo Federal para condonar a los

compesinos y ejidatarios, sus adeudos por maquinaria adquirida de la Sría. de Agricultura y Fomento. (Decree empowering the Federal Executive to cancel debts of small farmers and ejidatarios owing to the Ministry of Agriculture and Development for agricultural machinery.)
Date: Dec. 12, 1930.
Pub.: Jan. 22, 1931.

5. Ley Federal del Trabajo. (Federal Labor Law.)
Date: Aug. 18, 1931.
Pub.: Aug. 28, 1931.
Reformed by Decree of Oct. 6, 1933.

6. Ley de Servicios Agrícolas Nacionales. (Law of National Agricultural Services.)
Date: Aug. 19, 1932 (First).
Pub.: Aug. 27, 1932.
See Law of Dec. 21, 1909; regulated by Law of March 6, 1934.

7. Ley sobre Cámaras Agrícolas, que en lo sucesivo se denominarán Asociaciones Agrícolas. (Law concerning Chambers of Agriculture which in the future will be called Agricultural Associations.)
Date: Aug. 19, 1932 (Second).
Pub.: Aug. 27, 1932.
See Law of Dec. 21, 1909; regulated by Law of Feb. 23, 1934.

8. Ley de responsibilidades de los funcionarios y empleados agrarios. (Law of the responsibilities of agrarian officials and employees.)
Date: Aug. 26, 1932.
Pub.: Sept. 3, 1932.
Annulled by Decree of Nov. 10, 1932.

9. Decreto que deroga la Ley de Responsibilidades de los Funcionarios y Empleados Agrarios. (Decree annulling the Law of the Responsibilities of Agrarian Officials and Employees.)
Date: Nov. 10, 1932.
Pub.: Nov. 22, 1932.

10. Decreto que reforma la Ley Federal del Trabajo. (Decree reforming the Federal Labor Law.)
Date: Oct. 6, 1933.
Pub.: Oct. 11, 1933.
See Law of Dec. 18, 1931.

11. Reglamento de la Ley de Asociaciones Agrícolas. (Regulatory Law of the Law of Agricultural Associations.)

Date: Feb. 23, 1934.
Pub.: April 13, 1934.
See Law of Aug. 19, 1932.

12. Reglamento de la Ley de Servicios Agrícolas Nacionales, en lo referente a la constitución y funcionamiento del Consejo Nacional de Agricultura. (Regulatory Law of the Law of National Agricultural Services in matters referring to the establishing and functioning of the National Agricultural Council.)
Date: March 6, 1934.
Pub.: April 13, 1934.
See Law of Aug. 19, 1932.

APPENDIX C

ARTICLE TWENTY-SEVEN

APPENDIX C

ARTICLE 27 OF THE POLITICAL CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES AS REFORMED BY THE DECREE OF DECEMBER 30, 1933[1]

Article 27. 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 agricultural properties in operation; 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. The centers of population which lack lands and water or 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 agricultural properties in operation.

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 metaloids 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; mineral or organic deposits of materials which may

[1] Translation based on H. M. Branch, "The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared with the Constitution of 1857," *Annals of the American Academy of Political Science*, May 1917, pp. 15-25, reprinted in *Mexican Commerce and Industry*, March, 1927, pp. 9-57; and *Translation of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico*, made by the Asociación de Empresas Industriales y Comerciales, S. L. C.

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 waters of territorial seas to the extent and in the terms fixed by the Law of Nations; those of lakes and inlets of bays; those of interior lakes of natural formation which are directly connected with flowing waters; those of the 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 the said resources be regularly developed, and on the further condition that the 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 in lands, waters and their appurtenances, or to obtain concesssions 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 Ministry of Foreign Relations 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 one hundred kilometers from the frontiers, and of fifty kilometers from the seacoast, 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 on such real property; all

such real property or loans as may be at present held by the said religious institutions, either on their own behalf or through third parties, shall vest in the Nation, and anyone 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 schools of religious associations, 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.

III. 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 more real property than that which is indispensable for their purpose and immediately or directly intended therefor; but they may acquire, hold or administer loans made on real property, providing 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. Commerical stock companies shall not acquire, hold, or administer rural properties. Companies of this nature which may be organized 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.

VI. With the exception of the corporations referred to in Fractions III, IV and V, and the centers of population which, by act or right maintain a communal state, have received dotations or restitu-

tions, or have been organized into centers of agricultural population, 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 cadastral 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. The only point which shall be subject to expert opinion and to judicial determination is the increase in the value of the private property, on account of improvements, or its depreciation since the date of the last fiscal appraisal. The same procedure shall be followed in the case of objects whose value is not determined by the tax offices.

The exercise of the rights pertaining to the Nation by virtue of this article shall follow judicial process; but as part of this process and by order of the proper tribunals, which orders 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 or 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.

VII. The centers of population which by act or right maintain a communal regimen shall have the capacity to enjoy in common the lands, woods and waters which belong to them, which have been restored to them or which will be restored to them.

VIII. The following are declared null and void:

(a) All alienations of the lands, waters and woodlands of towns, settlements, congregations or communities made by mayors (*jefes políticos*), State Governors, or any other local authority in violation of the Law of June 25, 1856, and other relative laws and rulings.

(b) All concessions, compositions or sales of lands, waters and woodlands made by the Ministry of Development, or of Finance or

any other federal authority, from December 1, 1876, to date, encroaching on or illegally occupying ejidos, lands of common allotment, or of any other class belonging to towns, settlements, congregations or communities and centers of population.

(c) All proceedings with regard to surveys or fixing of boundaries, transactions, alienations, or sales by auction carried out during the period of time referred to in the preceding subclause, by companies, judges or other authorities of the States or of the Federation, entailing encroachments on or illegal occupation of the lands, waters and woodlands of ejidos, holdings of common allotment or holdings of any other kind belonging to centers of population.

The aforesaid nullity shall not apply to the lands to which title has been granted in allotments made in strict accord with the Law of June 25, 1856, and possessed by virtue of a title isssued to and held by the same person for more than ten years, provided the area of such lands does not exceed fifty hectares.

IX. Divisions or allotments of lands among the inhabitants of a given center of population which, although made to appear legitimate are not so due to mistakes or fraud, may be nullified at the request of three-fourths of the residents holding one-fourth of the lands divided up, or [at the request] of one-fourth of said residents holding three-fourths of the land.

X. Centers of population which have no ejidos or are unable to have same restored to them due to lack of title, impossibility of identifying such lands, or because they have been legally alienated, shall be granted sufficient lands, forests, and waters to constitute same, in accordance with their requirements; in no case shall they fail to be granted the amount of land which they need, which shall be expropriated for account of the Federal Government and be taken from that adjacent to the villages in question.

XI. For the purposes of the provisions of this Article and of the regulating laws to be issued, the following shall be established:

(a) A direct dependency of the Federal Executive charged with the application and enforcement of the agrarian laws.

(b) An advisory body, composed of five persons, to be appointed by the President of the Republic, and which will discharge the duties assigned to it by the organic laws and regulations.

(c) A Mixed Commission, composed of an equal number of representatives of the Federal Government, the local Governments, and one representative of the peasants, to be appointed in the manner set forth in the respective regulating law, to function in the

Federal District and in each State and Territory, with the attributes assigned to it by said organic and regulating laws.

(d) Local executive committees for each of the centers of population where agrarian petitions are handled.

(e) Ejido Commissariats for each of the centers of population which possess ejidos.

XII. Petitions for restitutions or dotations of lands or waters shall be presented directly to the Governors of the States and Territories.

The Governors shall refer the petitions to the Mixed Commissions, which shall consider the cases during a definitely fixed period of time and render an opinion. The State Governors will approve or modify the report of the Mixed Commissions and issue orders for immediate possession to be given covering the area of lands which they may deem proper. The cases shall then be referred to the Federal Executive for his decision.

When the Governors fail to comply with the provisions of the preceding paragraph within the definitely fixed period of time determined by law, the report of the Mixed Commissions shall be considered rejected, and the case shall be immediately referred to the Federal Executive.

On the other hand, should the Mixed Commissions fail to render a report within the definitely fixed time-limit, the Governors shall be empowered to grant possession of the amount of land which they deem proper.

XIII. The dependency of the Executive and the Agrarian Advisory Board shall report on the approval, rectification or modification of the reports rendered by the Mixed Commissions, with the modifications made by the local Governments, and so report to the President of the Republic, in order that the latter, as supreme agrarian authority, may hand down a resolution.

XIV. Landowners affected by resolutions already handed down granting or restoring ejidos or waters, in favor of villages, or which may be handed down in the future, shall enjoy no ordinary legal right nor recourse, and may not apply for an *amparo*.

Parties affected by dotations shall only have the right to petition the Federal Government to pay them the corresponding indemnity. This right must be exercised by the interested parties within a period of one year, reckoned from the date of publication of the respective resolution in the *Diario Oficial* of the Federation. No claim shall be admitted once this term has expired.

XV. Mixed Commissions, local Governments and other authorities entrusted with agrarian cases shall, under no circumstances,

touch small agricultural properties in operation, and shall incur liability for violating the Constitution, should they make grants affecting such.

XVI. Lands which are the subject of individual award must be divided up at the exact moment the Presidential resolutions are executed, in accordance with the regulating laws.

XVII. The Congress of the Union and the State Legislatures, within their respective jurisdictions, shall pass laws fixing the maximum extent of rural properties and measures governing the division of excess lands, in accordance with the following bases:

(a) The maximum area of land which an individual or legally organized company may own in the Federal District and in each State and Territory shall be fixed.

(b) The amount over and above the maximum area shall be subdivided by the owner within a time-limit to be fixed by the local laws, and the lots shall be put up for sale on conditions to be approved by the Governments in accordance with 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 lots shall be paid for in annual installments, sufficient to amortize the principal and interest, at a rate of interest not exceeding 3% per annum.

(e) Landowners are obliged to accept bonds of the local Agrarian Debt to guarantee payment of the property expropriated. With this end in view, the Congress of the Union will pass a law empowering the States to create their Agrarian Debts.

(f) No subdivision of property will be allowed unless all agrarian requirements of adjacent communities have been satisfied. Agrarian cases shall be handled within a definitely fixed period whenever there exist projects for the subdivision of lands.

(g) Local laws shall provide for the organization of the family patrimony, determining the property of which it should consist and on a basis of its being inalienable and in no case subject to legal attachment or encumbrances of any kind.

XVIII. All 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 corporation, are declared subject to revision, and the Executive is authorized to declare those null and void which seriously prejudice the public interest.

APPENDIX D

AGRARIAN CODE

APPENDIX D

AGRARIAN CODE OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES[1]

ABELARDO L. RODRIGUEZ, Substitute Constitutional President of the United Mexican States, to the inhabitants thereof, know ye:

That in the exercise of the powers vested in me by the Decree of December 28, 1933, issued by the Congress of the Union, I have seen fit to issue the following

AGRARIAN CODE OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES

TITLE ONE

Preliminary Provisions

Sole Chapter

Concerning Agrarian Authorities

Article 1. The following authorities shall handle the procedure, resolution, and execution of agrarian cases:

I. The President of the Republic;
II. The Agrarian Department;
III. Governors of States and Territories;
IV. Agrarian Mixed Commissions;
V. Agrarian Executive Committees; and
VI. Ejido Commissariats.

Article 2. The President of the Republic is the supreme agrarian authority. His final resolutions can never be modified.

Final resolutions, for the purposes of this Article, shall be understood as those which close a file for the restitution, dotation, or extension of ejidos; which create a new center of agricultural population; or which specify the location of nonaffectable small properties.

Article 3. The Agrarian Department shall be the higher agency in charge of enforcing this Code, and shall report directly to the President of the Republic.

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[1] Translation based on that of the Asociación de Empresas Industriales y Comerciales, S.C.L.

Article 4. The Agrarian Department shall consist of:

(a) A Delegation in each State;

(b) The National Agrarian Register;

(c) Offices of Lands, of Waters, and of Division of Properties and whatever other dependencies may be necessary.

Article 5. The Head of the Agrarian Department shall be appointed and removed by the President of the Republic, who shall designate for this post a person who does not possess more land than that defined as a small agricultural property in operation, as covered by Fractions I and II of Article 51.

Article 6. The Head of the Agrarian Department shall have the following duties:

(a) To keep the President of the Republic informed of all cases where the guilty parties, referred to in Article 158, should be turned over to the competent authorities;

(b) To take to the President of the Republic for resolution all agrarian matters;

(c) To enforce such agreements or resolutions, being personally liable for noncompliance therewith;

(d) To propose candidates for the Agrarian Advisory Board;

(e) Such others as may be specified in this Code.

Article 7. The Agrarian Advisory Board, established by subclause "b" of Fraction XI of Constitutional Article 27, shall be composed of five members, who must fulfill the following requisites:

(a) They must not own more lands than those defined as small agricultural properties;

(b) They must have had at least five years' experience in agrarian matters.

Three members of the Advisory Board must be graduate agricultural engineers.

The duties of the Agrarian Advisory Board shall be as follows:

(a) To report on agrarian cases, such reports to be the basis of the resolution of the President of the Republic in regard thereto;

(b) To revise and authorize the plans and projects in accordance with which the Presidential resolutions shall be carried out;

(c) To render a decision on cases submitted for consultation by the Head of the Agrarian Department;

(d) To report on bills of the Federal Executive for the amendment of agrarian laws; and

(e) Such others as may be specified in this Code.

Article 8. Delegates must fulfill the following requisites:

I. They must be graduate engineers whose degrees are legally

recognized, have had five years' experience in agrarian matters, and be of recognized integrity; and

II. They must not own more land than that defined as a small agricultural property in operation.

Article 9. The duties of Delegates of the Agrarian Department shall be:

(a) To preside over Agrarian Mixed Commissions;

(b) To supervise the operation of Agrarian Mixed Commissions, to insure that their proceedings are in strict accordance with the law;

(c) To report all irregularities of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions to the Agrarian Department, with a view to enforcing liability as set forth in this Code;

(d) To serve as the medium of communication between the Department and State Governors in agrarian matters;

(e) To collect from the local agrarian authorities the files which should be handled, under this Code by the Agrarian Department; and

(f) Such others as may be specified in the Interior Regulations of the Department.

Article 10. Governors of States and Territories shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) Appointment and removal of their representatives on the Mixed Agrarian Commissions;

(b) Appointment and removal of the members of Agrarian Executive Committees;

(c) To issue, publish, and order the carrying out of orders for giving possession;

(d) To keep informed of the proceedings in cases being handled by the Mixed Agrarian Commissions; and

(e) To inform the President of the Republic and the Head of the Agrarian Department of irregularities committed by employees of said Department, so that the respective liability may be enforced.

Article 11. Each State and Territory shall have an Agrarian Mixed Commission, which shall be the local agency for the enforcement of this Code.

Article 12. Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall be composed of five members, two of whom shall represent the Federation, two the Local Governments, and one the peasants. One of the representatives of the Federation must be the Delegate of the Agrarian Department.

At least one of the representatives of the Federation and one of the representatives of the Local Government must be graduate

agricultural engineers. The representative of the peasants must in every case be an ejidatario.

Article 13. All members of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions must be persons of recognized integrity and be experienced in agrarian matters.

Representatives of the Federation and of the States may not own more lands than those defined as small agricultural properties in operation.

Article 14. One of the members of the Agrarian Mixed Commission shall act as its President, another as Secretary, and the remainder [simply] as voting members thereof. The duties of President shall always devolve on the Delegate of the Agrarian Department, and those of Secretary on one of the representatives of the Local Government.

Article 15. The representative of the peasants on the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall be designated as follows:

Every two years following a notice of thirty days the Delegates of the Agrarian Department shall convoke the ejidatarios of the centers of population which are in possession of ejidos in order that in each community in the General Assembly in which at least sixty per cent of the individuals who enjoy the use of ejido parcels shall concur and by a majority of votes elect a representative and a substitute representative.

The minutes of the Assemblies referred to in the foregoing paragraph shall be forwarded to the Agrarian Department through its Delegations, so that once the votes throughout the State have been counted, the President of the Republic may make known who were elected.

The remuneration of peasants' representatives on the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall be paid jointly by the Federation and the respective Local Government, half of the respective sum being met by each of them.

The President of the Republic shall issue the regulating provisions for the election of the representative of the peasants on the Agrarian Mixed Commissions.

Article 16. Agrarian Executive Committees shall be composed of three members, one of whom shall act as President and another as Secretary. They shall be appointed by State Governors, being chosen from the agrarian applicants when the respective applications are referred to the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, and may be removed by said Governors.

Article 17. Agrarian Executive Committees shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) To represent legally applicants in agrarian cases.

(b) To carry out orders for the taking of possession and making delivery of the lands or waters to the Ejido Commissariat; and

(c) To deliver to the Ejido Commissariat the papers and everything in their care, at the time the orders for taking of possession are enforced.

Article 18. State Governors may remove members of the Agrarian Executive Committees for noncompliance with the obligations imposed on them by Fractions "a" and "b" of the preceding Article and for bad conduct, if so requested by the Ejido Assembly.

Article 19. Agrarian Executive Committees shall automatically cease operations once the orders for taking of possession are carried out.

TITLE TWO

CHAPTER I

DISPOSITIONS COMMON TO RESTITUTIONS AND DOTATIONS OF LANDS AND WATERS

Article 20. The centers of population which have been deprived of their lands, woods, or waters by any of the acts referred to in Constitutional Article 27 shall be entitled to a restitution of such property, in the manner set forth in this Code.

Article 21. The centers of population which lack lands, woods or waters, or these in sufficient quantities for their requirements, shall have the right to dotation thereof in the manner set forth in this Code, provided the respective center of population existed prior to the date of its petition.

Article 22. Agrarian petitions shall be made in writing and be presented to the Governor of the State in whose jurisdiction the center of population in question is located, a copy of same being forwarded to the Agrarian Mixed Commission.

The Governor must have the petition published and referred to the Agrarian Mixed Commission within a term of ten days and should he fail to do so, the said Commission shall start proceedings with the copy forwarded to it.

Article 23. It shall suffice, for the proceedings of a case for the dotation or restitution to be begun, that the respective petition state an intention to do so.

Should the petition not be sufficiently explicit as to the action in view, the case shall be handled as if it were a dotation.

Article 24. If the petition be for restitution, the case shall be dealt with as such; but at the same time the dotation proceedings shall be officially followed, in case a restitution be inapplicable.

The publication of the petition for restitution shall have the effect of notification for starting the double proceedings referred to in this Article, and shall have like effect with regard to the owners or beneficiaries of the waters to be used for irrigation of the lands affected by the restitution.

Article 25. Should the petition refer to a dotation the case shall be handled on this basis; but should, prior to the order for possession handed down by the Governor, a restitution be requested, the case shall be continued as both a dotation and a restitution. A fresh notification shall be required in this case, to be sent to the presumed parties affected.

Article 26. Procedure in the cases of dotations and restitutions of waters shall be in accordance with the provisions of this Code applicable to dotations and restitutions of lands, with such changes as may be required therefor.

CHAPTER II
CONCERNING RESTITUTIONS OF LANDS AND WATERS

Article 27. Both the inhabitants of the center of population making a petition as well as the presumed parties affected must, within a term of forty-five days, reckoned from the date of publication of the petition, present to the respective Agrarian Mixed Commission the titles and documents on which they base their rights.

Should the properties or lands covered by the petition not be detailed therein, the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall notify the presumed parties affected after studying the file, and the term of forty-five days shall be reckoned from the date of notification.

When the petition details the properties or lands covered by the petition, the presumed parties affected shall be notified by an official communication, in addition to the publication of the notification.

Article 28. The titles and documents referred to in the preceding Article shall be forwarded immediately to the Agrarian Mixed Commission and to the Agrarian Department, for the latter to study them and determine if they are authentic, which study must be made within a nonextendable period of thirty days; and the said Department shall return them together with the paleographic report and its opinion in regard thereto.

Article 29. Should the study made in accordance with the preceding Article show the titles submitted, to enforce rights to lands and water claimed, to be authentic, and should the scrutiny of the other documents prove the date and manner of despoliation, in such

a way that a restitution is in order, the respective Agrarian Mixed Commission shall suspend the procedure of dotation referred to in Article 24, and shall appoint technical personnel to perform the following work:

I. Identification of the boundaries of the lands claimed, and surveying and the making of maps showing the small properties referred to in Article 50 of this Code.

II. Preparation of the respective agrarian census.

The Census Board shall, in this case, be composed of representatives of the Agrarian Mixed Commission and of parties belonging to the respective petitioning center of population.

III. Drawing up a written report explaining the data referred to in the foregoing Fractions.

Should the opinion of the Agrarian Department be unfavorable with regard to the titles and other documents submitted, the Agrarian Mixed Commission must officially continue the procedure of dotation as set forth in Article 24.

Article 30. The Agrarian Mixed Commission shall make a report, based on the evidence in the file, within a term of thirty days, reckoned from the date of termination of the work referred to in the preceding Article, and shall at once submit it to the Governor of the State for his consideration; the latter shall make known his decision within a term not exceeding fifteen days.

Should the Governor fail to issue a decision within the aforesaid time-limit, the report of the Agrarian Mixed Commission shall be deemed as rejected, and the file on the case shall be referred to the Agrarian Department for final resolution.

On the other hand, should the Agrarian Mixed Commission fail to make a report within the time-limit set in the first paragraph of this Article, the Governor may grant possession of the proper area of land, and the file shall be withdrawn from the Agrarian Mixed Commission.

Article 31. Where the area of actual or potential crop lands restored to a center of population is not sufficient for all the individuals who are entitled to a parcel of ground having the area specified in Article 47, proceedings for a supplementary grant shall be instituted by the Agrarian Mixed Commission, in accordance with the rulings applicable to dotations.

These supplementary proceedings shall be instituted by the publication of the decision of the Mixed Commission.

When the area of crop lands restored exceeds that required to award a normal parcel to each of the individuals whose name

appears on the census, the parcels may be augmented up to double [the normal size], and the amount of industrial or commercial capital referred to in subclause "e" of Article 44 may be tripled.

Should there still be an excess of cultivated land after the conditions referred to in the preceding paragraph have been fulfilled, normal parcels shall be awarded in the manner laid down in Fraction I of Article 134.

Article 32. Restitutions of waters shall be applicable whenever the interested parties prove their right to such waters and furnish proof that they were despoiled of same subsequent to June 25, 1856, by any of the acts mentioned in Constitutional Article 27.

The volume of water which can be restored shall be determined by the procedure applicable to dotations, the amount required for the public and domestic uses of centers of population, at the time the respective resolutions are handed down, being respected, as well as the indispensable amounts required by the properties referred to in Article 50, provided the nonaffectable volume, for this purpose, is utilized by them.

TITLE THREE

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS GOVERNING DOTATIONS

Article 33. In order to make dotations to the centers of population which are entitled to the same under this Code, lands, woods, and waters shall be taken from the public and private properties which are legally subject to expropriation.

Properties of the Federal, State, or Municipal Governments which can be taken for dotations or extensions of ejidos or for the creation of new centers of agricultural population shall be subject to expropriation in preference to private properties.

Article 34. All properties whose boundaries are within a radius of seven kilometers from the most important place of habitation of the petitioning center of population shall be subject to expropriation for dotations of ejidos, as set forth in this Code.

Article 35. Properties affected shall be deprived of lands for dotations in proportion to their area and the quality of their land, in the manner set forth in Article 38. Likewise, the total units which can be disposed of shall be calculated in accordance with Article 57.

The number of parcels required for each dotation shall be taken in the manner provided for in Article 39.

Article 36. For the purposes of this Code, the area of properties

shall be that existing on the date of publication of the respective petition.

Article 37. All properties held by the same owner in the same political division of the Federation shall be deemed, for the purposes of this Code, as forming but one property, even though they be separated.

Likewise all undivided properties belonging to several owners shall be considered as one property.

Changes in the administration of a property consequent upon the dividing of an estate by inheritance shall take effect for agrarian purposes if the testator dies prior to the publication of the agrarian petition.

In order that the exception provided for in the foregoing paragraph in regard to the changes in the administration of the property may take effect, the respective deeds must be recorded in the Public Register of Property prior to the date of the Presidential resolution.

Article 38. Ejidos shall be formed of the best lands, as regards quality, and those nearest to the petitioning center of population, as regards location.

Other things being equal, lands shall be taken first from properties immediately adjoining the petitioning center of population. Only when immediately adjoining properties may not be affected, [or when] they have no land of good quality or in quantity sufficient for the dotation, shall land be taken from properties adjoining the former, and so on successively up to the radius of seven kilometers referred to in Article 34.

Article 39. The amount of the dotation shall be in proportion to the number of individuals capacitated to receive a parcel of land within the ejido, and the collective requirements of the center of population for woodlands, pasture, and other kinds of land other than those required for cultivation purposes.

Article 40. When centers of population have sufficient cultivated or cultivable lands for their requirements or if on the properties from which lands should be taken there are no cultivated or cultivable lands available, the grant shall only consist of the area of pasture and woodlands mentioned in the preceding Article, it not being considered that a larger grant of uncultivable lands can compensate the lack of cultivable land.

Article 41. Where a center of population is granted lands deemed as irrigated lands in the respective resolution, the waters pertaining to such lands shall be specified and delivered thereto.

CHAPTER II

CONCERNING LEGAL CAPACITY IN DOTATIONS

Article 42. Under no circumstances shall any of the following be capacitated to obtain grants of lands, woods, or waters:

(a) The Capital of the Republic or any of the State capitals;

(b) Centers of population which, in accordance with the agrarian census made in compliance with this Code, have less than twenty individuals who are entitled to receive lands by dotation;

(c) Towns of more than ten thousand inhabitants, according to the latest national census, if the agrarian census shows less than two hundred individuals who are entitled to receive lands by dotation;

(d) Seaports engaged in maritime traffic and border points having international railway communication;

(e) Centers of population formed within the colonization systems under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture and Development, the National Irrigation Commission, or the Mexican Financing Society;

(f) Centers of population formed on lands covered by a colonization contract executed strictly in accordance with the respective law, and of which the Agrarian Department is cognizant.

Article 43. The permanent resident farm laborers (*peones acasillados*) defined in Article 45 cannot, by themselves, constitute a center of population which is able to obtain a grant in accordance with Article 21; but they shall have rights:

I. To be included in the censuses of ejido petitions, as provided for in Fraction II of Article 45 of this Code;

II. To be included in the cases of extensions of holdings, as provided for in Fraction III of said Article;

III. To receive parcels in accordance with Fraction I of said Article 45;

IV. To form new centers of population, which shall be granted lands, waters, and woods in the terms of the corresponding Chapter of this Code.

CHAPTER III

CONCERNING PARTIES SUBJECT TO AGRARIAN RIGHTS

Article 44. All persons having the following qualifications are entitled to receive an individual parcel in ejidos granted by dotation and therefore to be taken into account in the agrarian census referred to in Article 63:

(a) He must be a Mexican, male, over sixteen years of age, if

single, or of any age if married; or, female, single or widowed if she is the head of a family;

(b) He must have resided in the petitioning center of population for six months prior to the date of the census, except in the cases provided for in Article 43;

(c) His habitual occupation must be the exploitation of the land by his own personal labor;

(d) He must not own, in his own name, or hold title to lands whose area is equal to or exceeds that of the parcel awarded him; and

(e) He must not possess commercial or industrial capital exceeding two thousand five hundred pesos.

Article 45. "Permanent resident farm laborers" shall be entitled to parcels in the dotations in accordance with the following conditions:

I. Should there be vacant parcels in existing ejidos within a radius of seven kilometers from any point of the boundary lines of the property on which the particular "permanent laborers" are employed, and provided the needs of the centers of population have been fulfilled, such "permanent resident farm laborers" who so request shall be granted parcels of ground;

II. Should the agrarian cases referring to lands located within a radius of ten kilometers calculated in the manner set forth in the preceding Fraction be in course of proceedings, the "permanent laborers" who expressly petition the Agrarian Mixed Commission or the Census Board to be included in the census, may be included therein and become entitled to a parcel;

III. Should petitions for extensions of ejidos be in course of proceedings covering lands within a radius of ten kilometers, or should such cases be eligible for procedure in the terms of this Code, the "permanent laborers" who expressly so petition shall be entitled to consideration in the respective agrarian census.

For the purposes of this Code, "permanent resident farm laborers" are the workers on agricultural properties who occupy a house without paying rent, and who depend for their living on the wages which they receive for their services.

Tenants, lessees on a percentage basis, equal share-croppers, or share-croppers on a one-third basis, etc., shall not come under the classification of "permanent resident farm laborers," unless they are actually such even though they bear any of the foregoing titles and only work as lessees on a percentage basis temporarily, being financed by the farm.

Article 46. The "permanent laborers" who are not entitled to

receive a parcel in the terms of the preceding Article shall have the right to receive one free of charge on one of the colonization or division projects of the Ministry of Agriculture and Development or the National Irrigation Commission.

Chapter IV

Concerning the Amount and Quality of Dotations

Article 47. The individual parcels of cultivated or cultivable land shall have the following area:

I. Four hectares of irrigated land, i.e., land which has sufficient water to grow the crops proper to the region, or which receive sufficient humidity by inundation or any other means;

II. Eight hectares of seasonal land, i.e., all lands not covered by the foregoing paragraph.

Cultivable lands are those of any class which, although not actually under cultivation, are economically and agriculturally susceptible of becoming such by the investment of the capital and labor at the disposal of the petitioners.

Article 48. The Federal Executive may increase the area of the individual parcel defined in the preceding Article, but solely in the case of grants to tribes which consist of properties belonging to the Federation, or national lands.

Article 49. Ejido dotations shall include, in addition to crop lands, pasture, woodlands, or land of any other class which may be required to meet the necessities of the respective center of population, and shall include in every case the land required to form the school plots referred to in Article 133 of this Code.

Chapter V

Concerning Small Property and the Properties, Works and Crops Which May Not Be Affected

Article 50. The following shall be respected in all cases of restitutions:

I. Lands to which title was granted in divisions made in accordance with the Law of June 25, 1856;

II. All holdings not exceeding fifty hectares held in the name of the person with right of domain for more than ten years, reckoned up to the date of publication of the respective petition; on the understanding that, if any excess lands are taken, the fifty hectares shall be located wherever the party affected designates at the time the plan of the project is drawn up.

Article 51. The following may not be affected in dotations:

I. Holdings of irrigated lands whose area does not exceed one hundred and fifty hectares;

II. Holdings of seasonal lands whose area does not exceed three hundred hectares.

If there are not sufficient lands to make dotations to a center of population within the radius of seven kilometers referred to in Article 34, the area referred to in the two preceding Fractions may be reduced to one hundred and two hundred hectares, respectively.

III. Lands devoted to the growing of sugar cane on sugar properties having mills, which belong to the owner of the land, intended for the manufacture of sugar, and up to the area required to furnish cane for the average grind in said factories during the preceding five years.

This exemption shall not be applicable if the mills are removed, and shall be reduced proportionally to the reduced manufacturing capacity of the factories.

IV. Up to three hundred hectares with regular plantations of banana, coffee, cacao, and fruit trees;

V. Lands which are being replanted with trees in accordance with the Forestry Law and Regulations. In this case the reforested lands must be those which, because of a slope and other characteristics, cannot be used for agricultural purposes.

In order that the plantations and reforested areas referred to in these two Fractions shall be exempted, the former must have been in existence and the works for the latter must have been started at least six months prior to the petition for ejidos, and such exemption shall depend on the continuance of the plantations or reforestation work; in case of destruction or abandonment, only the areas specified in Fractions I and II of this Article shall be respected;

VI. Up to five hundred hectares of irrigated land or its equivalent, held by agricultural schools of the Federal Government.

Article 52. Lands planted with alfalfa, henequen, maguey and other industrial agaves, and holdings of more than three hundred hectares occupied by the plantings referred to in Fractions IV of the preceding Article may be exempted from dotations, provided the following requisites are fulfilled:

I. That such plantations are in existence six months prior to the date of publication of the petition for ejidos.

II. That the presumed parties affected bind themselves, during the time the case is being handled by the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, to furnish lands in area and quality corresponding to ex-

propriations under this Code; provided that such lands are located within a seven-kilometer radius of the petitioning center of population; and that, further, boundaries are marked off within an unextendable period of thirty days, reckoned from the date the Agrarian Department notifies them that the exchange has been accepted; on the understanding that the exchange applicable in accordance with Article 57 can be allowed only if there are no lands of the same or a better quality or to the extent necessary, but in no case can lands which are neither actual nor potential crop lands be included.

Should the lands specified for the exchange belong to a property not deemed a small property and whose owner refuses to sell them or demands an excessive price, the Federal Government shall proceed to expropriate them, paying the value of the affectable property to the owner thereof.

The areas compensated in the manner provided for in Fraction II of this Article shall be considered separated from the property itself, and shall not be taken into account in later expropriations.

In the agrarian cases referred to in this precept, the Agrarian Mixed Commissions and State Governors shall proceed in such a manner that the Agrarian Department may give authorization for the exchange of lands, for which purpose, the time-limits for normal procedure may be modified with the approval of the said Department.

Article 53. In districts where crops, on account of farming technique, contingencies, or requirements of organization, do not insure positive profits under the ejido agricultural regimen as set forth in this Code, the requirements of the petitioners for lands, woods, and waters may be met by the establishment of one or more ejido districts, if the agreement of the majority of the ejidatarios of the center or centers of population can be obtained as well as that of the owners of the properties subject to expropriation, who shall contribute, in accordance with the proportionate amounts specified in Article 35, the lands, woods, and waters required to meet the necessities of the centers of population and the indispensable elements required for the proper installation of the ejidatarios.

The Agrarian Mixed Commissions, in handling such cases, shall take care that all individuals who are entitled to a grant receive the same, that is to say, that lands, woods, and waters are handed over to them, and that the requirements of the ejidatarios are thus satisfied.

Reports of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall be submitted to State Governors, who shall render a decision in regard thereto and,

after hearing the views of the Agrarian Department, shall issue an order of possession.

Time-limits and other requirements for normal procedure specified in this Code may be modified with the authorization of the Agrarian Department, in so far as necessary.

The orders of Governors having been executed, proceedings shall be continued in the ordinary way set forth in this Code.

In case of total or partial noncompliance with the conditions which, in the terms of the first paragraph, are stipulated for the establishment of ejido districts, the rights of the respective centers of population shall be expedited, and, for the purposes of this Code, all time-limits for notification shall be deemed as having expired.

The declaration of noncompliance shall be issued by Presidential resolution.

Article 54. The following shall not form part of dotations:

I. Buildings of any kind, provided they are not in ruins, it being understood that they are in such condition when, because of their state of destruction, they are not used for any purpose;

II. The hydraulic works enumerated below:

(a) Dams and reservoirs, with the exception of flooded lands regularly devoted to the planting of crops; (b) diverting works, such as dams, spillways, intakes, limiting works, etc.; (c) conduit works, such as tunnels, canals, aqueducts, pipe-lines, etc.; (d) drainage galleries; (e) works for improvement of springs; (f) pumping stations; (g) wells, provided they are in service on the property affected.

The works referred to in this Fraction must indispensably be used for irrigating lands which do not form part of the ejido or which are used for irrigating both the lands affected and those which still remain in possession of the owners.

In every case the protection zone pertaining to the works and buildings referred to in this Article must be specified.

Article 55. The works referred to in Fraction II of the preceding Article shall be subject to the easements of use and passage in regard to the waters required for the irrigating of ejido lands; but the ejidatarios shall contribute toward the maintenance and improvement of the works in proportion to their utilization thereof. Said ejidatarios may, at their own election, contribute cash or labor, but the Agrarian Department shall fix the proportion of the respective contributions.

Article 56. Houses built by the petitioners on the lands affected may be considered as part of the grant, at the request of the interested parties.

Article 57. Where properties subject to expropriation consist of the various classes of lands referred to in Fractions I and II of Article 51, the area which shall constitute an exempted small agricultural property in operation shall be determined by calculating each hectare of irrigated land as being equal to: two of seasonal land; four of good pasture land; and eight of woodland or pasture land located in barren country.

Where, under a Presidential order, land has been taken from a property and it has thus become reduced to the size of a small agricultural property in operation, subsequent resolutions shall not deem the classes of lands as having been changed if the owner has improved them by irrigation, drainage, or any other process.

Article 58. Where properties liable to expropriation have no cultivated or cultivable lands to the extent required to meet the requirements of the petitioning center of population, the grant shall consist of whatever lands are available, small properties in operation being respected. In this case only the individuals whose requirements are met with the lands available shall be considered as entitled to an ejido parcel. The remainder shall form a new center of agricultural population, to be located wherever the Federal Executive may determine, in accordance with the relevant provisions of this Code.

The Agrarian Mixed Commission shall choose the individuals who are to remain on the ejido, preferring for such purpose those who are more attached to the land and have a greater need therefor, but, if necessary, it shall select them by lot.

Article 59. Owners of properties subject to expropriation under this Code shall have the right to choose the location, within their property, of the area which, in accordance with Fractions I and II of Article 51, shall be nonaffectable.

Under such circumstances, the owners shall present their petition to the respective Agrarian Mixed Commission, accompanied by a plan of the entire property which shows the small property, and, with the possibility of the reduction referred to in Fraction II of Article 51, showing, within said small property, the area which, should the occasion arise, must be separated therefrom.

The Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall draw up a report within thirty days and forward the file on the case to the Agrarian Department, which, in turn, likewise within thirty days, shall, if it so deems expedient, propose to the President of the Republic that he issue a declaration to the effect that the area selected cannot be affected.

The declaration of the President of the Republic shall be published in the *Diario Oficial* of the Federation and in the official gazette of

the respective political division, being likewise inscribed in the National Agrarian Register.

Article 60. A small property not subject to expropriation in virtue of the declaration issued under the provisions of the foregoing Article shall form a topographical unit. Moreover, it can never enjoy exemption as a nonaffectable property except as provided for in Fractions I and II of Article 51 of this Code.

Article 61. The following may never be taken for dotations of waters:

I. Utilizations intended for public and domestic uses;

II. Dotations and restitutions of waters under a Presidential resolution;

III. Utilizations the volume of which is strictly necessary for irrigating nonaffectable small properties, to the extent set in this Code;

IV. Waters discharged from pumping stations; on the understanding that the respective concessions can be affected in the manner set forth in Article 86 and other relative precepts;

V. Waters intended for the requirements of railways and other transportation systems, should there be no other source of supply which can be economically utilized therefor;

VI. Waters intended for industrial uses, or for the generation of power, in general, up to the amount which is indispensable for the existence of the industries supplied, in the opinion of the Ministry of National Economy and that of Agriculture and Development.

TITLE FOUR

Concerning Procedure in Dotations of Lands

Chapter I

Procedure Before the Agrarian Mixed Commissions

Article 62. Publication of the petition, as set forth in Article 22, shall serve as notification of the instituting of dotation proceedings to all owners whose properties are located within the seven-kilometer radius referred to in Article 34, as well as to the owners or beneficiaries of waters liable to expropriation.

The Agrarian Mixed Commissions must also notify the owners of lands or waters which are liable to expropriation, in writing.

Article 63. The petition having been published, the following steps shall be taken:

I. An agrarian and livestock census shall be made of the petitioning center of population;

II. A plan shall be drawn up showing the following indispensable data: zone occupied by houses, with the location of the principal nucleus of same; zone occupied by communal lands; all small agricultural properties which are not liable to expropriation; and, finally, the portions of the property which are subject to grants, with the extent necessary for forming the ejido;

III. Commissions shall be appointed to draw up written reports supplementing the aforesaid plan and giving full details in regard to the location of the petitioning center of population; the extent and quality of the lands surveyed; principal crops, and average production; and other data in regard to the locality of an agricultural, climatic, and economic nature. Reports shall also be given in regard to the ownership of the properties subject to expropriation, with data from the respective public offices, consisting, preferably, of certificates from the Cadastral Office and Public Register of Property.

Article 64. The livestock census referred to in Fraction I of the preceding Article shall be made by the Census Board, which shall consist of: a representative of the Agrarian Mixed Commission, who shall direct the work; a representative of the petitioning center of population; and a representative of the owners.

The Agrarian Executive Commission [sic.] shall appoint the representative of the center of population. The representative of the landowners shall be appointed by a majority of the proprietors of land subject to expropriation located within the seven-kilometer radius referred to in Article 34; should they fail to agree on such appointment or fail to make it within the term set therefor by the Agrarian Mixed Commission—which cannot be less than five days nor exceed twenty—the census shall be made by the other two members of the Census Board. The same procedure shall be followed when the representative appointed fails to take up his duties or absents himself for any reason.

Article 65. The agrarian census shall include all individuals who are eligible to receive an individual parcel, under the provisions of this Code, and shall give their sex, occupation or trade, marital status, names of the members of their household, etc., likewise the amount of land, number of head of cattle and plows which they possess.

The representatives of the center of population and of landowners on the Census Board may make the observations which they deem pertinent, which shall be recorded on the census sheets; on the understanding that documentary proof must be presented to the Agrarian Mixed Commission within fifteen days following the date of the termination of the census.

Should the observations made to the census prove to be founded,

in view of the documental evidence referred to in the preceding paragraph, the Agrarian Mixed Commission shall make the necessary changes in the data objected to.

Article 66. With a view to the most satisfactory resolution of ejido cases, the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall, as a general rule, order that all petitions referring to the particular agricultural region be taken into account at the time the works specified in Articles 63 and 65 are being carried out.

Article 67. Based on the data in the respective file and the proofs and documents submitted by the parties concerned, the Agrarian Mixed Commission shall render a report stating if or if not the dotation solicited is in order within a term of thirty days, reckoned from the date on which the file is completed, and in accordance with Articles 63 and 65.

Article 68. The Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall submit their reports to the consideration of the State Governors, and the latter shall issue their orders within a term not exceeding fifteen days.

When the Governors fail to issue their orders within the aforesaid time-limit, it shall be deemed, for legal purposes, that they are not in agreement with the report, and the files shall be referred to the Agrarian Department for a final decision.

Should the Agrarian Mixed Commissions fail to report on the case within the time-limit granted them by this Code for the purpose, the Governors may order that possession of ejidos be granted within the area legally specified, and they are empowered to take over the files from the Agrarian Mixed Commissions at the expiration of the term set in the preceding Article.

Said Commissions shall notify the Agrarian Department when they forward their reports to the Governors and shall inform it when said Governors fail opportunely to issue orders.

When Governors issue orders for possession in the exercise of the powers granted them in the third paragraph of this Article, the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, on turning over the orders of possession to the Agrarian Department, shall complete the files by securing any data lacking and taking whatever steps are still required.

Article 69. The parties presumably affected may appeal in writing to the Agrarian Mixed Commissions setting forth that which their rights entitle them to during the course of the proceedings and until the latter render a report to the Governor. They may appeal in like manner to the Agrarian Department from the time the file is delivered thereto until the Advisory Board reports thereon, but solely for the purpose of making observations in regard to the orders for possession.

CHAPTER II

CONCERNING GOVERNORS' ORDERS AND THE EXECUTION THEREOF

Article 70. The orders of Governors must be made out in such a way that they specify the area and boundaries of lands recovered, in the case of restitutions, and the entire area and the various classes of lands and the partial distribution of the affectable area of each property, in the case of dotations.

If irrigated lands are granted or restored, the quantity of water appertaining thereto shall likewise be stated.

Article 71. Should the Governor's order be favorable to the petition, it shall be forwarded to the Agrarian Mixed Commission for execution, and the latter, in turn, shall order the Agrarian Executive Committee of the petitioning center of population to make delivery of the lands or waters granted by restitution or dotation.

Minutes shall be drawn up of the delivery proceedings, a representative of the Agrarian Mixed Commission acting as adviser.

Lands or waters restored or granted shall be delivered to the Ejido Commissariat designated for the purpose.

Article 72. Delivery proceedings shall consist of notifying the community of the respective order, and in marking out the boundaries of grants, which shall suffice for the ejidatarios to be deemed, for all legal purposes, as owners of the lands and waters covered thereby. The Agrarian Mixed Commission shall immediately notify the Department regarding the order of the Governor and the execution thereof.

Article 73. The proceedings for giving possession having been carried out or the order issued, when same is unfavorable to the petition, it shall be ordered published, such publication serving the purpose of notification to the interested parties. If the lands or waters affected are located in more than one federal political entity, the order shall be published in the official gazette of each of them.

Article 74. Should there be standing crops on lands granted at the time of giving possession thereof due to a Governor's order, the owners shall be given sufficient time wherein to gather the harvest. This time-limit shall be fixed, the proprietors expressly notified, and a statement to this effect posted on the notice board of the Municipal offices having jurisdiction over the center of population so benefited.

The time-limits granted shall in no case differ from the ordinary harvest time in the particular region, and shall never last until the next agricultural cycle of the respective crop.

A maximum time-limit of fifteen days shall be given for ejidatarios to take full possession of pasture lands; immediate possession shall

be given in the case of woodlands which are being exploited, the indispensable time required to remove cut lumber stored on the area granted being given.

Chapter III

Concerning Presidential Resolutions and the Execution Thereof

Article 75. Immediately the files on agrarian cases are received by the Agrarian Department and are completed thereby when certain requisites are still unfulfilled, the Advisory Board shall study them and render a report, in banc. A project of resolution shall then be drawn up, based on the terms of the report, which shall be submitted to the President of the Republic for his consideration.

Article 76. Presidential resolutions shall contain:

(a) The pros and the cons on which they are based;

(b) Data in regard to small agricultural properties in operation determined as such during the time the cases were in course of procedure;

(c) The points of the resolution which must state precisely the lands and waters which are granted, as the case may be, and the amount which each property affected must contribute for the dotation; and

(d) The plans on which execution of the resolution is to be based.

The approved plans of execution and the respective surveys cannot be modified except in the cases expressly provided for in Article 141 and relative Articles.

Article 77. Resolutions handed down by the President of the Republic shall be forwarded, with the respective plans, to the respective Delegation of the Agrarian Department, for execution. They shall also be published in the *Diario Oficial* of the Federation and in the official gazettes of the respective States.

Article 78. The taking of possession of the lands or waters shall be effected by notifying the ejido authority of the center of population of the resolution being executed and by surveying or marking the boundaries of the lands granted, minutes of the proceedings being drawn up.

For this purpose the owners of properties affected or adjoining same shall be cited by official communications, addressed to them at such properties, giving them not less than three days' notice, but the delivery proceedings shall not be delayed on account of their nonappearance.

Article 79. The ejidatarios shall become the owners of the lands and waters granted by the resolution from the termination of the

proceedings of final possession, and possessors thereof, in the manner laid down in this Code.

Article 80. The dividing up of the cultivated and cultivable lands shall be carried out simultaneously with the giving of final possession, as provided for in the relative provisions of this Code.

In cases where the Governor has issued an order in the negative, the Presidential resolution granting lands or waters must be made known to the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, so that the latter, in carrying out a supplemental order, shall give immediate possession of the lands or waters granted to the centers of population, until such time as the Presidential resolution is executed, at the proper time, by the Delegation of the Agrarian Department.

Article 81. Presidential resolutions whereby lands or waters are granted by dotation or restitution shall be recorded as titles to property in the National Agrarian Register and in the respective Public Registers.

Article 82. The provisions of Articles 73 and 74 are applicable to final possession proceedings.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERNING EXTENSIONS OF EJIDOS

Article 83. Extensions of ejidos shall be granted only:

I. In the cases of automatic extension referred to in Article 173 of this Code;

II. When the following requisites are fulfilled:

(a) The center of population has made efficient use of the *ejido*;

(b) There are at least twenty individuals without parcels and who meet the requirements set in Article 44;

(c) The lands are intended for the formation of new parcels;

(d) That the new agrarian census does not show individuals who have received grants under previous proceedings or who have obtained their rights to parcels by succession.

In the cases referred to in this Fraction, the procedure for extensions shall be subject to the ordinary procedure laid down for dotations.

TITLE FIVE

CONCERNING DOTATIONS OF WATERS

SOLE CHAPTER

Article 84. The centers of population referred to in Article 21 shall be entitled to dotations of waters for the irrigation of their lands. Petitions shall be addressed to State Governors, and the files

on the cases shall be started and proceeded with in the same manner as laid down for petitions for dotations of lands.

Article 85. The rights of beneficiaries of waters of national property may be affected for dotations of waters in the manner laid down in this Code.

Privately-owned waters may likewise be taken whenever there are excess waters not utilized for irrigation.

Article 86. The procedure set forth in Article 62 having been concluded, the Agrarian Mixed Commission shall order an inspection, for the purpose of obtaining the following data:

I. Possibility of irrigating the ejido or communal lands of the petitioners;

II. Location of existing utilizations which may be affected;

III. Volume of the streams and gauging of the various utilizations which may be affected and technical data in regard to the irrigation system;

IV. Coefficients of irrigation for crops grown in the particular region;

V. Information in regard to the area of lands irrigated by the utilizations from which water may be taken;

VI. Existing and possible easements on works already established or on lands to be occupied by the center of population which receives the dotation.

Article 87. The study prepared by the party commissioned for such purpose having been received, the Ministry of Agriculture and Development shall be asked to furnish the reports and data required to determine, in addition to ownership of the waters, the rights already confirmed or which may be confirmed pertaining to the presumed parties affected.

Article 88. Orders for possession in regard to waters dictated by State Governors shall be made known to the Ministry of Agriculture and Development after being carried out by the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, in order that said Ministry may provisionally readjust the respective utilizations and regulations and order the carrying out of the provisional limiting works required for the use of the utilizations granted.

Article 89. Once the Presidential resolution has been handed down, the Ministry of Agriculture and Development shall make a final readjustment of the utilizations affected and order the carrying out of the hydraulic works required.

Article 90. All parties affected by water utilizations, in virtue of this Code, shall be entitled to time-limits being specified during the

possession proceedings wherein they may make use of the waters which, on the date of the possession, are being used, in order to take care of unharvested crops. Such time-limit shall not be less than the period yet to run until the termination of the irrigation period, in the case of annual crops; the time-limit to be granted in the case of the crops referred to in Article 51, Fraction IV, may consist of one year.

Article 91. Where all the irrigated lands fed by hydraulic works are taken or the lands affected exceed seventy-five per cent thereof, the expropriation shall also include the irrigation works; in the latter case the easement required shall be established in favor of that part still held by the owner affected. Where the expropriation does not cover seventy-five per cent, the proprietor shall continue to own the works, the easement being established in favor of the lands which become ejidos.

Article 92. In the cases of partial expropriation referred to in the preceding Article, both ejidatarios and proprietors are obliged to contribute to the maintenance of the hydraulic works and to the expenses of water distribution in accordance with the Regulations issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Development, or, in the absence of same, in accordance with rulings handed down by said Ministry, the views of the Agrarian Department being previously heard. Ejidatarios may contribute their labor or cash, according to the circumstances.

Article 93. Private parties or ejidatorios who, as users of waters, refuse to contribute to the maintenance of the works or the expenses of distributing the waters, in the proper proportion, shall have their rights to the water suspended until they fulfill the obligations referred to in the preceding Article.

Article 94. When, from an economic standpoint, it is advisable to use existing hydraulic works when granting waters to a center of population, increasing the capacity of such works or strengthening them in accordance with the requirements of the additional utilization, the President of the Republic may establish the respective easement, the residents of the center of population thus benefited being obliged to carry out for their own account the works required for the purpose.

Article 95. In irrigation districts which are served by private companies under a concession, the Presidential resolutions may establish a preferential right in favor of the centers of population which have received dotations or restitutions of lands. Such centers of population shall pay the usual rates.

Article 96. Bodies of water of private ownership located partially or completely within ejido dotations or restitutions shall continue, provided circumstances so require, to be of common use, for the watering of cattle or for the domestic uses of ejidatarios and proprietors, established customs being respected. On the other hand, bodies of water located outside the ejidos shall serve the same purposes, provided they were used therefor prior to the ejido grant.

Article 97. Where the study of streams subject to dotations of waters shows that there are available waters after filling the requirements of concessions and confirmations of rights granted in the terms of the Water Law and of restitutions and dotations made in accordance with this Code, the petitions of centers of population which could be benefited with such waters shall serve as basis for their petitions to the Ministry of Agriculture and Development, and the Agrarian Department shall *ex officio* handle the procedure of the respective concessions.

In such cases the Ministry of Agriculture and Development shall give preference to the petitions of centers of population over those of private individuals, and shall grant the concession even in case of streams subject to total or partial prohibition decreed in accordance with the Water Law.

Article 98. The regulation of streams and irrigation systems shall be subject to the following general restrictions:

(a) Those to be set by the Minister of Agriculture and Development, exclusively, in the case of streams or irrigation systems where there are no ejidatarios;

(b) Those to be set by the Agrarian Department for the irrigation systems formed exclusively by ejidatarios;

(c) In the case of mixed systems the Ministry of Agriculture and Development shall draw up general provisions and regulations after hearing the views of the Agrarian Department, governing intakes and the principal canals, both for the ejidatarios and private individuals. Said Ministry, when proposing to regulate a stream, may request the Agrarian Department to change the method of utilization of the centers of population affected, proving, for such purpose that the new distribution system does not harm the ejidos and that the requirements prior to the dotation are met with the modified form of utilization.

(d) The regulations may include rulings for the proportionate reduction of specified volumes and flows when the flow supplied is temporarily or permanently reduced.

TITLE SIX

Concerning the Creation of New Centers of Agricultural Population

Sole Chapter

Article 99. New centers of agricultural population shall be created:

I. When the lands restored to a center of population are insufficient for the needs of all the individuals whose names appear on the agrarian census and when it is not possible to make a supplementary grant in accordance with Article 31.

II. When the available lands in accordance with Article 34 are not sufficient to be divided up among all the inhabitants of a center of population in the terms laid down in this Code.

III. When, in accordance with Article 83, the ejido lands should be increased, and there are no affectable lands of good quality available.

IV. When it is not possible to fulfill the requirements for lands and waters of "permanent resident farm laborers," in accordance with the provisions of Article 45.

V. When the affectable properties are included under Fraction III of Article 51.

Article 100. The creation of new centers of population may not be proposed except on irrigated lands or on seasonal lands when their cultivation is not fortuitous.

Article 101. In addition to the requirements set forth in Article 44 for an individual to become entitled to a parcel, there must be not less than twenty individuals in order that a new center of population be formed, and they must expressly declare their conformity with its proposed location and their decision to settle there.

Article 102. The proceedings for the forming of new centers of population which are created in accordance with the provisions of this Code, shall be instituted by the respective agrarian authorities or upon request of the interested parties.

Article 103. Prior to taking steps for the forming of a new center of population, the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, State Governors, the Agrarian Department, or the Agrarian Executive Committees, depending on the stage of the ejido proceedings, shall expressly consult the individuals of which it is to be composed, so that they may state their conformity in accordance with Article 101. Such conformity having been obtained, and the other requisites laid down in said Article having been duly proved, the respective agrarian authority shall submit the petition to the Agrarian Department. The

latter shall immediately proceed to publish the petition, mentioning the authority that instituted the proceedings, the reasons therefor, the names and addresses of the individuals who are to form the new center of population, and such other details as it may deem advisable.

The petition shall be published in the *Diario Oficial* of the Federation and in the official gazette of the corresponding political entity.

Article 104. The Agrarian Department shall appoint the necessary technical personnel to study the location of the new center of population, the quantity and quality of the lands, woods, and waters of which it is to be composed, and the properties from which they are to be taken. It shall also study the location plans and the costs of moving and installing the parties benefited.

The studies and plans which are prepared shall be submitted to the Governors and to the respective Agrarian Mixed Commissions, so that they may express an opinion thereon within a term of fifteen days. At the same time an official communication shall be sent both to the landowners whose lands are, under the plans of the Agrarian Department, to be affected, and to the peasants interested, so that both the former and the latter may, within a term of thirty days, state their views in writing.

The Agrarian Department through the Advisory Board, shall render a report, after taking into consideration the opinion of the Governors and of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, and the views of the interested parties, which report shall be submitted to the President of the Republic for decision.

Article 105. The lands to be taken for the formation of new centers of population shall be chosen from the most suitable properties, always respecting those which are to be exempted under this Code.

Where lands are to be taken from several properties the rules of proportion set forth in Article 35 should be abided by. Other things being equal, preference shall be given to properties which have been the least affected by previous ejido dotations.

In any case, preference shall be given to the dotations and restitutions for centers of population which might be taken from said properties.

Article 106. Presidential resolutions in regard to new centers of agricultural population shall be carried out by the respective Delegation of the Agrarian Department, in accordance with the procedure laid down in this Code for the dotation of lands, waters, and woods.

Article 107. The organization and development of the new centers of population shall be governed by the system laid down in this Code for ejidos.

Article 108. Presidential resolutions which create new centers of agricultural population shall be carried out in the same manner as Presidential resolutions in regard to dotations.

Landowners whose properties are taken for the formation of new centers of agrarian population shall have the same right as property owners whose lands are affected by dotation.

TITLE SEVEN

Concerning the National Agrarian Register

Sole Chapter

Article 109. The ownership of lands, woods, and waters acquired under this Code, as well as any changes in accordance therewith shall be recorded in the National Agrarian Register.

Article 110. Proof of ownership of lands, woods, and waters acquired by restitution, dotation, extension of ejidos, or the forming of new centers of agricultural population shall be based solely on the records in the National Agrarian Register. Ownership of individual parcels by ejidatarios and their rights to waters shall be proven in like manner, as well as any change or limitation in agrarian rights.

Article 111. The records in the National Agrarian Register and the certificates issued in regard thereto shall constitute full legal proof in court or elsewhere.

Article 112. The records of the National Agrarian Register shall be available to the public, and any person whatsoever may consult them and obtain whatever copies he may request.

Certificates shall be issued free of charge or tax when the interests of centers of population or ejidatarios are involved.

Article 113. The following must be recorded in the National Agrarian Register:

I. Presidential resolutions making dotations, restitutions, confirmations, and extensions of lands, waters, and woods.

II. Presidential resolutions creating new centers of agricultural population.

III. Presidential resolutions approving plans for the division of lands, in accordance with the respective Chapter of this Code.

IV. Plans for the parcellization of ejidos and all documents pertaining thereto.

V. Titles issued to the beneficiaries of ejido parcels.

VI. The lists of heirs referred to in Article 140 of this Code.

VII. Changes which affect the right to individual parcels, as provided for in the relevant Articles of this Code.

VIII. All deeds, titles, and documents which, in general, prove

the collective ownership of the real property of a center of population.

IX. All deeds and documents which, in general, have any bearing on ownership acquired by application of the Agrarian Code or the usufruct of communal holdings.

X. All other documents which are specifically mentioned in this Code and its Regulations.

Article 114. Whenever an inscription in the National Agrarian Register must also be entered in the Public Registry of Property, to comply with the ordinary civil laws, it shall be recorded without tax or charge of any kind.

Article 115. A judicial resolution, or an express agreement of the interested parties shall be required to modify or rectify an error in interpretation or a material error in the records in the National Agrarian Register. If one of the parties should be a center of population or an individual ejidatario, this agreement shall only be valid if approved by the President of the Republic at the request of the Agrarian Department.

Article 116. The manner in which the National Agrarian Register shall be kept shall be governed by the Regulations which the President of the Republic will issue in regard thereto.

TITLE EIGHT

Concerning the Regimen of Agrarian Property

Chapter I

General Provisions

Article 117. The agrarian rights which shall be acquired by centers of population shall be imprescriptible and inalienable and, therefore, cannot in any case or in any form be ceded, conveyed, hypothecated, or made the subject of lien in whole or in part, any such transaction, acts or contracts carried out or attempted in violation of this precept being nonexistent.

The following are likewise declared null and void: any acts of individuals, and any and all resolutions, laws, or rulings of the Municipal, State, or Federal authorities, or of the federal judicial or civil authorities which have caused or may, as a consequence, cause a center of population to be totally or partially deprived of its agrarian rights.

An exception is made in the case of the acts expressly authorized by Articles 141 and 142, and those which are permitted by Article 147 whereby the products of the lands, woods, and waters of common use would be utilized to better advantage, such as: leasing of pastures, incidental sale of waters, or exploitation permits for timber

operations or the working of maguey plantations or other sources of income.

Article 118. In carrying out Presidential resolutions on agrarian matters, the lands shall be at once divided into individual holdings, the pastures, woods, and other nondivisible effects being left for common enjoyment in accordance with this Code.

CHAPTER II

CONCERNING EJIDO COMMISSARIATS AND EJIDO BOARDS OF VIGILANCE

Article 119. The administration of agrarian properties and vigilance over lands divided by the community shall be entrusted to an Ejido Commissariat composed of three members and three alternates, who shall act as President, Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively. The juridical representation of the center of population shall be vested in the said Commissariat.

Article 120. A member of the Ejido Commissariat must have the following qualifications:

I. He must be an ejidatario of the center of population concerned, in due enjoyment of his rights, and have been a resident thereof for at least six months prior to the date of his election.

II. He must have a record for good conduct.

III. In the case of the Treasurer, he must furnish a bond satisfactory to the Agrarian Department.

Article 121. The members of the Ejido Commissariat shall be elected by a majority of votes at a general meeting of the ejidatarios.

Article 122. The members of the Ejido Commissariat shall have the following powers and duties:

I. To represent the center of population before the administrative and judicial authorities, their powers being those of a general attorney.

II. To manage the working of the communal properties in accordance with the respective rulings and laws, and to exercise vigilance to insure that individual holdings are worked in accordance with the legal rulings.

III. To foment and promote improvements of all kinds tending to benefit the collectivity.

IV. To call a general meeting of the ejidatarios whenever the Board of Vigilance, the Agrarian Department, or twenty-five per cent of the ejidatarios so request.

V. To comply with and enforce decisions taken at the general meeting of ejidatarios and the rulings of the Agrarian Department

or of its Delegates and other representatives, or of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit in the zones where it operates, in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

Article 123. In each center of population, in addition to the Ejido Commissariat, a Board of Vigilance shall be constituted in the manner laid down in Articles 119 and 121 of this Code for the Ejido Commissariat.

Article 124. The Board of Vigilance shall have the following powers and duties:

I. To exercise care to insure that all acts of the Ejido Commissariat are in accordance with the provisions of this Code and with the rulings issued governing the administration and exploitation of ejidos, and that the federal and local laws and regulations governing ejido activities are duly complied with.

II. To revise monthly the accounts of the Ejido Commissariats.

III. To notify the Agrarian Department, either directly or through its Delegates, of any irregularities of which they become cognizant, in the management of the Commissariats, in the utilization of the lands, or in complying with legal rulings.

IV. To request the Commissariat to call a general meeting of ejidatarios whenever important and urgent matters so require, or when more than twenty-five per cent of the ejidatarios so request.

Any failure of the members of the Board of Vigilance to fulfill the obligations imposed on them by this Article, or any violation of a law on their part, shall furnish grounds for their removal by the General Assembly of Ejidatarios, in the same manner as provided for in the case of the Commissariats.

Article 125. The Ejido Commissaries and the members of the Board of Vigilance shall hold office for two years unless removed for a valid reason by the General Assembly of Ejidatarios, such cause to be passed on in accordance with this Code.

Article 126. The Agrarian Mixed Commission shall call the first general meeting of ejidatarios to elect a Board of Vigilance and Commissaries in the manner laid down in Article 71.

Meetings for subsequent elections shall be called by the Ejido Commissariat or by the Board of Vigilance, in the case provided for in Fraction IV of Article 122. The Agrarian Department shall be represented at all elections.

Notices of elections shall be posted in a visible place in the center of population eight days prior to the date thereof.

Should a majority of the ejidatarios fail to attend the meeting, in virtue of the first notice, another notice shall be put up, on the understanding that the second meeting shall be held whatever be

the number of ejidatarios who attend, and resolutions adopted thereat shall be binding even upon those who may not have attended.

Any contentious point arising because of a call for the election of Commissaries and members of the Board of Vigilance or because of the act of election itself shall be settled by the Agrarian Department.

Article 127. Voting shall be by secret ballot. In case of a tie, the voting shall be repeated and if there still be a tie, the Agrarian Department will make up a mixed ticket of the candidates tied, and the places shall be assigned by a drawing.

Article 128. Ejido Commissaries shall be removed for any of the following reasons:

I. Failure to comply with the decisions of the general assembly of ejidatarios.

II. Noncompliance with the provisions of this Code, or with the regulations governing the working and exploitation of ejidos.

III. Failure to comply with the rulings of the Agrarian Department, issued directly thereby or through its Delegates or representatives in accordance with the provisions of this Code and its regulations.

IV. Misappropriation of funds, or for having committed an offense punishable by imprisonment.

V. At the request of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, as provided for in the respective law.

Their removal shall be effected by a two-thirds vote of the majority at the general meeting held for the purpose, but in the cases provided for in Fractions III and IV of this Article, and the facts having been proved by the Agrarian Department, if no decision is taken at the meeting with regard to the removal of the officers, they shall be considered as suspended, and their places shall be taken by their alternates, or by members of the Board of Vigilance in the absence of their alternates, who are to substitute them until such time as their dismissal is confirmed or the suspension is justified.

All partial or total changes, whether temporary or permanent, in the personnel of the commissariat or of the Board of Vigilance, must be submitted for approval to the Agrarian Department, for the sole purpose of determining whether the resolution of the Assembly has been taken in accordance with the law.

Article 129. In the cases provided for in Fraction IV of the preceding Article, the removal having gone into effect, a copy of the minutes must be forwarded, together with all the papers in regard thereto, to the respective Government Attorney.

Article 130. The Commissariats may not be parties to any transactions nor contract any obligations nor bind themselves in any way

unless expressly authorized therefor by the meeting of the ejidatarios, any acts entered into in opposition to this rule being null and void.

Article 131. The Commissariat shall call a regular general meeting at least once a month, apart from any ordinary or special matters to be dealt with, at which they shall render an account of their activities during the period under review and, in all cases, render a statement of accounts and submit to the meeting for discussion and resolution, any proposal of the ejidatarios who may be present.

Chapter III

Concerning Division and Allotment of Lands for Individual Use

Article 132. The cultivated or cultivable lands, which in virtue of a Governor's decree are held by ejidatarios, shall be awarded temporarily by the Ejido Commissariat immediately after the possession proceedings, in accordance with the following conditions:

I. If it be impossible with the personnel at the disposal of the Commissariat to follow a topographical plan, the land shall be divided into as many parcels as there are individuals mentioned in the decree. In the same manner, if there be any waters, the service thereof shall be temporarily regulated.

II. The Commissariat, at a meeting of ejidatarios, shall award the lands by drawing, minutes of the proceedings being drawn up and signed by said officers, by the counsel mentioned in Article 71 and by anyone present at the meeting who desires to do so.

III. The Commissariat shall then award to each individual the parcel obtained by him in the drawing, defining the perimeter and the boundaries of each plot. At the same time they shall deliver proof of possession to each holder.

IV. Copies of these minutes and a description of the individual holdings formed shall be sent to the Agrarian Mixed Commission and to the Agrarian Department. The description shall specify the exact area of each parcel, quality of land, measurements of perimeter, boundaries, progressive number, name of the beneficiary, etc.

Possession of the parcels, and the use of the waters may not be changed except in the manner laid down in Articles 136, 140, 141, and 144, until such time as the final division is made.

Article 133. In carrying out the Presidential resolutions, the following rules shall govern the division and allotment of lands:

I. Based on the requirements of the community, the land shall be divided into: an urbanized area, pastures and woodland, and cultivated or cultivable land. In the urbanized area, a lot must in

all cases be set aside for the establishment of rural schools, with an athletic field and a piece of land for agricultural experiments.

II. The area of the school lot shall be the same as that of all other parcels. The working of this parcel and distribution of its products shall be governed by the joint rulings of the Ministry of Public Education and of the Agrarian Department, it being sought that in addition to its educational and demonstration purposes, the rural teachers may utilize such holdings for such agricultural activities as shall identify them with the ejidatarios.

III. The cultivated or immediately cultivable ejido lands shall be divided into parcels having the specifications as to size and area which are set forth by the Presidential resolution. Should there have been changes in the conditions of the lands of the ejido, the Agrarian Department, in agreement with the President of the Republic, shall fix a new area for parcels, which area cannot be reduced even though there is not sufficient land to allow for parcels to be awarded to all of the ejidatarios of the center of population.

IV. There will be taken into account the cases in which the beneficiaries may count on, in addition to the parcel of cultivable land, other sources of income within the same ejido (wood, charcoal, livestock products, ixtle, or *lechuguilla*), or outside of it (day wages from neighboring haciendas, domestic work, mule-driving, pottery, weaving, etc.).

V. The lands having distributing boxes for irrigation, pockets for catching rain water, or dirt embankments for flooding shall not be included under division projects when they constitute a natural, physically nondivisible unit and require for their cultivation, general care, conservation, and upkeep the collective intervention of all the ejidatarios.

VI. No parcel may have an area of less than that specified in the Presidential resolution handed down or in the laws in force at that time, except in the case of the lands referred to in the two preceding Fractions.

VII. Any lands remaining after the land has been distributed among the individual holders shall be divided into parcels, to be distributed in accordance with this Code, or to form reserve zones to furnish parcels for the sons of ejidatarios when they become of legal age to ejidatarios from neighboring ejido centers where there is a shortage of land, or to petitioners for ejidos in immediately neighboring centers of population.

VIII. When there is not sufficient land available, studies must be made to see how it can be increased by either of the following procedures:

(a) By cultivating woodlands and pastures with the financial assistance of the Federal Government, the State Government, the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, or with the funds at the disposal of the ejidatarios in the community;

(b) By cultivating hitherto barren lands by means of irrigation, drainage or improvement, with the same financial assistance referred to in the preceding subclause.

Should it be impossible to meet the requirements of the center of population, a declaration shall be published that there is a shortage of parcels, and the provisions of Article 173 of this Code shall be abided by.

Article 134. The [final] delivery of parcels to the ejidatarios whose names appear in the census and who till the ground, to their heirs, and to other ejidatarios, shall be carried out as follows:

I. In making delivery, preference shall be given to:

(a) Ejidatarios or their heirs whose names appear in the original census and who are already making use of a parcel.

(b) Inhabitants of the town whose names do not appear in the census, but who have cultivated a parcel in a regular manner for more than two years.

(c) Ejidatarios whose names appear in the census who have not yet obtained a parcel but who have expressed a desire to cultivate one from the date of the [provisional] division of the land.

(d) Inhabitants of the community who have obtained a parcel by recent award.

(e) Peasants who have reached the age for acquiring a parcel and who have not yet been awarded one.

(f) Permanent laborers from the properties referred to in Article 45.

(g) Peasants from other ejido centers where there is a shortage of land.

(h) Peasants from adjacent centers of population.

In any event it shall be endeavored to give preference in awarding any specific parcel to the ejidatario who has been occupying it or has made improvements thereon. All other parcels shall be awarded by lot.

In drawing up the plans for the division of land, care shall be taken to insure that all parcels are equal from an agrological and economic standpoint.

II. When the land to be divided is insufficient for the number of individual parcels required by the agrarian census, it shall be fractioned into as many parcels as are economically possible and the beneficiaries shall be eliminated in reverse order of the list given in Fraction I of this Article, and within each one of the listed

categories, in accordance with the following selection:

(a) Unmarried men over sixteen but under twenty-one years of age.

(b) Unmarried men over twenty-one years of age.

(c) Married men without children.

(d) Married men with children.

In each one of the four classes mentioned, by the drawing of lots, when all the individuals of the community are not included.

III. A list of the agriculturists who are eliminated shall be made out, so that the peasants who have been left without land under the division may be given:

(a) Individual parcels in ejidos which have surplus land.

(b) Parcels from uncultivated ejido lands obtained by means of the works referred to in Fraction VII of the preceding Article.

(c) Parcels assigned to them in the national irrigation systems.

(d) Parcels resulting from the division of lands by the National Bank of Agricultural Credit or similar institutions.

(e) Lands which said peasants acquire with the financial assistance of the National Bank of Agricultural Credit.

(f) Lands in new centers of agricultural population created in the future in accordance with this Code.

(g) Lands in any extensions granted to ejidos.

Article 135. The assignment of parcels having been completed, the Delegate of the Agrarian Department, accompanied by the Ejido Commissariat, shall effect the actual delivery thereof, by personally going over the boundaries of each parcel, this being considered as the consummation of the possession procedure of the land.

A record of the possession proceedings of the parcels shall be drawn up and signed by the Delegate, the Commissaries and the beneficiaries.

Article 136. At the request of the interested parties, and with the approval of the general meeting of ejidatarios and of the Agrarian Department, two ejidatarios of different centers of population may exchange their parcels.

Article 137. Based on the record referred to in Article 135, the Agrarian Department shall issue the respective individual titles, delivery of which shall be effected through the Ejido Commissariat after having been inscribed in the National Agrarian Register.

Article 138. Parties who are not in conformity with the division and awarding of lands, may apply to the Agrarian Department within a term of thirty days, reckoned from the date of delivery of the parcels.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF THE OWNERSHIP OF AGRARIAN PROPERTY

Article 139. The ownership of cultivable lands shall be individual, as herein provided. Woodland, pastures, water and other natural superficial resources, shall be held by the community.

The cultivable lands which constitute physically indivisible units and which require for their cultivation the combined efforts of the ejidatarios shall be held and exploited on a communal basis.

Article 140. The grantee shall exercise domain over his ejido parcel with the following limitations:

I. The individual holding shall be imprescriptible and inalienable, and may never be encumbered; therefore, any act, operation, or contract under any form or title, already entered into or which may be entered into in the future, by the holder to alienate or encumber any part or the whole of the parcel, shall be considered as nonexistent.

II. The grantees may not lease their parcels on a share basis nor under any other contract which implies the indirect exploitation of the land.

III. In case of the death of the grantee, his rights shall pass to the person or persons whom he supported, even though they may not have been related to him, provided they have lived with him as members of his family. Each grantee shall therefore, to this effect, furnish the Ejido Commissariat with a list of the persons he supports, and name his successor as head of the family. This list must not include anyone who already has a parcel in the same or another ejido.

IV. Only the following have the right to be included in the lists of succession:

(a) The consort of the individual holder.

(b) His children.

(c) The persons of either sex who have formed part of his family.

When the parcel, in accordance with the list of succession, should be transferred to a minor under sixteen, incapacitated to direct the exploitation, the Board of Vigilance shall appoint a person to undertake the working of the parcel.

V. Should an ejidatario die without successors, or should he renounce his parcel or be legally deprived of it, the general meeting shall, by a two-thirds vote, and with the approval of the Agrarian Department, decide on its award.

VI. Grantees of parcels shall definitely lose their rights thereto in the following instances:

(a) For violation of Fractions I and II of this Article.

(b) For not cultivating the land for two consecutive agricultural years.

(c) Female holders who marry the holder of another parcel.

(d) Because of mental derangement, alcoholic degeneration, or imprisonment for a period greater than two years, providing that there are no members of his household to take charge of his parcel.

(e) For failure to appear during the first three months following the possession proceedings and take over the parcel and receive the provisional certificate or title.

(f) For failure to contribute punctually toward payment of taxes or other expenses imposed by the general meeting to take care of the ejido. In this instance, the time-limits which are deemed right and proper shall be extended twice to enable the individual holder to meet his obligation.

Article 141. Land belonging to an ejido community may only be expropriated:

(a) To establish and develop urban centers.

(b) To establish means of communications.

(c) For the construction of hydraulic works for public benefit; and

(d) For the exploitation of natural resources belonging to the Nation, and subject to a federal concession.

Article 142. Waters belonging to ejidos may only be expropriated when no others are available:

(a) For the domestic use of inhabitants of towns.

(b) For public service for towns and to supply railways and other means of communication.

(c) For industrial uses other than the generation of hydraulic power.

Article 143. The land and waters which form part of ejidos may only be expropriated by a Presidential decree, after compensation has been made, and proceedings instituted. The views of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions, of the respective State Governors and of the Agrarian Department shall be recorded in the file of the proceedings.

In such expropriations the compensation shall be based on the economic value of the lands and waters expropriated. The compensation shall be held by the community, which, in turn, shall be obliged to give the ejidatarios concerned new parcels or to compensate them.

The corresponding decree of the Federal Executive shall stipulate with precision what compensation is to be given and the amount thereof, if it is to be paid in cash.

Article 144. A grantee shall temporarily lose his rights to a parcel:

(a) If, without first notifying the Commissariat, he abandons it for more than six months without serious cause and without any of his sucessors taking over the cultivation and obligations thereof.

The suspension of rights shall take effect during the following agricultural cycle, the Commissariat granting temporary possession in accordance with Article 134.

(b) If he neglects to cultivate the land, provided the community suffers to a serious extent, in which case, the suspension shall take effect for the following agricultural cycle, temporary possession being granted to his immediate successor, or should there be none, in accordance with the provisions of Article 134. If the possessor of the title is guilty of the same nonobservance twice in succession, he shall be permanently deprived of his parcel.

The ejidatarios, assembled in a duly called general meeting, shall pass on the above-mentioned causes, but the individual in question may present his defense, and the case shall be reported on. The representative of the Agrarian Department shall be present at the meeting.

Article 145. Decisions taken at general meetings of ejidatarios with regard to permanent or temporary privation of the enjoyment of parcels shall not be put into execution immediately, and they must in all cases be revised by the Agrarian Department, which will hand down a final decision.

Article 146. Questions regarding the domain, possession and enjoyment of parcels which arise among ejidatarios, shall be settled firstly by a duly called general meeting, after the Commissariat has reported on the case, and with the intervention of the Delegate of the Agrarian Department; the latter shall decide, in the last instance, on the concrete cases mentioned.

Article 147. Pasture and woodland, and in general, all lands to be enjoyed in common by the ejidatarios, shall be utilized and administered in accordance with the following rules:

I. All the ejidatarios of a center of population shall have the right to use, for their direct or agricultural needs, the lands and products to which this Article refers, within the limitations set in the interior regulations of the ejido, and upon payment of the dues referred to in Article 152.

II. Contracts for the commercial or industrial exploitation of such lands or of the products thereof for purposes other than those mentioned in the foregoing Fraction, may only be entered into if a resolution to do so be taken by the meeting of ejidatarios, with the

approval of the Agrarian Department, and provided the term of such contracts does not exceed one year.

III. Failure to comply with the rules of this Article shall furnish grounds for the Ejido Commissariat to warn the offenders twice. Should they commit the offense for a third time, the matter shall be brought before a general meeting for a decision to be taken as to the length of time during which the offender should be deprived of his rights. Such temporary suspension shall never exceed six months.

Article 148. In accordance with the Law of Agricultural Credit, the National Bank of Agricultural Credit is charged with the social and economic organization of the ejidatarios in the zones where the Bank operates and, to this end, the Agrarian Department will transfer to it the ejidos in the said zones, and in them the Bank will exercise the functions of organizer, agents, or any other functions pertaining to the employees of the Agrarian Department, and will take their places with all the legal faculties which pertain to them.

In the districts where the National Bank of Agricultural Credit does not yet operate, the Agrarian Department, through its organizing staff and its ejido control, shall study the exploitation of ejidos, and draw up a plan for their operation which shall cover:

(a) The definition of products and methods of cultivation which shall be prohibited on the grounds of being soil-exhausting and antieconomic;

(b) The designation of the products and techniques best suited to obtain the maximum advantage from the natural and human resources;

(c) The form of organization of the activities of the ejidatarios with reference to both production and marketing;

(d) The most convenient utilization of the communal forest, pasture, maguey, and other resources of whatever class in the possession of the community;

(e) Any other social and economic matter of importance to the community.

This plan shall be submitted for approval to the Ejido Assembly, and once it is approved thereby, shall be made obligatory and be put into force under the vigilance and direction of the personnel referred to in this Article.

Article 149. The Agrarian Department, or the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, as the case may be, shall issue such rules and regulations as may be deemed pertinent for the better utilization, exploitation, conservation or reproduction of the resources and products of the land referred to in the preceding Article.

The general meeting of ejidatarios may also issue such regulations, but they must, in all cases, be submitted to the Agrarian Department for revision and approval.

Article 150. The Ejido Commissariats shall undertake the administration of water utilizations which are held communally by the center of population in accordance with the following conditions:

I. The right to the waters and their utilization for the irrigation of ejidos shall be vested in the ejidatarios in their corporate capacity.

II. The rights referred to in the foregoing Fraction shall be exercised as follows:

(a) The volume stipulated in the Presidential resolution shall be borne in mind.

(b) The provisions of this Code governing the use, distribution, and utilization of waters shall be complied with.

(c) The interior regulations agreed on at the general meeting and approved by the Agrarian Department shall likewise be complied with.

(d) The general rulings of the Ministry of Agriculture and Development on the distribution and regulation of streams shall be complied with.

(e) All rulings passed by said Department, the general meeting of ejidatarios or the Ejido Commissariat to enforce the provisions of this Article, shall be abided by.

Article 151. No obligation in cash can be exacted from the members of the ejido community except the fiscal obligations referred to in the following Article, or those contracted in accordance with the Law of Agricultural Credit or expressly authorized by this Code.

Article 152. The fiscal duties of the ejidos shall be subject to the following rules:

I. No Municipality, State, nor the Federation may impose on ejido properties any tax other than the land tax, which shall be based on the proportionate value of the lands in relation to the fiscal value of the properties from which the ejido was constituted. Or, in default thereof, in relation with the fiscal value arrived at by the application of rulings on the subject. The rate assigned shall be based on the income of the land and in no case may exceed five per cent of the annual production of the ejido.

II. While the possession granted by Governors by means of rulings continues to be enjoyed, the ejidos shall pay only twenty-five per cent of the respective territorial tax during the first year, which shall be increased by ten per cent during each subsequent year until the normal rate is reached or until the Presidential resolution is carried out.

III. In cases of possession where the land has not been divided up in accordance with this Code, the territorial tax shall be paid by the Ejido Commissariats to whom the power to collect rates from the ejidatarios is delegated.

IV. The coactive economic process [attachment] shall only be effected on individual crops of the ejidatarios who have not paid their quota and shall not affect more than twenty-five per cent of the yearly production of the parcel.

V. Fiscal liability for the lands held for common use shall be general. Liability for the lands which have been divided up shall be individual, and the tax offices shall take the division lists and plans into account when enforcing such liability.

Chapter V

Concerning the Common Fund and Products from Expropriations

Article 153. In each ejido there will be constituted a common fund of which the following products will form a part:

I. Those from the brush lands and pastures or other resources of the ejido resulting from exploitations made for the account of the community;

II. The quotas agreed upon by the Assembly for the purpose of the general improvement of the ejido;

III. Those referred to in Article 154;

IV. Any other [product] which does not belong privately to the members of the community.

The said fund will be destined preferably to the following objects:

(a) The execution of territorial improvements, such as schools, irrigation works, urban services, etc.

(b) The constitution of the exploitation fund referred to in the Law of Agricultural Credit.

(c) The acquisition of machinery, work or breeding animals, equipment, seed, etc.

It is absolutely prohibited to invest the fund for religious or political purposes.

The use made of the fund in all cases must be submitted to the consideration of the Ejido Assembly and approved by the Agrarian Department.

Article 154. In the cases referred to in Article 141, the procedure shall be as follows:

I. If the object of the expropriation be to create an urban center, a plot of ground shall be given free of charge to each of the ejida-

tarios who has a right to an ejido parcel. From the proceeds of the sale of the other urbanized lots, an amount shall be set aside for public urbanization services, any remainder to become part of the common fund of the ejido.

II. If the object of the expropriation be the establishment of means of communication, the concession wherefor implies the payment of indemnity for the land expropriated, the proceeds shall form part of the common fund, and any other benefit from the expropriation shall be enjoyed on a communal basis.

III. If the object of the expropriation be any of the purposes mentioned in subclause "c" of Article 141, the indemnity shall be enjoyed on a communal basis.

IV. If the object of the expropriation be any of those mentioned in subclause "d" of Article 141, the respective decree shall set forth that all privileges and participations shall pertain to the community.

Article 155. Any indemnity payable in the cases of expropriation referred to in the foregoing Article, shall consist preferably of lands of the same quality as those expropriated. The proceeds from the expropriation shall be invested, firstly, in the acquisition of cultivable lands to replace land taken from the individual parcels; secondly, in the acquisition of any other kind of lands which would improve the ejido, and thirdly, to be invested in the manner set forth in Article 153.

TITLE NINE

Concerning Liabilities and Penalties

Sole Chapter

Article 156. The public officials and employees who in accordance with Article I of this Code, intervene in the handling and deciding of agrarian cases, shall be liable for any violation of the precepts of this Code.

Article 157. The President of the Republic shall incur liability should he violate this Code by refusing to grant to a center of population the lands, woods, or waters to which it is entitled, or if his decisions affect small agricultural properties in operation.

Article 158. Governors shall incur liability and shall be turned over to the competent authorities:

(a) For delaying the appointment of their representatives on the Agrarian Mixed Commissions for more than fifteen days, when, by reason of such delay, the Commissions are broken up.

(b) For failure to refer to the Agrarian Mixed Commission, within ten days of their presentation, the petitions made by the centers of population.

(c) For failure to pass judgment on the reports of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions or for not returning the files sent them by the Commissions within the time-limit set by this Code.

(d) For affecting a small agricultural property in operation by the dictation of orders of possession; and

(e) In the other cases specified in this Code.

Article 159. Public officials who intervene in the designation of members of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall incur liability if they do so in violation of Articles 12, 13, and 15 of this Code.

Article 160. The Head of the Agrarian Department shall incur liability:

I. If he furnishes false data to the President of the Republic when submitting to him the drafts of agrarian resolutions, when such falsehood can be partially or totally imputed to him.

II. When, in violation of this Code, he proposes resolutions whereby the lands, waters, or woods to which a center of population is entitled are refused.

III. For proposing that, by means of a Presidential resolution, lands from small agricultural properties in operation be affected.

IV. For ordering that a Presidential resolution affecting small agricultural properties in operation be carried out.

The guilty party shall become liable for a prison sentence of from six months to two years, at the discretion of the District Judge.

Article 161. The Head of the Agrarian Department shall also incur liability:

I. For failure to notify the President of the Republic of the cases in which agrarian officials or employees should be turned over to the authorities.

II. For failure to make an accusation against the agrarian authorities to whom he is superior in rank, when they have incurred liability in accordance with this Code.

The President of the Republic shall impose the administrative penalties in accordance with the Regulations which are to be issued for the purpose.

Article 162. Members of the Agrarian Advisory Board shall incur liability:

(a) For acting with deceit in the cases referred to in Article 7.

(b) For proposing to affect a small agricultural property in operation.

(c) For failure to render a report within the time-limits set in the Interior Regulation of the Agrarian Advisory Board, when such omission is partially or fully imputable to them.

In the cases referred to in this Article, the members of the Agrarian

Advisory Board shall be liable for a prison sentence of from six months to two years, at the discretion of the District Judge, depending on the seriousness of the offense.

Article 163. The Delegates of the Agrarian Department in the States or Territories shall incur liability:

I. For proposing in their reports or studies that, in violation of this Code, lands, waters, or woods to which a center of population is entitled be refused.

II. For proposing that lands be taken from small agricultural properties in operation, for executing Presidential resolutions which affect them, or for ordering same to be executed.

III. For failure to deal with the agrarian cases entrusted to them within the time limit set in this Code, unless they have a well-founded excuse of which the Agrarian Department is previously aware.

IV. For failure to notify the Agrarian Department in due time of any irregularities committed by the respective Agrarian Mixed Commissions.

V. For not informing the Agrarian Department truthfully regarding the agrarian cases in which they intervene, in such a way that a decision is or might be handed down in violation of this Code.

VI. For granting or proposing to grant to the owners whose lands are affected longer terms than those set forth in Article 74 for harvesting their crops or for the removal of cattle or forest products.

In the cases referred to in this Article, the Delegates responsible shall become liable for a prison sentence of from six months to two years, at the discretion of the District Judge, depending on the seriousness of the offense.

The technical or administrative staff of the Agrarian Department or of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall incur the same liabilities and penalties as those laid down for the Delegates.

The Heads of the Tax or Cadastral offices or of federal or local Registers of Public Property, or of any other office which, in compliance with this Code, are bound to furnish data and documents to the agrarian authorities for the expediting of ejido cases, must do so within a term of fifteen days at the outside. Violation of this precept shall be punishable by definite or temporary suspension from duty, depending on the seriousness of the charge.

Article 164. Members of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall incur liability:

I. For failure to make proposals to the Commissions in the manner laid down in their Interior Regulations, when the omission can either partially or entirely be imputed to them.

II. For furnishing false data to the Agrarian Mixed Commissions in the proposals which serve as a basis for their reports; and

III. For proposing that small agricultural properties in operation be affected, or for executing orders for possession which would affect them.

In the cases referred to in this Article the offending members of the Agrarian Mixed Commissions shall become liable for a prison sentence of from six months to two years, at the discretion of the District Judge, and depending on the seriousness of the offense.

Article 165. The Federal Courts shall be competent to take cognizance of the official offenses listed in the foregoing articles, and the Federal Code of Penal Procedure shall supplement the present Code.

Article 166. All acts or omissions of the officials or employees who intervene in the application of this Code, which, although not specified in the above Articles, constitute a violation thereof, shall be considered as offenses, and shall be punishable by administrative process.

Article 167. The President of the Republic shall issue regulations to define the acts or omissions punishable in accordance with the preceding Article and to establish the respective penalties.

Article 168. The public at large is hereby empowered to denounce to the President of the Republic and to the Head of the Agrarian Department all acts or omissions of agrarian officials and employees who, in accordance with this Code and its Regulations, have incurred liability, so that they may be turned over to the proper authorities.

Article 169. The provisions of this Chapter neither restrict nor modify the scope of the penal laws that may be applicable to any act or omission of the agrarian officials or employees punishable thereunder, In any case, the respective penalties shall be accumulated, if, besides an official offense, an offense of the common order has been committed.

TITLE TEN

General Provisions

Sole Chapter

Article 170. For the purpose of nullifying the divisions referred to in Fraction IX of Constitutional Article 27, ejidatarios or usufructuaries of communal lands, in the proportion stated in said Constitutional precept, shall address a communication to the Delegate of the Agrarian Department containing the following data:

I. Names of the petitioners and the proportion of communal area owned by them.

II. Name of the community or center of population in question, its location, and to which Municipality and State it belongs.

III. Date of definitive possession, in case the ejido was acquired by dotation or restitution.

IV. Titles respresenting possession and ownership of the lands, in case they have been held from time immemorial.

Article 171. The communication referred to in the foregoing Article having been presented, the Delegate shall call a general meeting of ejidatarios or of usufructuaries of communal lands, at which the interested parties and the parties affected by the nullity requested shall be heard, and all the testimonial and documentary proof submitted shall be received.

The Delegation will substantiate the proceedings within ninety days, which period shall include the time-limits granted to the parties interested for the presentation of proofs and argument.

The respective file shall be submitted to the Agrarian Department so that the President of the Republic may decide whether the division or distribution in question is to be declared null and void.

Article 172. Should a division of the land be nullified, a new division and awarding of parcels shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

Article 173. The Agrarian Department shall *ex-officio* handle all extensions of ejidos which require the application of this Code for the division of the land, in the cases where, in accordance with Article 133, a declaration is made that there is a shortage of parcels.

The declaration shall serve the purpose of a petition of the respective community and a recognition by the Agrarian Department of its need for land. The case shall be deemed as substantiated before the Agrarian Mixed Commission and resolved on affirmatively by the respective Governor. The Agrarian Department shall be bound to follow up the proceedings and forward the report of the Advisory Board to the President of the Republic in half the ordinary time-limits set in this Code.

Article 174. Ejidos which consist of sufficient land to allow the parcel called for by this Code to be given to each peasant shall be divided up first. The following order shall be observed for holdings that do not fulfill these requirements:

(a) Ejidos whose divisible area can be increased in accordance with Article 133.

(b) Ejidos which have a common fund, which permits them to acquire land, or which enjoy credit for the same purpose.

(c) Ejidos where ejidatarios from other ejido communities having no parcels available can be placed.

(d) Ejidos which, in accordance with Article 133, should be increased or which merit the establishment of a new center of population.

Article 175. With the exception of legal easements, all encumbrances on properties taken for ejidos shall automatically become null and void by virtue of the Presidential resolution.

Leases, or contracts providing rights of tenure and trust, usufruct or shares shall cease to have effect, with regard to lands taken for holdings, from the date of the execution proceedings, regardless of the nature or date of the contract.

Encumbrances on properties taken in agrarian expropriations shall be extinguished in proportion to the part of the property taken, the security of the creditors becoming limited in such cases to the proportion of the indemnity pertaining to the parties whose property has been affected, in accordance with this Code. Action on the part of the creditors, in so far as the extinguished portion of the encumbrance is concerned, shall only apply to such property of the debtors as may be proportional to said indemnity.

During the time which elapses between possession under an order passed by the Governor and possession based on the Presidential resolution, the encumbrances and contracts affecting the proportional part of the property affected shall be considered in suspense.

Article 176. Should a division of land or a transfer of property be effected subsequent to the publication of the petition for ejidos, after knowledge thereof, or subsequent to the notification of the founding of a new center of agricultural population, parties who have acquired the land shall be entitled to a refund of any sums paid, and also to payment of damages.

Proposed divisions under the respective laws passed by the States must be approved by the Agrarian Department. Such approval shall be granted only if the agrarian requirements of the region have been satisfied, and the resolutions granting ejidos to centers of population not hitherto furnished therewith have been submitted to the President of the Republic. In this case, the ejido dotations shall be definitely resolved on within a peremptory period of time, being officially dealt with, in accordance with Article 173.

Article 177. The proprietors affected by resolutions granting or restoring lands or waters handed down in favor of communities or which may be handed down in the future shall have no ordinary right or legal recourse, nor may they apply for an *amparo*.

Parties affected by dotations shall only have the right to petition the Federal Government to pay them the respective indemnity.

This right must be exercised by the interested parties within one

year, reckoned from the date of publication of the respective resolution in the *Diario Oficial* of the Federation. No claim shall be admitted after the expiration of this period of time.

Article 178. Any cases of doubt arising from the application of this Code shall be solved by the Federal Executive.

TRANSITORY ARTICLES

Article 1. The Agrarian Mixed Commissions, in so far as the election of representatives of the peasants is concerned, shall assemble on January 1, 1935, in the manner laid down in Article 15 of this Code. In the meantime, the President of the Republic, through the Agrarian Department, shall provisionally appoint the representatives of the ejidatarios from three names proposed by the other members of these Commissions, who shall interpret the views of the ejidatarios in the respective entities.

Article 2. Centers of population which are at present in possession of lands, waters, and woods granted them by previous laws shall proceed to elect Commissariats and Boards of Vigilance.

For this purpose, the Agrarian Department shall, as it deems advisable, call general meetings of ejidatarios in each State and Territory. The elections must be completed not later than the 31st of December of the current year.

The Ejido Executive and Administrative Committees shall automatically cease to function upon the Commissariats and Boards of Vigilance taking office.

Article 3. The indemnities referred to in Article 177 shall be dealt with in accordance with rulings to be passed in regard thereto. These rulings shall form a Title of this Code.

Article 4. The proportional extinction of the encumbrances on landed property affected, referred to in the third paragraph of Article 175, shall be effected on the assets constituted prior to the issuance of this Code, provided no sentence has been handed down which has become operative with regard thereto prior to this Code going into force.

Article 5. The proceedings in pending cases shall be adjusted in their present condition to this Code with the exception of land divisions initiated under a previous law and those governed by the decree of December 28, 1932, when the centers of population are in conformity therewith.

Article 6. The time-limit set in this Code for Governors to issue a ruling on the cases referred to them by the Local [State] Agrarian Commissions, and where no provisional resolution has been handed

down in accordance with the Agrarian Law of March 21, 1929, shall commence on the date of publication of this Code.

Article 7. All laws, decrees, circulars, and other rulings on agrarian matters issued prior to this Code, as well as those which conflict with its enforcement are hereby repealed.

In compliance with the provisions of Fraction I of Article 89 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, and for its publication and observance, I promulgate this Code in Durango, Dgo., on the twenty-second day of March nineteen hundred and thirty-four. (Sd.) A. L. Rodríguez. The Secretary of State in charge of the Office of Agriculture and Development, (Sd.) Francisco S. Elías. The Head of the Agrarian Department, (Sd.) Angel Posada. To the Minister of the Interior.

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