University of New Mexico

UNM Digital Repository

History ETDs

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Fall 12-16-1994

The Spirit of Hidalgo: The Mexican Revolution in Coahuila, 1910-1915

Suzanne B. Pasztor

University of New Mexico - Main Campus

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/hist_etds

Part of the [Latin American History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Pasztor, Suzanne B.. "The Spirit of Hidalgo: The Mexican Revolution in Coahuila, 1910-1915." (1994).
https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/hist_etds/286

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in History ETDs by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

THE AUTHOR HAS DECLINED
THE OPPORTUNITY TO CORRECT THE
FORMAT, TYPOGRAPHICAL AND/OR OTHER ERRORS
CONTAINED IN THIS MANUSCRIPT.

THE UNIVERSITY APOLOGIZES TO THE READER
FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE
THAT MIGHT RESULT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87131

POLICY ON USE OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Unpublished theses and dissertations accepted for master's and doctor's degrees and deposited in the University of New Mexico Library are open to the public for inspection and reference work. *They are to be used only with due regard to the rights of the authors.* The work of other authors should always be given full credit. Avoid quoting in amounts, over and beyond scholarly needs, such as might impair or destroy the property rights and financial benefits of another author.

To afford reasonable safeguards to authors, and consistent with the above principles, anyone quoting from theses and dissertations must observe the following conditions:

1. Direct quotations during the first two years after completion may be made only with the written permission of the author.
2. After a lapse of two years, theses and dissertations may be quoted without specific prior permission in works of original scholarship provided appropriate credit is given in the case of each quotation.
3. Quotations that are complete units in themselves (e.g., complete chapters or sections) in whatever form they may be reproduced and quotations of whatever length presented as primary material for their own sake (as in anthologies or books of reading) ALWAYS require consent of the authors.
4. The quoting author is responsible for determining "fair use" of material he uses.

This thesis/dissertation by Suzanne B. Pasztor has been used by the following persons whose signatures attest their acceptance of the above conditions. (A library which borrows this thesis/dissertation for use by its patrons is expected to secure the signature of each user.)

NAME AND ADDRESS

DATE

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Suzanne B. Pasztor
Candidate

History Department
Department

This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm:

Approved by the Dissertation Committee:

Guida B. Hall, Chairperson

R. Himmerich Valencia

J. L. Kessell

Christine Marie Sierra

Don M. Coor

Accepted:

Hebert

Dean, Graduate School

December 16, 1994

Date

THE SPIRIT OF HIDALGO:

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION IN COAHUILA, 1910-1915

BY

SUZANNE B. PASZTOR

B.A., History, Adams State College, 1986

M.A., History, Texas Christian University, 1988

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in History

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

December 1994

© Copyright 1994 by Suzanne B. Pasztor

For My Parents,
For Peter,
and In Loving Memory of Irene Halasz

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many individuals and institutions have aided me in the completion of this dissertation. A Graduate Fellowship and two research grants from the Institute of Latin American Studies at the University of New Mexico helped fund my research, as did a grant from the International Federation of Women's Clubs. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of my dissertation committee members: Linda B. Hall, Don M. Coerver, John L. Kessell, Robert Himmerich y Valencia, and Christine M. Sierra. I am especially indebted to Linda Hall and Don Coerver, who have seen me through both the Master's and Doctoral degrees and who have made my graduate career both rewarding and enjoyable. I am likewise grateful to Jonathan Porter, chairman of the History Department of the University of New Mexico, who has always provided encouragement and support.

The assistance of several people at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse was also instrumental in the completion of my work. Jean Bonde and Randy Hoelzen of Murphy Library's Interlibrary Loan Office provided assistance in locating the sometimes obscure materials needed to finish the writing of my dissertation.

The help and support of several people in Mexico, where I conducted the majority of my research, was invaluable. In Saltillo, Alfonso Vázquez Sotelo, director of the Archivo General del Estado de Coahuila, generously accomodated my work even as his staff was in the process of reorganizing this archive. I am also indebted to Arq. Guillermo González, director of the Archivo General del Tribunal Superior de Justicia, who graciously allowed me access to documents in this littel-used archive. Carlos Manuel Valdés Dávila, Ildefonso Dávila del Bosque, and the staff of the Archivo Municipal de Saltillo, provided encouragement and a comfortable place to work. Martha Rodríguez García and José Luis García Valero gave additional support and suggestions. Finally, I wish to thank Elizabeth Gutiérrez Romero and the faculty of the Centro de Estudios Socioeconómicos of the Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, for including me in their institution as a visiting research scholar.

In Mexico City, several people have provided valuable assistance. I especially wish to thank Beatriz Carrillo González of the Archivo de Relaciones Exteriores. I am also grateful to Esperanza Fujigaki Cruz and Augusto Cardona Fujigaki for their hospitality and friendship.

THE SPIRIT OF HIDALGO:
THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION IN COAHUILA, 1910-1915

BY
SUZANNE B. PASZTOR

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

DECEMBER 1994

ABSTRACT

THE SPIRIT OF HIDALGO: THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION IN COAHUILA, 1910-1915

by Suzanne B. Pasztor
Bachelor of Arts, History, Adams State College
of Colorado, 1986; Master of Arts, History, Texas
Christian University, 1988; Doctor of Philosophy, History,
University of New Mexico, 1994

This dissertation fills a gap in the scholarship of the Mexican Revolution by providing a detailed history of the northeastern state of Coahuila from the late Porfirian era to approximately 1915. It evaluates the general social, political, and economic developments that contributed to revolutionary activity within the state and that helped to shape the movements led by Francisco I. Madero and Venustiano Carranza. The social bases and characteristics of support for Madero, Carranza, and other revolutionary factions are also examined. Another major theme is the crucial role played by the extensive Coahuila-Texas border in the financing of the Mexican Revolution. Finally, the immediate outcomes of the Revolution are addressed through a study of the reforms introduced during the governorships of Carranza and Gustavo Espinosa Mireles.

The Mexican Revolution in Coahuila occurred against a backdrop of rapid modernization, economic transformation, and

social change. It was also shaped by Coahuila's pattern of development, which encouraged traditions of local autonomy, political independence, and economic self-sufficiency. The Madero revolt of 1910-1911 was a reaction to both economic crisis and the effects of political centralization. Yet while it helped give expression to popular discontent, it did not address the major causes of such discontent.

Coahuila's popular movement was more successfully harnessed by Carranza, whose moderate approach to reform also helped maintain the support of the middle sectors and of some elites. A persistent economic crisis encouraged unrest just as it provided recruits for Carranza's Constitutionalist army. Political factionalism, reminiscent of the era of Porfirio Díaz, also hampered efforts by Carranza to pacify Coahuila.

In the immediate aftermath of the Constitutionalist victory, Coahuila's government remained highly centralized while Carranza and Espinosa Mireles sought to reconstruct the state. Cautious yet often significant reforms began to challenge the traditional socioeconomic system. Although more sweeping change would not come until the 1930s, Coahuila's broader adjustment to modernization continued apace.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vii
CONTENTS	x
INTRODUCTION	1
MAP 1. PORFIRIAN COAHUILA	13
CHAPTER 1. THE SPIRIT OF HIDALGO: NINETEENTH CENTURY COAHUILA	14
CHAPTER 2. PORFIRIAN POLITICS AND THE GROWTH OF MADERISMO	74
CHAPTER 3. REGIONS AND REBELLIONS: THE MADERISTA REVOLT OF 1910-1911	106
CHAPTER 4. MADERO, CARRANZA, AND COAHUILA: THE DUAL ADMINISTRATION	130
CHAPTER 5. MOBILIZING DISCONTENT	163
CHAPTER 6. CATTLE, CONTRABAND, AND CUSTOMS: FINANCING THE CONSTITUTIONALIST MOVEMENT	198
CHAPTER 7. VILLISMO IN COAHUILA	228
CHAPTER 8. RECONSTRUCTION AND REFORM: THE TRIUMPH OF CONSTITUTIONALISM	256
CONCLUSION	288
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	298

INTRODUCTION

The regional approach to Mexican history continues to provide valuable insights into the Mexican Revolution. Research on this topic in state and local archives likewise continues to encourage the development of new interpretive frameworks. Significant gaps in the historiography of the Mexican Revolution still exist, however. This dissertation attempts to add to the body of regional literature by focusing on one of the areas for which knowledge is still incomplete: the northeastern state of Coahuila.

As the birthplace of several key revolutionary figures, Coahuila has not been neglected by scholars. Several historians have told the story of Francisco I. Madero, his challenge to the regime of Porfirio Díaz and his eventual demise. The laudatory biography of Stanley Ross, Francisco I. Madero: Apostle of Mexican Democracy (1955), remains a basic work, and attempts to place the national figure of Madero in his Coahuilan context. Charles Cumberland's Mexican Revolution: Genesis Under Madero (1952) is still a fundamental treatment of the Madero regime, and provides another sympathetic biography of this native Coahuilan. Scholars of the Mexican Revolution are also familiar with Coahuila's other revolutionary native son, Venustiano Carranza. Douglas Richmond's work, Venustiano Carranza's Nationalist Struggle,

1893-1920 (1980), places Carranza in his Coahilan context, while focusing primarily on his legacy as a national figure.

Richmond's article "Factional Political Strife in Coahuila, 1910-1920" (1980), also provides an excellent analysis of Carranza's approach to Coahuila, first as the state's governor, and later as president of Mexico. He argues that Carranza was ultimately more successful than other revolutionary leaders in pacifying the state because he understood Coahuilan desires for "clean living, good schools, municipal autonomy, greater access to land, and a deep reverence for the legislative process." Carranza's brand of moderate or orderly reformism, moreover, was largely a product of Coahuila, a state that "had always been more prosperous, urbanized, and reformist than most of Mexico since the 1880s." Richmond also notes that Carranza's reformism had more in common with the Porfiriato so that in Coahuila "continuity rather than abrupt change explains ideological trends from 1910-1920."¹

The Coahuilan background of these two leaders, then, has not been neglected by historians. Other scholars have also provided good studies of the background to the Mexican Revolution in Coahuila. Dissertations by William S. Langston and William K. Meyers contribute to an understanding of the

¹Richmond, "Factional Political Strife in Coahuila, 1910-1920," Hispanic American Historical Review 60 (February 1980): 49-68. William H. Beezley has also examined the Carranza governorship in "Governor Carranza and the Revolution in Coahuila," Americas 33 (October 1976): 50-61.

structure of Coahuilan society on the eve of the 1910 revolution. These works also discuss the specific conditions that contributed to the growth of anti-Díaz opposition groups and ultimately, to local revolt. Langston's "Coahuila in the Porfiriato" (Tulane University, 1980) uses prosopography to analyze the interplay between the Porfirian regime and Coahuilan elites. The author suggests that the revolution in Coahuila was a product of political and economic "cramps"--particularly among Coahuila's younger generation of professionals. Like the rest of Mexico, Coahuila experienced both a radical movement stressing socioeconomic reform and supported by those on the edge of Porfirian prosperity, and a liberal reformist movement supported by some sectors of the elite (including Francisco Madero and Venustiano Carranza) and by young professionals.²

Meyers' "Interest Group Conflict: A Social History of La Comarca Lagunera 1888-1911" (University of Chicago, 1980) attempts to examine the status of both elite groups and the lower classes on the eve of the Revolution in "the most rapidly expanding industrial and urban area in Mexico"--the Laguna region (encompassing southwestern Coahuila and northwestern Durango). Here, argues Meyers, the revolution was unique in that a group of landowners led the revolution and landowners and peasants joined together to defeat the old

²Willam Stanley Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato: A Study of Political Elites," (Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1980).

regime. Like Langston, Meyers ties the origin of the revolution in the Laguna to the area's social and economic development. His epilogue provides an overview of the armed phase of the revolution in the Laguna and suggests that Madero, Huerta, Villa, and even Carranza ultimately failed to end intra-elite conflicts or to diffuse the region's popular movement of agricultural and industrial workers.³

In addition to the works of Meyers and Langston, more recent studies have enhanced the picture of Coahuila's social and economic structure on the eve of the revolution. Manuel Plana provides another examination of the Laguna region in El reino de algodón en México: la estructura agraria de la Laguna (1855-1910) (1991). He traces the growth of the Laguna's cotton industry, while examining relations of production and the characteristics of the labor force. Rita Favret Tondato's Tenencia de la tierra en el estado de Coahuila (1880-1987) (1992) is a pioneering study of patterns of land ownership and changes in Coahuila's agrarian structure from 1880 to the contemporary era. In tracing this one theme over an extended period Favret's work helps to understand the economic profile of Coahuila in historical perspective. Several works by Mario

³William K. Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict and Revolutionary Politics: A Social History of La Comarca Lagunera, Mexico, 1880-1911," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1980). Meyer has also written an excellent analysis of the consequences of Porfirian centralization on the Laguna region in "Politics, Vested Rights, and Economic Growth in Porfirian Mexico: The Cía Tlahualilo in the Comarca Lagunera, 1885-1911," Hispanic American Historical Review 57 (August 1979): 420-454.

Cerutti on the economic development of northeastern Mexico during the nineteenth century, also help put Coahuila's growth in a broader context, while providing a sense of the socioeconomic milieu of the Porfirian era.⁴

Mexican scholars have also pursued the topic of Porfirian Coahuila, providing information and perspectives that are useful to the study of Coahuila's revolutionary phase. Romana Falcón has examined the effects of Porfirian centralization. She illustrates the steps taken by Díaz in his attempt to gain definitive political control over Coahuila, while arguing that, in the process, Díaz proved the inherent weakness of the Porfirian regime--the incapacity to modernize its political system and to provide a mechanism for balancing interests. Thus, while Evaristo Madero unsuccessfully sought accomodation with Díaz, his grandson Francisco would be pushed to rebel against Díaz. He would do so in the company of the middle and popular sectors, which were also effectively excluded from the

⁴Manuel Plana, El reino del algodón en México: la estructura agraria de la Laguna (1855-1910) (Torreón: Ayuntamiento de Torreón, 1991); Rita Favret Tondato, Tenencia de la tierra en el estado de Coahuila (1880-1987) (Saltillo, Coahuila: Universidad Autónoma Agraria Antonio Narro, 1992); Mario Cerutti, Burguesía, capitales e industria en el norte de México (Mexico: Alianza Editorial, 1992); Cerutti, Economía de guerra y poder regional en el siglo XIX: Gastos militares, aduanas y comerciantes en años de Vidaurri (1855-1864) (Mexico: Archivo General del Estado de Nuevo León, 1983); Cerutti, ed., Monterrey, Nuevo León, el noreste: Siete estudios históricos (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, 1987).

Porfirian system.⁵

Finally, a few works help provide some detail for a narrative of the Mexican Revolution in Coahuila. The late Saltillo historian Ildefonso Villarello Vélez composed a general survey of major political and military events in his Historia de la revolución mexicana en Coahuila (1970). William Meyers' "Second Division of the North: Formation and Fragmentation of the Laguna's Popular Movement" (1988), gives a valuable narration of the Madero revolt in Coahuila's Laguna region, while explaining the origins of the popular movement in that area. Leo M. Dambourges has studied the most notorious anti-foreign episode in Coahuila: the Chinese massacre in Torreón.⁶

A good foundation thus exists for a true regional history of the Mexican Revolution in Coahuila. This dissertation attempts such a study, building upon the work of other

⁵Romana Falcón, "Logros y límites de la centralización Porfirista. Coahuila vista desde arriba," in El dominio de las minorías: República Restaurada y Porfiriato, eds. Anne Staples, Gustavo Verduzco Igartúa, Carmen Blázquez Domínguez, and Romana Falcón, (Mexico: El Colegio de Mexico, 1989), pp. 95-135; Falcón, "Raíces de la Revolución: Evaristo Madero, el primer eslabón de la cadena," in The Revolutionary Process in Mexico: Essays on Political and Social Change, 1880-1940, ed. Jaime Rodríguez O. (Los Angeles: University of California, 1990), pp. 33-56.

⁶Ildefonso Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución mexicana en Coahuila, 2nd ed. (Saltillo, Coahuila: Biblioteca de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1983); Meyers, "Second Division of the North: Formation and Fragmentation of the Laguna's Popular Movement, 1910-1911," in Riot, Rebellion and Revolution: Rural Social Conflict in Mexico, ed. Friedrich Katz, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 448-486; Leo M. Dambourges Jacques, "The Chinese Massacre in Torreón in 1911," Arizona and the West 16 (Autumn 1974): 233-246.

scholars, while focusing on the archival sources available in Saltillo, Coahuila and Mexico City. It fills a gap in the scholarship of the Revolution by providing a detailed history of the state from the late Porfirian era to approximately 1915, when Carranza's Constitutionalist movement triumphed within the state. A major theme is the general social, political, and economic reality of Coahuila that helped to produce revolutionary activity and to shape the movements of Maderismo and Carrancismo. The study begins with a general survey of Porfirian Coahuila, highlighting the state's social variety while at the same time suggesting common social conditions conducive to rebellion and to the growth and appeal of the movements led by Madero and Carranza. It also examines the social bases and characteristics of support for Madero and Carranza, as well as for other revolutionary factions and leaders. The immediate outcomes of the Revolution are addressed through an examination of the reforms introduced first during the governorship of Venustiano Carranza, and then during the administration of Gustavo Espinosa Mireles. Finally, a separate chapter explores the crucial role played by the extensive Coahuila-Texas border in the financing of the Mexican Revolution.

Some scholars of social revolution have adopted the theoretical perspective presented in Theda Skocpol's States and Social Revolutions, in which the author argues that the structure of society--the relationship of groups within it and

its international position--is the key to social revolution. She contends that social revolutions involve class-based revolts from below, and that they result in changes in both the social and political structure.⁷ In one of the most succesful regional studies of the Mexican Revolution, Revolution from Without: Yucatán, Mexico, and the United States, 1880-1924 (1982), Gilbert M. Joseph adopted a similar perspective. He focused on the role of the organization and activities of interest groups in the course of the revolution in Yucatán, and the significance of the region's economic ties to the United States. The result is a convincing argument that already-existing structural factors were instrumental in shaping the course of the revolution in that Mexican state.⁸

This dissertation likewise attempts to underscore the ways in which Coahuila's social and economic structure shaped and was shaped by the Revolution. Yet, as some scholars of the Mexican Revolution have argued, Skocpol's model may err in encouraging a view of social revolutions as inherently radical events that are largely isolated from broader historical forces. In a recent volume edited by Jaime Rodríguez O. (The Revolutionary Process in Mexico. Essays on Political and Social Change), an attempt is made to temper Skocpol's

⁷Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

⁸Gilbert M. Joseph, Revolution from Without: Yucatán, Mexico, and the United States, 1880-1924 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

approach by presenting the Mexican Revolution in terms of the larger evolution of Mexico. Rodríguez argues that historians must broaden their focus of the Revolution by "stressing continuity while examining change . . .," and by "shift[ing] the focus of analysis from events to processes."⁹ He contends that, in the case of Mexico, revolution did not bring the sweeping transformation postulated by Skocpol. Rather, the changes that occurred were more evolutionary than revolutionary, and there was no sharp break with the past.

A recent compilation of documents on Coahuila's history by Eduardo Enríquez Terrazas and Martha Rodríguez García reflects this tendency toward a longue-durée approach. The editors offer a periodization of the state's history based on broad socioeconomic transformations. They identify the years 1880-1918 as a single era, divided into two sub-periods. The years 1880 to 1905 were distinguished by the arrival of the railroad and subsequent consolidation of the economic developments already underway after the mid-nineteenth century. Modernization affected not only the economy but also society, particularly through the growth of an urban middle class and an urban laboring class. The period from 1905 to 1918 involved the "violent rectification" of this project of development through the Revolution. It began with economic crisis and ended with the drafting of a new state

⁹Jaime E. Rodríguez O., ed., The Revolutionary Process in Mexico: Essays on Political and Social Change (Los Angeles: University of California, 1990), p. 3.

constitution.¹⁰ In a similar way, this dissertation demonstrates that, while the Revolution did bring significant change to Coahuila, revolutionary outcomes were often far from radical, and revolutionary events might be seen as part of Coahuila's broader adjustment to modernization and its dislocations.

An attempt to account for differences in the revolutionary experience of northern Mexico has also become part of the historiography of the Mexican Revolution. In his 1981 book, The Secret War in Mexico, Friedrich Katz argues that the revolution in the northern states was distinct from that of other areas of Mexico because a true cross-section of society, including hacendados, members of the middle class, and agricultural and industrial workers, participated. These groups often formed a united force, exhibiting a "tradition of cooperation" characteristic of the frontier states. Katz also alludes to the importance of local autonomy in the frontier states, an autonomy that was eroded by the policies of Díaz, and suggests that this factor (however intangible), contributed to revolt in the north.¹¹

The concept of cross-class revolt in the northern states

¹⁰Eduardo Enríquez Terrazas and Martha Rodríguez García, eds., Coahuila: Textos de su historia (Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, 1989), pp. 399-406.

¹¹Friedrich Katz, The Secret War in Mexico, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1981), pp. 18-20. Katz also highlights the importance of the border with the United States, which gave the northern states ready access to arms.

is pursued by Alan Knight in his two-volume work, The Mexican Revolution. In this revisionist study, Knight argues that, especially in the north, popular revolt was significantly different from the traditional peasant rebellions in areas such as Morelos, home of Emiliano Zapata. He introduces the concept of serrano revolt to refer to the experience of the north and other areas in which the authority of the state was tenuous, and in which local autonomy was carefully guarded. Rather than seeking a restructuring of society, serrano rebels sought to free themselves from the central government that especially began to encroach upon their independence during the Porfiriato. Such movements contained a significant bandit element and often involved the mobilization of an entire community, regardless of class. Particularly in the north, with its more mobile population and lack of a traditional peasantry, the revolution had a logic of its own, by which groups formed alliances often against class or ideological interests. Rather than seeking to restructure society, serrano rebels sought simply to free themselves from the impositions of the central government. At the same time, and as in the case of traditional peasant rebellion, specific grievances were expressed through popular revolt.¹²

As a study of the Revolution in a major northern state, this dissertation will address the question of the uniqueness

¹²Knight's description of serrano society and some of his basic ideas of serrano revolt may be found in The Mexican Revolution, Vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1990), pp. 115-127.

of the revolutionary experience in the north. In addition to examining the social bases of support for Madero and Carranza, it relates some of the details of rebellion, including the targets of rebel violence. It also identifies many of the concrete grievances and petitions for reform that surfaced as a result of the Maderista and Carrancista movements. Finally, a survey of a portion of Carranza's army is intended to suggest the extent of cross-class support for the Revolution.

PORFIRIAN COAHUILA

CHAPTER 1
THE SPIRIT OF HIDALGO:
NINETEENTH CENTURY COAHUILA

In 1896 Bernardo Reyes, governor of Nuevo León and strongman of northeastern Mexico, puzzled over rumors of a revolt in central Coahuila. Some twenty-five men, most from the "lower elements" of Coahuilan society, were implicated in a plot against Mexico's president, Porfirio Díaz, that included plans to kidnap the aging dictator. Questioning of the suspected rebels revealed contact with other malcontents in southwestern Coahuila, and in the northern border town of Piedras Negras. Interrogated by local authorities, Manuel Sarabia, a spiritist from the town of San Buenaventura and leader of the plot, spoke mysteriously of a revolution that "in the spirit of Hidalgo," would engulf the entire state of Coahuila, and would eventually count among its supporters, two men by the name of Madero and Carranza. The "Conspiracy of Monclova," as it came to be known, quickly sputtered out. Its adherents were imprisoned, and Manuel Sarabia, in the interest of Porfirian peace, was sent to the federal prison at San Juan de Ullúa.¹

¹Juan J. Villarreal to Bernardo Reyes, Monclova, 7, 11, 13, 17 March 1896. Centro de Estudios de Historia de México CONDUMEX, Archivo de Bernardo Reyes (hereinafter cited as ABR), carpeta 24, legajo 4771, 4778 4784, 4792.

The spirit of independence invoked by Sarabia was an indelible part of the Coahuilan landscape. An Indian frontier during the colonial period and much of the nineteenth century, this northern state had developed a tradition of local autonomy. Geographical location encouraged the development of a self-sufficient economy, while distance from central authority generated a tradition of political independence that made Coahuilan leaders among the foremost champions of federalism.

By the late nineteenth century, when the Conspiracy of Monclova surfaced, Coahuila was in the midst of a significant economic transformation that would gradually replace its traditional self-sufficiency with a highly integrated economy that was linked to and dependent on outside markets. The initial arbiter of this change was a new entrepreneurial class emerging in northeastern Mexico by the mid-nineteenth century, itself a product of the individual initiative and economic autonomy characteristic of northern Mexico. During the Porfiriato, this native "bourgeoisie" reluctantly accepted the advent of an aggressive group of foreign businessmen whose investments hastened the process of Coahuila's economic transformation.

The economic changes that began at mid-century and introduced a new capitalist class, both native and foreign, to the region, brought other significant changes in Coahuilan society. To meet the increasing demand for labor generated by

the growth of various economic sectors, and to compensate for the lack of a sizable native labor supply, workers from central and southern Mexico poured into Coahuila. This new workforce, like the capitalist class that supported it, was distinguished by its modern nature. Rural as well as urban industrial workers enjoyed what were among the highest wages in Mexico, and more traditional work relations such as debt peonage, common in central and southern Mexico, were rare in this northeastern state.

The economic and social changes that were characteristic of Coahuila's history during the latter part of the nineteenth century did not immediately replace older forms of socioeconomic organization and activity. Inevitably, economic transformation caused dislocation and generated a variety of conflicts. Older forms persisted into the twentieth century, however, and they provided significant obstacles to the modernizing mission of the Porfiriato. This complex mixture of economic and social change, the dislocations they caused, and the stubborn persistence of traditional forms, was apparent in each region of the vast state.

Four socioeconomic regions emerged in Coahuila as a result of nineteenth-century growth: the southeast, Laguna, center, and north. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, Coahuila was divided into five political and administrative districts: Saltillo, Parras, Viesca, Monclova,

and Rio Grande.² Northern Coahuila (or the Rio Grande District) was one of the first regions to feel the effects of economic change. The Mexican-American War, which ended the political unity of Texas and Coahuila forged after Mexican independence, also created an international border that would encourage the integration of this area into a broader economic sphere. Yet its historic position as the northernmost reach of Coahuila's Indian frontier had also encouraged independent development and ensured the persistence of a strong tradition of political and economic autonomy. More than any other area of Coahuila, the Rio Grande District was characterized by its vastness, isolation, sparse settlement, and vulnerability to Indian attacks. The historical weakness of central authority in this region had contributed to the emergence of a particularly independent spirit.

Like the rest of Coahuila, colonial settlement of this frontier had been the cautious and too often unsuccessful work of mission and presidio.³ By the mid-eighteenth century the Spanish crown had redoubled its efforts to settle New Spain's northern frontier, including the region of Coahuila, or Nueva

²This study adopts the geographical divisions presented in the most recent survey of Coahuilan history, Eduardo Enríquez Terrazas and José Luis García Valero, Coahuila: una historia compartida (Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, 1989).

³The pattern of settlement and municipal development in the Rio Grande District is outlined in Esteban López Portillo, Catecismo geográfico, político e histórico del estado de Coahuila de Zaragoza, 2nd ed. (Saltillo, Coahuila: Tipografía del Gobierno en Palacio, 1886), pp. 179-215.

Extremadura. Those who would defend such areas against Indian intrusions were granted their own lands, which they could freely sell or augment. These "military colonists" also enjoyed the rare privilege of carrying arms (a necessity on this Indian frontier) and they came to enjoy an unprecedented degree of local autonomy.⁴ From the start, the municipio libre or "independent municipality" had a special meaning to settlers on the northern frontier.

While the establishment of military colonies in Coahuila's northern region and other areas of northern New Spain did not result in significant colonization of the Indian frontier, the institution was revived in 1848 when a national decree called for the establishment of a new group of colonias along Mexico's northern border and the reinforcement of old presidios and colonias, many of which had been abandoned. This national initiative was a response to the continuing problem of raids by nomadic Indian groups--which had increased as colonization of Texas pushed them southward--but it was also indicative of Mexican fears of Anglo-American expansionism.⁵ Several new colonias were established in the Rio Grande District and one in the municipio of Múzquiz, on the northern fringe of Coahuila's Central or Monclova

⁴Katz, Secret War, p. 8.

⁵Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 79-80; Plana, El reino, pp. 37-38.

District.⁶ This new group of settlements, like those of the colonial era, enjoyed little success, falling victim to their traditional enemies--poor communications, Indian depredations, and weak state control.⁷

Despite the dubious achievements of presidio and mission, as well as the colonia system both before and after Mexican independence, these institutions played a significant role in determining the pattern of development in Coahuila's Rio Grande District. Small communities of independent farmers tended to develop near presidios and missions, and new population centers emerged around the military colonies as well. Furthermore, hacendados in northern Mexico had traditionally allowed independent cultivators to settle on their lands to help protect against Indian raids. The growth

⁶Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 196, 213. These authors identify colonias in Carmen, Múzquiz, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Piedras Negras, and Las Vacas. Each of these municipalities began to develop as colonias. See also Pablo Cuéllar Valdés, Historia del estado de Coahuila (Saltillo, Coahuila: Biblioteca de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1979), pp. 157, 162. This author imprecisely identifies six colonias, five in the Rio Grande District and one in Múzquiz (in central Coahuila or the Monclova district). Cuellar Valdés also identifies one additional settlement in Sabinas (central Coahuila), apparently a military colony established by Juárez as a reward to veterans of the French Intervention. The use of military colonies, especially in Coahuila and Chihuahua, also found adherents in presidents Benito Juárez and Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, who saw it as a way to placate the large and unruly Mexican army that emerged from the French Intervention. See Daniel Cosío Villegas, ed., Historia moderna de México (9 vols.; Mexico: Editorial Hermes, 1955-1972), vol. VIII (Mexico: Editorial Hermes, 1970), pp. 205-206 (hereinafter cited as HMM).

⁷Plana, El reino, pp. 37-38; Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 79-80.

of small-scale landholdings and communal settlements, then, was characteristic of this and other regions of Coahuila.⁸ After 1850 these smallholders of the Rio Grande District, accustomed to political autonomy and economic independence and self-sufficiency, (which included frequent, healthy doses of contraband trading) were abruptly drawn into a national and international economic system.

The establishment of an international border in northern Coahuila increased the economic importance of the Rio Grande district. The town of Piedras Negras, established on the site of the colonia militar of Guerrero, became home to Coahuila's first customs house in 1855.⁹ Efforts to stem the flow of contraband--the main form of commerce in this border region--and discourage other illegal activities characteristic of this often lawless frontier, encouraged the development of Coahuila's cattle industry. At the same time, Piedras Negras grew to become a major point of contact with the United States.¹⁰

⁸Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 241-245; Cuellar Valdéz, Historia del estado, p. 131; Manuel Plana, El reino, pp. 71-72; Francois Chevalier, "The North Mexican Hacienda: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century," in A.R. Lewis and T.F. McGann, eds., The New World Looks at its History (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), pp. 95-102. For a survey of the development of population centers in northern Coahuila since the colonial era which illustrates this general pattern, see Esteban López Portillo, Anuario coahuilense para 1886 (Saltillo, Coahuila: Tipografía del Gobierno en Palacio, 1886).

⁹Cuellar Valdés, Historia, p. 131.

¹⁰Cerutti, Economía de guerra, pp. 133-137.

Frequent Indian raids, isolated location, and high freight costs, however, lessened the initial importance of Piedras Negras as a commercial transit point. Indeed, it was not until the United States Civil War that the economic isolation of northern Mexico, especially of Coahuila, was truly broken. During the war Piedras Negras became the outlet for cotton grown in Texas and other southern states, and southern cotton growers exchanged their crop for arms and food for Confederate troops.¹¹

Merchants in Coahuila benefitted enormously from these developments. Many were part of the nascent entrepreneurial class emerging in northeastern Mexico after 1850, who began to build their fortunes with profits gleaned from the transportation of goods. Commerce remained rudimentary until the arrival of the railroad in the 1880s, and transportation of goods was accomplished by using mule trains, a system called arriería.¹² An active and always colorful contraband trade persisted throughout the nineteenth century as well, and more than one Coahuilan merchant engaged in a combination of legal and illicit trade. Evaristo Madero, patriarch of the influential Madero family, used his revenue from trade and contraband as well as his personal connections in Texas and northeastern Mexico to build an economic empire based in

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Historia, pp. 20, 58.

Coahuila and including extensive interests in agriculture, mining, textiles, and banking.¹³

While the economic transformation of Piedras Negras and Coahuila's northern border region worked to the benefit of Mexican merchants, it also encouraged the American investment that helped seal that transformation.¹⁴ Commercial links between northern Coahuila and the United States, especially Texas, continued to be strong after the Civil War, and Americans began to establish their own businesses on the other side of the international line. In 1869 the American Consul at Piedras Negras reported (perhaps with some exaggeration) that most businesses in this Mexican town were owned by Americans who lived in Eagle Pass. An active trade existed between the towns of northern Coahuila and Texas, with corn, wheat, wool, raw sugar, hides, and goatskins marketed in San Antonio and other Texas towns in return for raw cotton as well as manufactured goods. Despite the well-deserved reputation of the Texas-Coahuila border as a lawless frontier still victimized by Indian raids, and despite complaints by Americans of the arbitrary nature of the Mexican justice and

¹³An excellent discussion of the establishment and growth of Evaristo Madero's economic empire is contained in Cerutti, Burguesía, pp. 217-251. Additional biographical information may be found in José Vasconcelos, Don Evaristo Madero (Biografía de un patricio) (Mexico: Impresiones Modernas, 1958).

¹⁴Katz notes that the economic transformation of northern Mexico was due primarily to U.S. investment. See, Secret War, p. 7.

taxation systems, American business interests continued to grow and prosper. Some American companies even began to invest in the development of mines to the west of Piedras Negras, responding to rumors that the mountains were rich in silver and lead.¹⁵

As the economic significance of Coahuila's border increased, so did the political importance of Piedras Negras and its customs house. Events within Mexico demonstrated this new importance, and indicated the extent to which leaders of northeastern Mexico attempted to defy central control. After 1850, competition between the country's major political factions, Liberals and Conservatives, escalated into a bloody civil war. The situation was complicated when French soldiers invaded Mexico to collect a debt and proceeded, with the endorsement of Mexican Conservatives, to establish an empire. Even as the Coahuilan economy began to move away from its traditional autarky, such developments encouraged the persistence of an economy and a political system independent of the authority of central Mexico. The defensive needs of the northeastern states of Nuevo León, Tamaulipas, and Coahuila helped create what Mario Cerutti has referred to as an "economy of war."

The administrator of this self-contained system was

¹⁵William Schuchardt, report from Piedras Negras, 12 April 1869. General Records of the Department of State. Consular Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Piedras Negras, Mexico, 1868-1906 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1964). (Hereinafter cited as SD-CD/Piedras Negras).

Santiago Vidaurri, who emerged as the fiercely independent strongman of northeastern Mexico during the 1850s. Vidaurri used his considerable influence to enlist the resources and support necessary for the maintenance of a significant quantity of troops. His bold scheme extended to the annexation of Coahuila, which remained part of Nuevo León until 1864. Under Vidaurri, political and military power became linked with that of northeastern Mexico's most important businessmen. Merchants played a key role in financing local armies during the mid-nineteenth century, and their support was rewarded with favorable trading conditions. Vidaurri's economy of war found especially strong patronage in the nascent bourgeoisie of Monterrey, including Evaristo Madero (who had established his transportation business in Monterrey in 1852), Patricio Milmo, and the González Treviño family. Significantly, these same merchants became influential entrepreneurs in Coahuila as well. Support of Vidaurri's independent economic system soon translated into political power, and by the end of the nineteenth century several prosperous merchant families had come to occupy a significant place in national society as well.¹⁶

Although by 1850 the Mexican government had expressed a strong interest in the new revenues being generated by Piedras Negras and other customs houses along the Río Bravo, Vidaurri

¹⁶Cerutti, Economía de guerra, pp. 17-18, 196-197, 210-211; Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 82-83.

seized the initiative. Vidaurri himself controlled the customs houses and used their revenues to support the economy of war. At the same time, he encouraged the development of commerce in the border area through a lowering of import taxes and other policies. So firm was Vidaurri's control of the border area of northeastern Mexico that in 1864 he refused to give Benito Juárez customs revenues needed to sustain the fight against the French intruders.¹⁷ Only after the expulsion of the French did Juárez succeed in breaking Vidaurri's control over northeastern Mexico.¹⁸

In addition to Vidaurri's economy of war, there were other obstacles to the imposition of central economic control. Chief among these was the persistent contraband trade that had historically characterized the exchange of goods on both sides of the Rio Bravo, and which continued into the twentieth century. To discourage this informal economic sector the Mexican government established a "free zone," or Zona Libre, in 1858. The free zone allowed imported articles to enter Mexico free of charge, and was intended to enable residents of

¹⁷Cerutti, Economía de guerra, pp. 196-197; Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 85. Cerutti calls Vidaurri's economic policies "a radical expression of liberalism."

¹⁸See Katz, Secret War, p. 7. Katz suggests that the undermining of Vidaurri's power was a key in the political transformation of Coahuila.

the border area to acquire basic necessities legally.¹⁹ Yet instead of discouraging contraband, the Zona Libre apparently encouraged it by providing duty-free and therefore low-cost goods that became part of a lucrative trade in the interior of Mexico and outside the zone itself. The northern border towns became mere "warehouses," providing illicit goods for points farther south.²⁰ Even Evaristo Madero, once a participant in the contraband trade of the northern frontier, would later favor abolition of the free zone because it impeded regular commerce among populations of the Mexican border region.²¹

The Díaz government inherited the problem of contraband and general security on the northern frontier. Good relations with the United States hinged on protecting the legitimate

¹⁹Plana, El reino, p. 39; Cerutti, Burguesía, p. 52. Many residents of the northern frontier had apparently argued for such a "free zone" in order to help attract families to this still sparsely-settled area. The Zona Libre was established first in Tamaulipas and, according to Cerutti, was officially sanctioned by the Mexican government in 1861. Plana and Cerutti indicate that the "free zone" applied only to northeastern Mexico, yet in 1887, a U.S. consular official described the zone as a fifteen mile wide strip reaching from the western mouth of the Rio Grande to the Gulf of California. See consular report of W.G. Allen, Piedras Negras, 26 January 1887, SD-CD/Piedras Negras.

²⁰Cerutti, Burguesía, p. 52; Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 247; Commercial report of J.W. Wadsworth, Saltillo, 31 August 1883, General Records of the Department of State. Consular Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Saltillo, Mexico, 1876-1906 (hereinafter cited as SD-CD/Saltillo). The "free zone" was also a bane to American merchants outside of the zone, who were forced to pay high export duties and thus had to sell their goods at outrageously high prices. See consular report of W.G. Allen, Piedras Negras, 26 January 1887, SD-CD/Piedras Negras.

²¹Plana, El reino, p. 62.

transport of goods (and thus providing a favorable climate for American investment). American authorities frequently called for abolition of the Zona Libre. Finally in 1905 Díaz abolished the free zone and established strict guidelines for inspecting and escorting all goods imported into Mexico. Coahuilan officials hailed the measure as a step that would help transform the border region into a productive economic region.²² Contraband continued, but this frontier was now truly open to the American investment that was so crucial to development and that would help break the political and economic isolation of northeastern Mexico.²³

In attempting to integrate Coahuila's border region into the national economy and make it attractive to American investors, Díaz faced not only the defiance of border residents but also the determination of local officials to profit personally from the area's legitimate and informal economies. Both before and during the era of the free zone, the new economic importance of the north had caused local military and political officials to use their power to gain control over the resources and revenues to be had in the region. Such officials were often key players in the contraband and more licit forms of economic activity that

²²Report of Lewis A. Martin, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 1 July 1905, SD-CD/Piedras Negras. NOTE: the name of Piedras Negras was changed to Ciudad Porfirio Díaz in 1888. It regained its former name in 1911. Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 247.

²³Plana, El reino, pp. 43, 61.

reached a height during the U.S. Civil War and French Intervention. Economic opportunities fed the ambitions of local jefes and made rebellion, in the face of threatened central control, a principal instrument of action.²⁴

Local authorities, often with the sanction of the state government, used the extraction of export fees to support the municipal government, and those fees often fluctuated in response to local "exigencies." Duties were collected on horses and cattle, but a merchant knowing the right people could make a private arreglo, or arrangement, and receive a sizable discount.²⁵ Coahuila's state government also attempted to appropriate customs duties for its own use. With its large areas of good grazing land, the Rio Grande District had attracted Texas cattlemen for many years. To encourage the development of the area, Coahuilan officials had allowed these lands to be leased very cheaply and had decreed against an export tax. When American property became abundant and more valuable, however, the state imposed a head tax on all exported cattle. Despite a national repeal of such "extraction" laws under the Díaz government the Coahuilan legislature remained defiant, and the state continued to collect its own cattle export tax. The determination of local and state officials to profit from the newly-prosperous Rio

²⁴Ibid. p. 41.

²⁵William Schuchardt, Piedras Negras, 15 April and 30 October, 1882, SD-CD/Piedras Negras.

Grande District and the inability of the central government to gain control of the situation ensured the persistence of an informal economic sector.²⁶

Even in the contraband trade, official connections were to be found. American Consul William Schuchardt revealed the existence of an active cattle ring enjoying official sponsorship. In this arrangement, "officials, and prominent and influential men" of Piedras Negras provided arms and money to cattle thieves who raided into Texas. The ringleaders used their influence to procure the proper papers from the Mexican customs house in the event that their hired hands were caught while transporting the cattle into Mexico. The protection of state authorities was apparently also assured, since the ringleaders were active participants in Coahuilan politics.²⁷

Another such contraband arrangement emerged during the governorship of José María Garza Galán in the 1880s. Relatives of the governor, apparently with his help and encouragement, did a brisk business passing various items

²⁶E.D. Linn, Piedras Negras, 6 March 1886; W. G. Allen, Piedras Negras, 29 January 1887; Schuchardt, Piedras Negras, 30 October 1882, SD-CD/Piedras Negras. Schuchardt observed that most legitimate export trade went through Laredo, where no special taxes or export fees existed.

²⁷Schuchardt, Piedras Negras, 9 April 1892, SD-CD/Piedras Negras. Clearly too, contraband operations existed on a smaller scale and without such "official" involvement. See Ignacio Galindo, Antonio García and others to Minister of Foreign Relations, Monterrey, 7 December 1873, fojas 1-2, "Comisión Pesquisadora de la Frontera del Norte...Coahuila, 1873", Archivo de Relaciones Exteriores Libro Encuadernado 1597 (hereinafter cited as ARE-LE).

across the border and beyond the Zona Libre, which still operated at that time. The efforts of Díaz' and Bernardo Reyes to stop these activities revealed the involvement of local officials as well as members of the Mexican army entrusted with the pursuit and punishment of contrabandistas.²⁸ Reyes suggested that the involvement of the governor may have been an attempt to deal with fiscal problems caused by Garza Galán's predecessor, who had left the state treasury empty, neglecting to pay government employees, and perhaps the military as well.²⁹

The extent to which members of the Mexican army were involved in contraband activities is impossible to determine. Yet the frequent complaints that military personnel were poorly-paid and equipped in Coahuila lends credence to the interpretation that the army was a key player in this informal economic sector. In addition, national revolts and crises had a special character on this northern border. Military leaders as well as local officials tended to respond to such crises with opportunism rather than with genuine support of, or resistance to, the principals of the revolt itself.

²⁸Col. Pedro A. Valdéz to Reyes, San Juan de Sabinas, 12 and 15 April 1887, ABR carp. 6, leg. 1171; Col. Nicanor Valdéz to Reyes, Piedras Negras, 16 April 1887, ABR carp. 6, leg. 1157; Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey, 21 April and 9 May 1887, ABR carp. 6, leg. 1159, 1181; M. M. Sánchez to Reyes, Piedras Negras, 27 June 1887, ABR carp. 7, leg. 1230. Mexican customs officials apparently also engaged in contraband activities. See ARE, expediente 28-9-104.

²⁹Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey, 9 May 1887, ABR carp. 6, leg. 1181.

Such was the case with Díaz' revolt of La Noria in 1871-1872, which sought to depose President Benito Juárez. Poorly prepared and equipped, the Federal troops of Coronel Pedro A. Valdéz were forced to evacuate Piedras Negras in 1871, leaving the town to Díaz supporters under Coronel Anacleto Falcón. While the newly-installed officials lowered customs duties in an attempt to encourage imports and generate revenue, Valdéz and his men retreated south. Yet rather than regroup for an offensive against Falcón, these soldiers used the opportunity to raid defenseless towns for money and goods. Valdéz' men avoided confrontation with La Noria rebels. American Consul Schuchardt remarked that Valdéz and his men were acting more like enemy raiders than representatives of the government, and he explained such behavior by the fact that these soldiers had not received their pay for a long time. Indeed, many soldiers apparently sold stolen goods on the other side of the international line, and after Falcón's troops forced him to cross into Texas, Valdéz attempted to recruit more men there with the promise that those who followed him back into Mexico could steal all they wanted.³⁰ When the rebellion was over, Schuchardt wryly remarked that the situation around Piedras Negras had returned to normal, with the "low life people"

³⁰Schuchardt, Piedras Negras, 15, 27 October, 13 December 1871; 10 January, 16 March, 9 April 1872, SD-CD/Piedras Negras. Schuchardt noted that in Texas, Valdéz was joined by "Americans, coloureds, and Mexicans," mostly "desperate characters and Mexican cattle thieves."

resuming their old occupation of stealing cattle from Texas.³¹

For the popular classes living along Coahuila's border, economic integration, however grudgingly accomplished, meant a different challenge to their traditional self-sufficiency and economic and political autonomy. Among smallholders in particular, the economic changes that occurred after mid-century and intensified during the Porfiriato represented an attack on the very means of subsistence.

The decrease in the incidence of Indian raids after 1880, and even more importantly, the increasing value of land and the coming of the railroad, led to expropriation of the lands of campesinos throughout northern Mexico. The former military colonists and others who had benefitted from the pattern of independent settlement in the region lost not only their lands but also their political autonomy, a byproduct of the isolation of the northern frontier.³² The displacement of smallholders in Coahuila helped make the northern border a center of rebellion and popular unrest throughout the Porfiriato.

National and local laws promulgated between 1866 and 1883 promoted land concentration throughout Coahuila. Stockholders of land survey companies took possession of large portions of terrenos baldíos, especially in the Rio Grande District and in

³¹Schuchardt, Piedras Negras, 20 January 1873, SD-CD/Piedras Negras.

³²Katz, Secret War, pp. 8-9.

Coahuila's central region. Two such stockholders were Generals Gerónimo Treviño and Francisco Naranjo, who received land in return for their services against the French and later in support of Díaz. Other lands were bought by foreign and national businessmen, including Evaristo Madero and Guillermo Purcell.³³

As land values increased and foreign and Mexican investors sought to expand their holdings at the expense of communal properties and smallholders, many in northern Coahuila lost their lands.³⁴ As this process continued, disputes over scarce resources, especially water, also increased. In 1903 these disputes caused Governor Miguel Cárdenas, himself a beneficiary of land concentration, to pledge himself to the complete elimination of communal property.³⁵

³³Favret Tondato, Tenencia, pp. 29-36, 122; Esperanza Fujigaki Cruz, "Las rebeliones campesinas en el porfiriato 1876-1910," in Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana, vol. 2: La tierra y el poder, ed. Enrique Semo (Mexico: Siglo XXI Editores, 1988), pp. 189-191. Mexico's northern states, which were less populated and integrated, experienced the most movement of national lands during the Porfiriato.

³⁴The lack of specialized studies on land tenure changes during the Porfiriato prevents a more precise knowledge of the effect of land concentration on smallholders. (Favret's study, Tenencia de la tierra, is a pioneering work in this respect.) Much can be inferred, however, from the document, Carta general de la propiedad rural del estado de Coahuila, 1913 (Saltillo: n.p., 1913). This map, product of a commissioned survey conducted in 1912 and 1913, may be found in the Archivo Municipal de Saltillo.

³⁵Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 213, 241, 243-245.

By the end of the nineteenth century competition for water in northern Coahuila was a major source of conflict among hacendados and between hacendados and smallholders.³⁶ Range disputes were also common. In 1909 the vecinos of Gigedo in the Rio Grande District petitioned for the use of a road leading to the town of Nava that the agricultural company of the Garza Brothers had closed with barbed wire.³⁷ Complaints of this type were frequent as land became concentrated in fewer hands and as cattlemen, in particular, sought to enclose those lands. Some smallholders attempted to impose their own brand of justice, cutting newly-erected barbed wire fences that deprived them of land or impeded their passage to other areas.³⁸

By the late nineteenth century the displacement of many smallholders, the abolition of communal lands, and the increasing competition over resources had combined to produce deep discontent among the popular classes. The same

³⁶See for example, complaint of Tomás and Mucio Méndez, Rosales, Coahuila, 1909, Archivo General del Tribunal Superior de Justicia del Estado de Coahuila: Fondo Histórico 1820-1930 (hereinafter cited as AGJ), Juicio Civil 1909; Reyes to José H. Serret and Reyes to Francisco Arizpe y Ramos, Monterrey, 31 January; 4, 15, 17 February; 9 March 1894, ABR, cop. 13, doc. 8474, 8468, 8496, 8510, 8559.

³⁷Petition of vecinos of Gigedo, 4 January 1909, Archivo General del Estado de Coahuila (hereinafter cited as AGECE): Fondo Siglo XIX, exp. 10,696.

³⁸Several such complaints from smallholders and large landowners alike are contained in AGJ, Juicio Civil. See for example, complaints of Fortino Bermea and Patricio Milmo, Rosales, 1901; complaints of Francisco Ibarra and Manuel B. Dávila, Piedras Negras 1909.

competition for lands and water also affected the region's elites, and the increasing prevalence of foreign landowners in the area gave many disputes an anti-foreign tone. At the same time and despite the continuing transformation of the northern border, an informal economic sector continued to operate. Authority remained largely local and even the army showed a remarkable flair for independence and entrepreneurship. This complex situation helped make Coahuila's northern border a center of unrest and rebellion. Further attempts by the Mexican government to centralize its economic control would meet adamant resistance here.

In September 1891 Catarino E. Garza and his followers in the border regions of Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas published a revolutionary plan calling for the overthrow of Porfirio Díaz. Their revolt was to be effected by a newly-established rebel army that took as its banner the Constitution of 1857 and pledged to defend the principles of no-reelection, political and economic freedom, and state and municipal sovereignty--principles that had been trampled upon by Díaz and his Tuxtepecan allies. The rebellion of the Catarinistas began with a small and seemingly insignificant raid from Garza's base in south Texas into Tamaulipas. After a brief skirmish with Mexican customs guards the rebels, whose reported strength varied from ten to fifty men, fled west, pursued by Mexican soldiers. Catarinista activity continued sporadically throughout the rest of the year, with Garza and

his men wandering in the sparsely-populated border region, attempting sporadic raids and being pursued by Texan and Mexican officials. By early 1892 Mexicans on both sides of the border were still echoing Garza's call for revolt, but with the capture by American officials of several Catarinista rebels and the reported flight of Garza to Florida, the movement seemed to fade.³⁹

Texas newspapers disagreed as to whether Catarino Garza was a "border ruffian" or a popular and well-educated journalist obsessed with overthrowing Díaz. Matías Romero, Mexican Ambassador to the United States, dismissed the Garza revolt as the work of "fugitives, malcontents, seditious refugees, and idlers," who were found in abundance along the Mexican-Texas border.⁴⁰ A native of Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Garza had been educated in Texas and Mexico before entering the Mexican army. Charged with insubordination, he had fled to Texas, where he established himself as a journalist in

³⁹Documents dealing with the 1891-1892 activities of Garza and his followers are contained in ARE, exp. 11-10-44. See for example Rafael Varrios to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Laredo, 11 September 1891. Gabriel Saldívar has compiled a collection of these documents in Documentos de la rebelión de Catarino E. Garza en la frontera de Tamaulipas y sur de Texas 1891-1892 (Mexico: VI Congreso Mexicano de Historia, 1943). A description of the revolutionary plan of Garza is given in Ildefonso Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución mexicana en Coahuila, 2nd. ed. (Saltillo, Coahuila: Biblioteca de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1983), pp.17-20.

⁴⁰Plutarco Ornelas to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 13 June 1892, ARE, Exp. 11-10-44, part 7. Romero's assessment of Garza appears here in a report translated into English by Ornelas.

several south Texas towns. In Eagle Pass, Garza had published a paper that regularly attacked José María Garza Galán, the governor of Coahuila whom Díaz had imposed in 1886. In 1887 Garza Galán had unsuccessfully petitioned U.S. officials for the extradition of Garza. The Porfirian governor also attempted to have the border rebel assassinated.⁴¹

Garza's following in the Coahuilan border region, although difficult to document, was of some significance. It included prominent landowner Marcos Benavides, uncle of the young Francisco I. Madero and a prominent landowner not only in northern Coahuila but also in the Laguna. Benavides and other Coahuilans were eventually established as a contingent of the Garza "army" known as the "Guerrilleros de Coahuila." Catarinismo also counted among its supporters the journalist Paulino Martínez, who later became an ally of Francisco Madero and the Antireelectionist movement.⁴² Catarinismo would emerge again in early 1893, when the "Guerrilleros" helped lead small-scale uprisings in the towns of Hidalgo and

⁴¹San Antonio Daily Express, 25 September 1891, in ARE, exp. 11-10-44. See also San Antonio Daily Express, 16 August 1887 and Pedro Magaña to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Mexico City, 27 August 1887 in ARE-LE 834(1). In 1890, widely denied rumors surfaced that Garza was spearheading a movement in northern Coahuila designed to oust Garza Galán. See Rafael Varrios to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Laredo, 28 June and 4 July 1890, ARE, Exp. 11-9-35.

⁴²Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución, p. 20. See also Matías Romero to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Washington, 23 June 1890, ARE, exp. 11-9-35; Secretario de Gobierno to Juez 1 del Distrito en el Estado, Saltillo, 19 August 1893, AGE: Fondo Copiadores, Secretario de Gobierno, 1893.

Guerrero, both in northern Coahuila. Persecution again caused Garza's movement to falter, but many Catarinistas soon joined the rebellion that would succeed in ousting Governor Garza Galán.⁴³

Although the Catarinista movement itself had sputtered out by 1893, other political and reform movements continued to find support in northern Coahuila into the next century. Indeed, the Rio Grande District would be an active center of pre-revolutionary unrest and revolutionary fighting. More than any other region of the frontier state of Coahuila, the northern border zone had developed a tradition of independent development and political and economic autonomy.

The expansive central district of Coahuila, from which the 1896 Conspiracy of Monclova sprang, experienced much the same pattern of development as the northern region, and by 1900 was undergoing its own economic transformation largely due to the development of mining. Sparsely settled by presidio and mission since late colonial times, the Monclova District was also home to at least a few military colonies during the nineteenth century, most notably the colonia located in the northernmost municipality of Múzquiz.⁴⁴

⁴³Secretario de Gobierno to Juez 1 del Distrito en el Estado, Saltillo, 19 August 1893, AGECE: Fondo Copiadores, Secretario de Gobierno, 1893; Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución, pp. 17-20.

⁴⁴Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 184-185; Cuéllar Valdés, Historia del estado, p. 157. Precise information on the number and location of colonias militares in Coahuila during both the colonial and national periods is

Throughout the colonial period most of this sparsely-settled region had been given over to cattle ranching, which, along with agriculture, was the basis of Coahuila's economy until the Porfirian era. By the late eighteenth century, much of this district had come under the control of the great latifundio of the Sánchez Navarro family.⁴⁵ When this great estate began to dissolve after 1860, much of its land became the property of prominent political and military figures in northeastern Mexico. As in the Rio Grande District, land concentration affected the area, facilitated by national laws issued during the Reforma (a period of Liberal reform during the nineteenth century) and the Porfirian era, and by concessions granted to survey companies. Such concessions provided Generals Gerónimo Treviño and Francisco Naranjo with vast estates in central Coahuila.⁴⁶ Survey companies also acquired lands in the central region for two of Coahuila's prominent Porfirian governors, General José María Garza Galán

difficult to obtain. For a general summary of municipal development in the central district, which suggests some of the general settlement patterns, see Esteban López Portillo, Catecismo, pp. 130-178.

⁴⁵For an excellent discussion of the formation and history of this estate, see Charles H. Harris, A Mexican Family Empire: The Latifundia of the Sánchez Navarros, 1765-1867 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975).

⁴⁶Favret, Tenencia, pp. 122, 213. Northern Mexico, with its vastness and sparse population, was especially affected by land concentration. Within Coahuila, the areas most affected were the central and northern or Rio Grande District.

and Miguel Cárdenas.⁴⁷

Land concentration in the central district, as in the north, proceeded at the expense of smallholders and residents of communal lands. The vast hacienda "La Babia" of General Treviño came to supplant the military colony located in the municipality of Múzquiz that had been created in the mid-nineteenth century, undoubtedly displacing the colony's inhabitants.⁴⁸

The attempts of a new group of landowners to enclose their properties mirrored events in Coahuila's border area, as did the numerous disputes over water. The Nadadores River was a particular source of contention in central Coahuila. The appropriation of its waters by Governor Garza Galán in the late nineteenth century not only deprived owners of small agricultural holdings but also caused disputes among the Monclova District's more prominent landowners. In 1895 Emilio Carranza, a farmer and cattleman in the region, petitioned Reyes for help in reclaiming the waters of the Rio

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 31-32; Cerutti, Burguesía, pp. 259n, 262n. A relative of Garza Galán, Coronel Juan José Galán, was commandant of a military colony that existed in Monclova as early as 1850, and perhaps also received some lands for his prominent role in the Indian wars. See for example Jefe Político del Distrito de Rio Grande to Corl. Juan José Galán, n.p., 1 January 1850; Manuel Flores to Alcalde lo Suplente, Guerrero, 28 May 1862, ARE-LE 1594: "Invasiones de los Indios Bárbaros de los E.U.A. a México, 1873... Comisión Pesquisidora de la Frontera del Norte . . . Coahuila, 1873."

⁴⁸Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 213.

Nadadores.⁴⁹ Several years later, Reyes recommended that a commission be sent to resolve the Nadadores issue. Apparently no settlement was reached and conflicts continued.⁵⁰ In 1898 Martín Morales and Francisco García Letona brought suit against Guillermo Richardson, owner of the hacienda La Jalpa. Richardson was charged with changing the course of a local supply of running water, thereby depriving others of this scarce resource.⁵¹ Quarrels over water and rangeland continued in the central district throughout the Porfiriato.⁵²

As in the northern part of the state, resource disputes in central Coahuila were a product of the transformation of the local economy from one of self-sufficient agriculture and cattle ranching to one increasingly tied to international markets and gradually integrated into Mexico itself. This

⁴⁹Emilio Carranza to Reyes, Ocampo, 23 May 1895, ABR, carp. 23, leg. 4474.

⁵⁰Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey, 12 April 1903; Reyes to Miguel Cárdenas, Monterrey, 29 April 1903, ABR copiador 41, documents 20174, 20185.

⁵¹Petition of Martín Morales and Francisco García Letona, Monclova, 1898, AGJ, Juicio Civil.

⁵²Numerous examples of range and water disputes may be found in AGJ, Juicio Civil. See for example, Complaint of D. A. Ayarzogarita, Romero Rubio, 1880; Petition of Juan Garza Galán, Múzquiz, 1909. See also Emilio Carranza to Bernardo Reyes, Ocampo, 23 May 1895; Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey, 12 April 1903; Reyes to Miguel Cárdenas, Monterrey, 29 April 190, ABR, carp. 23, leg. 4474; cop. 41, doc. 20174, 20185. Water disputes had been a part of Coahuila's history from the start. But competition for this scarce resource began in earnest with the development of Coahuila's modern, market-oriented economy. See Harris, Mexican Family Empire, pp. 5, 20-27; Favret, Tenencia, pp. 60-61.

transformation was due to to development of mining after 1880, which was itself aided by the arrival of the railroad and by the subsequent influx of investment capital from Mexicans and foreigners. The exploitation of lead, copper, zinc, silver, and especially coal affected the entire region by spurring the development of new towns and the revival of older population centers.⁵³ The mining of coal was of particular significance. By the turn of the century, Coahuila was Mexico's main supplier of this resource.⁵⁴

The revision of Mexico's mining code in 1884 transferred subsoil rights to those owning the land, breaking the colonial tradition that all minerals and precious metals belonged to crown or nation. The new code allowed mining claims to be freely bought and sold. As a result, José María Garza Galán was able to acquire all rights to coal contained in the area of San Juan de Sabinas. By 1905 he had sold his claim to the *Compañía Carbonífera de Sabinas*, which included members of the Madero family as principal stockholders. *Carbonífera de Sabinas* was one of the few important Mexican-owned mining companies in the entire country during the Porfiriato.⁵⁵

⁵³Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, *Coahuila*, pp. 181-183. Coahuila had some mining during the colonial period but this was halted after independence due to lack of capital and to the persistence of Indian raids. See Commercial Report of J.W. Wadsworth, Saltillo, 31 August 1883, SD-CD/Saltillo.

⁵⁴Cosío Villegas, *HMM*, VII, 198-200.

⁵⁵Juan Luís Sariego, *Enclaves y minerales en el norte de México: historia social de los mineros de Cananea y Nueva Rosita 1900-1970* (Mexico: Ediciones de la Casa Chata, 1988),

The development of mining had a significant impact on other aspects of the region's economy. It boosted agricultural and cattle production, which now responded to the increasing needs of the new mining sector. Carbonífera de Sabinas, for example, had numerous contracts with local hacendados who provided food for mining communities.⁵⁶ Such arrangements were an added impetus to land concentration, as a few hacendados sought to monopolize this lucrative enterprise.⁵⁷ Mines throughout northern Mexico became their own self-contained social and economic systems. Rosita, Coahuila, for example, had its own schools, hospital, and post office, all under the control of Carbonífera de Sabinas. Rosita also attracted merchants from surrounding areas, who brought their goods to the mining town for sale.⁵⁸

In mining, as in most sectors of Coahuila's rapidly modernizing economy, competition between Mexican and foreign investors was often strong. By 1909 the most productive of Coahuila's coal mines were under the control of the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO) of the Guggenheim

pp. 61-64. San Juan de Sabinas was originally carved out of the Sánchez Navarro estate and established through the distribution of lands and water rights to veteran soldiers.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 72, 82.

⁵⁷This appears to have been the case in Sabinas. See Ibid., p. 82.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 99-100. Sariego's study provides a good survey of the history of this coal-mining town, as well as an interesting comparison between the development of Rosita and the Cananea mines in Sonora.

family. Yet Mexican entrepreneurs continued to invest in this sector of the economy. The Madero family was an outstanding example of this new generation of Mexican businessmen. Investors in coal mines and in most other sectors of the state's economy, the Maderos were staunch competitors and often political opponents of ASARCO and other foreign companies. Indeed, by the early twentieth century the Madero family was one of the few Mexican families still active in the mining sector, and they owned the only non-foreign smelter in Coahuila.⁵⁹

The growth of mining in the central district was accompanied by the development of the region's other resources. The exploitation of guayule became an important activity and, like mining, involved both foreign and national investment.⁶⁰ The extraction and processing of this resource also became a virtual foreign monopoly. The Continental Rubber Company of the Rockefellers, based in New York, controlled most of the state's guayule resources, which were processed into an elastic rubber gum and exported to England, Germany, and the United States.⁶¹ The chief Mexican competitor of Continental Rubber was, once again, the Madero family, which also engaged in the cutting and processing of guayule through

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 60.

⁶⁰Favret, Tenencia, pp. 81-83.

⁶¹Ramón Eduardo Ruíz, The Great Rebellion: Mexico 1905-1924 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980), pp. 16-17.

its company, "Las Filipinas."⁶²

In addition to generating often fierce competition between foreigners and Mexicans, Coahuila's mineral resources inevitably brought intervention by the central government. Discovery of the rich resources of Sierra Mojada immediately generated a jurisdictional dispute between Coahuila and Durango. The Díaz regime decreed this area a federal territory in 1879, naming General Francisco Zérega as its military commander. Sierra Mojada became a part of Coahuila in 1880, but because of continuing competition over its resources, it remained under close supervision of the state and central Mexican governments.⁶³

As one of Mexico's richest sources of lead and ores, and a major supplier of these minerals to the United States, Sierra Mojada was of great interest to Americans investors. A U.S. consulate was established there briefly during the 1890s.⁶⁴ Díaz attempted to encourage American investment throughout Coahuila's mining region, but not all Mexicans were receptive. Local officials, themselves involved in the lucrative business, blocked efforts of Americans to engage in mining. Members of the Mexican army, also attempting to

⁶²Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 82-83.

⁶³López Portillo, Anuario, pp. 500-501. Such control was normally exercised by jefes políticos.

⁶⁴Cosío Villegas, HMM, VII, 194; Eugene Fechet, Piedras Negras, 1 February, 1 June 1892, SD-CD/Piedras Negras.

profit from the situation, claimed American mining rights for themselves and helped Mexican companies jump American claims in return for part of the profits.⁶⁵ In the central region too, individual initiative and economic opportunism continued to hold sway, frustrating efforts at political centralization.

As the central region underwent the transformation from a highly self-sufficient cattle and agricultural economy to a more modern, market-oriented economy, it became home to an increasingly modern workforce that distinguished northern Mexico from the rest of the country. Coahuila's mining region depended largely on migrant workers, who were attracted by high wages to labor-poor Coahuila. Foreign workers were also present in some Coahuilan mines.⁶⁶ At the same time, however, frequent fluctuations in international prices and markets made the worker's employment insecure and frequent work stoppages occurred.⁶⁷

In addition to being at the mercy of market forces, Coahuila's miners were also often at the mercy of the mining companies. Frequent complaints surfaced over the tienda de raya, or "company store," which was often the only source of basic necessities for the miner and his family. Mining companies periodically attempted to pay workers in store

⁶⁵B. J. Pridgen, Piedras Negras, 20 September 1885, SD-CD/Piedras Negras.

⁶⁶Sariego, Enclaves, pp. 109-111, 114. Japanese, Chinese, Italians, and "colored" Americans all worked in Rosita.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 116-128.

coupons instead of in cash, and indebtedness was encouraged by advancing store credits.⁶⁸ The safety of the mines was also a key issue, and discrimination by foreign companies against native Mexican workers was another frequent cause of complaint.⁶⁹ Open conflict in Coahuila's mining region surfaced over wages, inadequate housing and living arrangements, and dangerous working conditions. Most commonly, such conflicts took the form of strikes and pillaging of the company store, the latter form of protest often being led by the female relatives of miners.⁷⁰

Miners' grievances were just beginning to be channelled into organized activity on the eve of the Mexican revolution. Anarcho-syndicalism, and in particular the ideas of the Mexican Liberal Party or PLM, found adherents among some of northern Mexico's miners.⁷¹ Anarcho-syndicalism provided a plan of action against mining companies and employers as well as an outlet for the anti-foreign sentiment that was prevalent

⁶⁸See for example, Secretaria de Hacienda to Governor Jesús del Valle, Saltillo, 5 January 1910, AGE: Fondo Siglo XIX; Reyes to Juan Castellón, Monterrey, 9 October 1894; Reyes to Miguel Cárdenas, Monterrey, 10 October 1894; Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey, 29 October 1894, ABR cop. 17, doc. 10704, 10708; cop. 14, doc. 8901.

⁶⁹Sariego, Enclaves, pp. 118-128. Accidents were common in Coahuila's mines. See for example, Mayor of Sabinas to Governor Jesús del Valle, 2, 4 February 1910, AGE: Siglo XIX.

⁷⁰Sariego, Enclaves, p. 150.

⁷¹The development of the Mexican Liberal Party is traced in James D. Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution 1900-1913 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968).

in many mining communities. The proximity of the U.S. border, which was a main zone of PLM activity, also encouraged the penetration of anarcho-syndicalist ideas. Miners in northern Mexico may also have been politicized through their experiences working in the mines of the American southwest, where the Western Federation of Miners was active.⁷²

As the heart of Mexico's coal region, Coahuila was the home of one of the first miners' unions. The Unión de Mineros Mexicanos (UMM) was established in July of 1911, emerging out of a syndicate already established in Rosita, which became the seat of the UMM. Several members of the UMM would shun the anarcho-syndicalist/PLM policy of political neutrality during the Mexican revolution, readily joining insurgent forces.⁷³

Bernardo Reyes' investigation of the Conspiracy of Monclova revealed connections in Coahuila's southwestern or Laguna region. Manuel Sarabia, suspected instigator of the 1896 plot against Porfiria Díaz, had apparently been in contact with Hilario Siller, a fellow spiritist, and Toribio

⁷²Sariego, Enclaves, pp. 129-131. Little is known about the development of the workers' movement in Coahuila itself, and inferences must be made from the experiences of workers in northern Mexico as a whole. Sariego's interviews with miners of Coahuila's coal region, however, indicate that the PLM was active in this area before the revolution.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 150-152. At first anarcho-syndicalist in orientation, and influenced by the PLM, the UMM abandoned its stance of political neutrality during the revolution, as part of a general trend toward integration into the post-revolutionary political system. In 1918, the UMM actively participated in the establishment of the Confederación Regional de Obreros Mexicanos (CROM).

Regalado, a native of San Pedro and a landowner of modest means.⁷⁴ By the middle of the nineteenth century, economic development had also begun to transform this corner of the state. The Comarca Lagunera (encompassing the Coahuilan towns of San Pedro, Matamoros, Viesca, and Torreón; and Mapimí, Lerdo, and Gómez Palacio in Durango) was emerging as a new socioeconomic region, aided by the construction of irrigation works and by the breakup of latifundios, both of which set the stage for the growth of the Laguna's cotton industry. The railroad arrived in the 1880s, connecting the zone to Mexico City and to the United States border towns of El Paso and Eagle Pass. The Laguna soon became the country's principal producer of cotton, helping to supply the growing textile industry in Porfirio Díaz' Mexico.⁷⁵

As in Coahuila's central and northern regions, the new economic importance of the Laguna generated increased competition over water and land. Resource disputes continued to divide the region's elite landowners throughout the Porfiriato. Competition also took the form of an ongoing struggle between the landed and landless, making agrarian unrest and social banditry part of the Laguna's modern history.

⁷⁴Juan J. Villarreal to Reyes, Monclova, 7 March, 1896, ABR, carp. 24, leg. 4771.

⁷⁵Favret, Tenencia, pp. 22-24; Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 42-44, 48; Cosío Villegas, HMM, VII, 73. Meyers remarks that the Laguna was "the most rapidly developing area of Porfirian Mexico," p. iv.

After 1850, as the Laguna experienced the breakup of its great haciendas, most notably that of Leonardo Zuloaga, the region also experienced a wave of agrarian rebellion. As in other areas of Coahuila, landowners in the Laguna had developed a tradition of allowing independent farmers to settle on their lands in order to help against nomadic Indian raids. Frequently the farmers of these collective settlements, or congregaciones, demanded legal possession of these lands.⁷⁶

The Laguna experienced the nineteenth-century Reforma primarily as a struggle by shareholders and small, independent farmers to establish independent towns by legally acquiring communal or ejidal lands.⁷⁷ In the 1860s Benito Juárez had attempted to calm agrarian strife in the Laguna by carving the town of Matamoros out of the latifundio of Zuloaga. San Pedro emerged in the same way: the confiscated lands of hacendados who supported the French Intervention were given to resident smallholders in 1870 by Liberal governor Victoriano Cepeda.⁷⁸ Other small plots in the Laguna went to loyal veterans of the struggle against the French.

⁷⁶Plana, El reino, pp. 27, 71-72, 106.

⁷⁷Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. v-vi; 31; María Vargas-Lobsinger, La hacienda de "La Concha": Una empresa algodонера de la Laguna 1883-1917 (Mexico: UNAM, 1984), pp. 18-19; Barry Carr, "Las peculiaridades del norte mexicano, 1880-1927: Ensayo de interpretación," Historia mexicana 22 (enero-marzo, 1973): 324.

⁷⁸Plana, El reino, pp. 80-89, 92.

The agrarian unrest in the Laguna that contributed to the creation of Matamoros and San Pedro often took the form of "social banditry." In an area already insecure because of frequent Indian raids, the increasing tensions over land and water emerging after 1850, complicated by the Laguna's frequent periods of drought, often generated waves of agrarian rebellion by smallholders. And while the breakup of the region's latifundias sometimes worked to the advantage of smallholders, it represented not an end to land concentration but a change from the traditional cattle and cereal hacienda to a more modern one owned by the new bourgeoisie of northern Mexico. Moreover, as foreigners became the majority of landowners and renters in the Laguna during the Porfiriato, these independent agricultural colonies or pueblos libres of Matamoros and San Pedro developed a tradition of battling foreigners for lands and water rights.⁷⁹

The establishment of independent settlements and the parcelling out of confiscated lands after mid-century, then, was not a permanent solution to the Laguna's agrarian problem. Haciendas continued to exist side-by-side with the smaller properties of independent farmers. Porfirian laws and policies that encouraged land concentration affected not only San Pedro and Matamoros but also the communal lands of neighboring Viesca. In addition, the newly-prosperous cotton

⁷⁹Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," p. 31; Vargas-Lobsinger, La Concha, pp. 18-19; Favret, Tenencia, pp. 22, 111.

industry tended to displace the Laguna's numerous population of sharecroppers or aparceros. With the influx of a new, mobile labor force from south and central Mexico, sharecroppers, once an important reserve labor supply, were no longer as useful. In addition, as the Laguna's hacendados responded to the economic boom by placing more land under cultivation and expanding their irrigation works, less water was available for the small plots of sharecroppers. The fate of the aparceros is unknown, but their discontent perhaps contributed to the agrarian unrest that continued to characterize the Laguna region.⁸⁰

The cotton boom that contributed to this unrest also caused a burst of industrial development in southwestern Coahuila. After 1880 the textile, cotton seed processing, mining and smelting, and guayule industries all found a home in the Laguna. Torreón, a town that emerged almost overnight as a railroad center and crossing point of the Mexican Central and Mexican International railroads, became the region's bustling center, replacing the older agricultural town of Matamoros.⁸¹

Rapid economic growth also made a significant mark on the

⁸⁰Vargas-Lobsinger, La Concha, pp. 94, 113, 141, 143. Vargas-Lobsinger suggests that the discontent of the aparceros perhaps contributed to the "explosion" of the Mexican Revolution.

⁸¹Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 110-113. Meyers argues that the relegation in status of Matamoros caused special resentment, as its people were now affected by an unfavorable allocation of water.

society of this region. The sudden influx of capital and entrepreneurial talent from outside of the region helped create a society of landowners and businessmen who were progressive and future-oriented.⁸² Investment in the new economy flowed in from prominent families of northern Mexico, including the Corrals of Sonora, the Terrazas of Chihuahua, and the Maderos based in Coahuila and Nuevo León. Prominent national figures such as Francisco Bulnes and José Yves Limantour, also played roles in the development of the Laguna. Above all, the Laguna became a center of foreign investment by Germans, Spaniards, Chinese, British, and most notably, Americans so that before 1910 "the Laguna contained a larger number of foreigners than any other area of Mexico outside of Mexico City."⁸³ In addition to the region's dominant landowners, foreigners engaged in mining, guayule, and agriculture. German businessmen, as well as the American Smelting and Refining Company of the Guggenheim family, were prominent in mining; Rockefeller's Continental Rubber Company dominated the guayule industry, and the British and others invested heavily in agriculture. Prominent Mexican landowners numbered only four: Práxedes de la Peña, Amador Cárdenas,

⁸²Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 145-146, 165.

⁸³Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," p. v.

Carlos González, and the Madero family.⁸⁴

With its significant industrial growth accompanied by the development of commerce, banking, and the service sector, the Laguna was also fertile ground for the growth of a sizable middle class. Here too, foreigners were prominent, dominating skilled urban and industrial jobs. Mexicans also found their places as craftsmen, clerks, managers, and professionals.⁸⁵

The increasing importance of the Laguna inevitably generated competition among regional elites. The interference of the central government, which began in earnest during the Porfiriato, complicated the situation and demonstrated that in this corner of Coahuila as well, economic autonomy was still a prized possession.

In the spring of 1881 over three hundred armed landowners and rural workers from southwestern Coahuila invaded the neighboring state of Durango. Accompanied by the mayor of San Pedro, Epitacio Sifuentes, and by the jefe político of the Viesca district, Carlos González, hacendados and rancheros, including Toribio Regalado, as well as agricultural workers, moved swiftly to destroy the irrigation works of Durango landowner Ulpiano Lavín. When the invaders

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 48-49, 90-100, 129. Meyers notes that the Maderos, who also had investments in mining, guayule, and other industries, were often the only prominent Mexicans in largely foreign-run industries.

⁸⁵Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 180-183, 185, 188-190; Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 171.

withdrew several days later, they had ruined several bridges and filled in irrigation canals that threatened to deprive them of water from the Nazas River.⁸⁶

Accustomed to such frontier justice tactics, and himself a landowner in Coahuila's Laguna region, which depended on the uninterrupted flow of the Nazas from the upper river zone in Durango, Coahuila's governor Evaristo Madero took no action, assuming the matter was "happily" ended. Indeed, Madero's only real complaint was that federal troops had meddled in the affair. Similar invasions had occurred since the 1860s, reflecting the determination of Coahuilans to safeguard their share of the waters of the Nazas.⁸⁷ The legal dispute that ensued in the aftermath of the 1881 invasion, however, involved not only the governors of Coahuila and Durango but also the federal government. By 1888 a new federal law had made the central government the arbiter of future disputes

⁸⁶Toribio Regalado's participation in this dispute is particularly interesting. As a native of San Pedro, Regalado had perhaps benefitted from the legalization of the lands of smallholders which occurred in 1870 and had been a product of the Laguna's agrarian unrest. In 1892, he joined the Mexican Army and remained a source of concern for the Díaz regime because of his independence and connections to several rebellions against Díaz. See Regalado's service record in Archivo Histórico de la Defensa Nacional, Cancelados y Pensionistas, exp. D/111/4/5255. Hereinafter cited as AHDN-CP.

⁸⁷Documents on the 1881 Nazas dispute and invasion are contained in Archivo General de la Nación (hereinafter cited as AGN): Ramo Gobernación, 2a 881 (10) exp. 4. This collection of documents also includes the printed pamphlet "Documentos relativos a la invasión de territorio del estado de Durango hecho a mano armada por vecinos de Coahuila."

over the Nazas River, illustrating the extent to which the federal government was determined to inject itself into this newly-prosperous region.⁸⁸ One of the first significant products of central involvement was a sizable concession of water rights to the foreign-owned Tlahualilo Company. This concession was intended to encourage the development of lands in Durango's Laguna region and was destined to provoke anew the anger of the landowners of the lower Nazas zone in Coahuila.⁸⁹

The 1881 Nazas dispute illustrated not only the resolve of local landowners to safeguard their rights to a scarce resource, it also demonstrated a phenomenon that would recur during the Mexican revolution: the cooperation of hacendados and their workers. This phenomenon was a product of the modern work relations that emerged in the Laguna as well as an expression of the unique social milieu characteristic of the region by the late nineteenth century.⁹⁰ Just as the Laguna's elite constituted "a market and profit-oriented business class" rather than a traditional regional elite, so too was the

⁸⁸Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 155.

⁸⁹For an excellent discussion of the Tlahualilo Company and the water issue in the Laguna region, see William K. Meyers, "Politics, Vested Rights, and Economic Growth in Porfirian Mexico: The Cía. Tlahualilo in the Comarca Lagunera, 1885-1911," Hispanic American Historical Review 57 (August 1977): 425-454.

⁹⁰Katz observes that during the revolution, resident peons in northern Mexico rebelled with, rather than against, their hacendados. Secret War, pp. 14-15.

Laguna's workforce "modern," in the sense that it was characterized by mobility and a lack of traditional ties to the region. Most workers came from central Mexico to work in the cotton fields, help in the cutting and processing of guayule, work in the mines along the Laguna's western border, and provide labor for other new industries. Because of the sudden and explosive demand for labor that could not be met by the Laguna's native population, and because of the competition for laborers among the different economic sectors, workers in this region enjoyed some of the highest wages in Mexico.⁹¹ Laborers on the cotton plantations received the highest agricultural wages in Mexico, and they were paid in cash rather than in coupons good only in the hacienda store.⁹²

These agricultural workers, the largest sector of the Laguna's workforce, had not been deprived of their own lands, nor did they labor under the odious system of debt peonage. Indeed, in addition to their relatively high wages, unskilled agricultural workers often benefitted from the enlightened approach of hacendados toward their workforce, which included the establishment of schools, health care, and other benefits. Seasonal cotton pickers formed an additional element of the Laguna's agricultural labor force. As many as fifty thousand migrant workers poured into the Laguna between August and

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 175-178, 144-146; Meyers, "Second Division of the North," pp. 456, 458-459.

⁹²Katz, Secret War, pp. 14-15.

November to help with the harvest. For many the Laguna was part of a continuing migration that also involved seasonal work in the United States. As different industries competed for their labor, and as many Mexican workers were exposed to the unionism of their counterparts in the United States, this seasonal labor force became increasingly vocal, demanding higher pay and better conditions.⁹³

Laguna society, modern and prosperous, characterized by an innovative, entrepreneurial spirit, was also reflected in the region's modern hacienda. Tied to regional and national markets, the Laguna's haciendas were run like specialized businesses, making use of new technology in irrigation and importing high-quality cotton seed from the United States. Mexican hacendados in the Laguna, moreover, personified the social mobility that characterized this frontier area. Many had started as merchants, moneylenders, miners, and industrialists in other areas of northern Mexico.⁹⁴

Many other landowners began as hacienda administrators or as renters of hacienda lands. Such was the case with several of the high-level employees of the hacienda "La Concha" of Carlos González Montes de Oca. Much like Evaristo Madero, González had begun to acquire land in the Laguna with the help

⁹³Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 144-147, 153-154, 167-168, 172-173.

⁹⁴Fujigaki Cruz, "Las rebeliones," pp. 186, 199, 208-210. Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Historia, pp. 20, 58. Once again, Evaristo Madero was an excellent example of the upwardly mobile northern entrepreneur.

of revenues from his family's transportation business. During the first years of "La Concha," money income needed for the construction of irrigation works and for the initial development of the hacienda came from rentals of land. By 1910 many of "La Concha's" renters were owners of their own plots. In addition, several high-level employees of "La Concha"--administrators, accountants, office personnel--enjoyed a remarkable degree of social mobility during the Porfiriato. Many became landowners after the revolution.⁹⁵

Alan Knight has characterized northern Mexico as "the land of the self-made man."⁹⁶ The careers of Evaristo Madero and Carlos González illustrate the extent to which "opportunity remained open to talent,"⁹⁷ just as the Laguna's well-paid, mobile, and increasingly vocal labor force was illustrative of the region's dynamism. In the Laguna, however, the northern tradition of independence still held sway. While the general lack of workers characteristic of northern Mexico tended to discourage the development of institutions like debt peonage, certain "semifeudal" institutions like private armies and justice systems prevailed.⁹⁸ The persistence of such independent forms of

⁹⁵Fujigaki Cruz, "Las rebeliones," pp. 200-201; Vargas-Lobsinger, La Concha, pp. 18, 21, 44, 63-64, 112, 139.

⁹⁶Knight, The Mexican Revolution, Vol. I, p. 11.

⁹⁷Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," p. 141.

⁹⁸Barry Carr, "Las peculiaridades," p. 323.

control were apparent in 1881 when landowners and rural workers, including the newly-prosperous hacendado, Carlos González, defied the central government, and solved a water dispute by force of arms.

The 1896 Conspiracy of Monclova, which found adherents in many areas of Coahuila, apparently had no echo in the state's southeastern region. Yet the southeast was also affected by the economic transformation that began to occur after the mid-nineteenth century and that was sealed by the arrival of the railroad. Here too, the transformation caused not only growth but social change and unrest.

Although primarily an agricultural region through much of the nineteenth century, southeastern Coahuila also included the state capital of Saltillo, which since the colonial era had developed as a major commercial center and a link between the fertile Laguna and Monterrey.⁹⁹ The economic developments of the late nineteenth century, as well as its position as the seat of state government, ensured Saltillo a prominent place in Porfirian Mexico. Along with Torreón and Monclova, Saltillo came to contain Coahuila's most important families.¹⁰⁰

Development in this area was centered in Saltillo and Parras, and was based primarily on the textile industry and

⁹⁹Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 103-113.

¹⁰⁰Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," p. 61.

viticulture. The cotton boom in the Laguna encouraged growth in textiles and spurred the development of other small and medium-sized enterprises, including the guayule industry. During the Porfiriato, Parras was Mexico's principal center of viticulture.¹⁰¹ The arrival of the railroad also made Saltillo a major center of the export trade. As the terminus of the Mexican International Railroad, Saltillo shipped goat skins, ixtle (a coarse fiber from the agave plant used to make thread, rope, and paper), and lead ore to New York, grain and vegetables to San Antonio, and lumber gathered from the surrounding sierras to Monterrey.¹⁰²

With a development pattern similar to the rest of the state, the southeast was also affected by the dissolution of great colonial estates during the Reforma.¹⁰³ Progressive hacendados, several engaged in viticulture, came to replace the great property holders of the colonial and early independence periods. Here too, land concentration mixed uneasily with smallholdings, and the "modern hacendado" and "modern peon" found a place.¹⁰⁴ In the larger towns, and

¹⁰¹Cosío Villegas, HMM, VII, 91-92.

¹⁰²Commercial report of J.W. Wadsworth, Saltillo, 17 November 1883; report of Charles Pettit, Saltillo, 21 August 1885, SD-CD/Saltillo.

¹⁰³Lopez Portillo, Catecismo, pp. 75-102. During the sixteenth century, this region had been settled with the help of Tlaxcalan and Guachichil Indians as well.

¹⁰⁴Less information is available on land tenure changes in southeastern Coahuila. Part of this area had included the Sánchez Navarro estate. When dissolved in the 1860s, these

especially in Saltillo, a class of largely non-native urban workers emerged, as did a growing middle class of shopowners, teachers, small-scale merchants, office workers, and government functionaries. Several entrepreneurial families, most from northeastern Mexico, reluctantly witnessed the increasing intrusion of foreign capital in all sectors of the economy.¹⁰⁵

The economic transformation of Coahuila had already begun by 1876, when the Tuxtepec revolt brought Porfiria Díaz to power in Mexico. The initial arbiters of this transformation, which would reluctantly draw elements of the state's more traditional society into a modern and integrated economy, were members of a new capitalist class, mostly from northeastern Mexico. This non-traditional elite, injecting itself into the Coahuilan economy at a time when political and economic autonomy was still the norm, began to build their fortunes without real assistance or interference from the center. Economic development and solutions to economic problems remained matters of local initiative. While Porfirian policies and laws, specifically those encouraging land concentration, allowed many budding capitalists and ambitious military men to take better advantage of the situation, such

lands became haciendas and ranchos. There is evidence that significant land concentration did occur in this region as in all regions of Coahuila. Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 137.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 103-113.

policies simply complemented a process already underway.

Nevertheless, the Díaz regime would hasten this process and increase tensions already being caused by economic dislocation and competition. The imposition of the Porfirian political system also had repercussions. Porfirian centralization arrived with a vengeance in 1884 when Díaz ordered the ouster of Governor Evaristo Madero. Patriarch of one of the most influential families in northeastern Mexico and a personal friend of former President Manuel González, Madero had developed a reputation for his political and economic autonomy. To Díaz himself, Madero was perhaps best known for his opposition to the Tuxtepec revolt of 1876. The governor's expulsion was accompanied by an attack by federal soldiers on the Madero hacienda El Rosario, center of the family's economic empire and birthplace of Francisco I. Madero.¹⁰⁶ This event marked the beginning of the political and economic persecution of the Madero family, which would continue into the 1900s.¹⁰⁷

Díaz further increased his control over northeastern Mexico in 1885 when he named General Bernardo Reyes commander of the Third Military Zone, encompassing the states of Coahuila, Nuevo León, Tamaulipas, and San Luis Potosí.

¹⁰⁶Falcón, "Raíces de la Revolución, pp. 37-39; Falcón, "Logros y límites." Falcón sees Díaz' ouster of Madero as part of a broader effort to lessen the influence of Manuel González in northeastern Mexico.

¹⁰⁷Falcón details this process in her excellent study, "Raíces de la Revolución."

Veteran of the war against the French, loyal servant to presidents Benito Juárez and Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, and somewhat belated supporter of Díaz, Reyes became the strongman of northeastern Mexico.¹⁰⁸ With the imposition of José María Garza Galán as governor of Coahuila in 1886, Díaz and Reyes set out to gain control over the political system of a state that Díaz had come to view with disfavor because of its traditionally independent stance and lukewarm support of the Tuxtepec revolt.¹⁰⁹

By the late nineteenth century, political and economic power in Coahuila had become inextricably linked. Political participation became the province of a small group of extended families and business partners, so that by the 1890s three cliques controlled the state's political life. The oldest such clique or camarilla was led by Evaristo Madero, whose economic empire and political clout centered in the southeastern municipality of Parras and in the Rio Grande District. A second faction was led by José María Garza Galán whose influence and that of the Garza Galán family itself, found its base in the Monclova District, especially the

¹⁰⁸Anthony T. Bryan, "Mexican Politics in Transition, 1900-1913: The Role of General Bernardo Reyes" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1970), pp. 12-30. Reyes also served as governor of Nuevo León from 1885-1887.

¹⁰⁹Garza Galán was preceeded in the governorship by the military government of General Julio H. Cervantes, who was imposed by Díaz to quiet unrest after the ouster of Madero. Garza Galán owed his governorship to Manuel Romero Rubio, and to prominent military caudillo of northeastern Mexico, General Gerónimo Treviño. See Falcón, "Logros y límites," p. 104.

northernmost municipality of Múzquiz. The third and newest faction, led by Miguel Cárdenas, also centered in the mining region and included members of the Carranza family.¹¹⁰

While each of these cliques was a product of local ties, each also had connections with national political life. Despite an uneasy relationship with Díaz himself, Evaristo Madero maintained good relations with José Yves Limantour, finance minister and member of the científico group surrounding the aging dictator. The Garza Galán faction also had científico connections-- with Díaz' father-in-law, Manuel Romero Rubio. The Cárdenas faction, in turn, was increasingly identified with Díaz' strongman in northeastern Mexico, General Bernardo Reyes.¹¹¹

The machinations of Díaz and Reyes brought an unprecedented measure of central control to all levels of Coahuilan politics and involved both the president and his northeastern strongman in a delicate balancing act of Coahuila's political factions. Abruptly, a state accustomed to political autonomy, was drawn under national control. State elections, already effectively manipulated by the new elite, became a mere formality under the watchful gaze of Reyes. Municipal and state officials were imposed, and Reyes often made use of his military subordinates to ensure desired

¹¹⁰Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 130-136. Langston provides an excellent prosopographical study of politics and elite competition during the Porfirian period.

¹¹¹Ibid.

electoral outcomes.¹¹²

For Coahuila's elites, the ouster of Madero and advent of Reyes' control over state politics also meant the arrival to power of the Garza Galán clique. In the spirit of political autonomy and camarilla competition, Garza Galán used his new-found political clout to extend his personal influence, and that of his political faction, beyond his family's base in Múzquiz.¹¹³ Encouraged by Reyes and Díaz, Garza Galán made use of the institution of the jefatura política. In Coahuila, jefes políticos had been employed during the early nineteenth century as a means of increasing state authority over municipalities. Designated and removed by the governor, they had formal and informal powers that were extensive, including control over elections, armed forces, the military draft, taxation, public security, and the allocation of water, land, and mining rights.¹¹⁴ Abolished by the 1869 state constitution, the institution had been revived in the 1870s.¹¹⁵ It reached new heights under Garza Galán.

¹¹²Falcón, "Logros y límites," pp. 119-130.

¹¹³Ibid., "Logros y límites," p. 104.

¹¹⁴Romana Falcón, "La desaparición de jefes políticos en Coahuila. Una paradoja porfirista," Historia mexicana 37 (enero-marzo 1988): 429. The institution was inherited from the liberal Constitution of Cádiz (1812) and was not formally abolished until 1917. J. Lloyd Mecham provides a basic survey of the jefatura in "The Jefe Político in Mexico," Southwestern Social Science Quarterly 13 (June 1933): 333-352.

¹¹⁵Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 100.

During the governorship of Garza Galán, jefaturas existed in the five political districts of Coahuila: Saltillo, Parras, Viesca, Monclova, and Rio Grande. In addition, the governor established five new jefaturas, all within the booming mining region of the Monclova District. Here, a population of increasingly vocal miners, railroad workers, and other laborers contributed to an atmosphere of political unrest.¹¹⁶

Perhaps not suprisingly, given the intimate connection between political and economic activities in late nineteenth-century Coahuila, Garza Galán designated friends and family as jefes. These men used the posts to their personal benefit. In Sierra del Carmen, Garza Galán's uncle and half-brother shared the post of jefe político, using their position to enjoy the profits of this important mining region. In the strategic border town of Ciudad Porfirio Díaz (formerly Piedras Negras), another uncle held the post, and conveniently received land and a streetcar contract in the bargain.¹¹⁷

For many Coahuilans, imposition of jefes políticos during the governorship of Garza Galán represented the ultimate affront to the local autonomy. Many jefes nullified municipal elections, and they were sometimes named with the intent of

¹¹⁶Alicia Hernández Chávez and Ildefonso Dávila del Bosque, "La querella de Coahuila: municipios y jefes políticos en el Siglo XIX," in Archivo Municipal de Saltillo Catálogo del Fondo Jefatura Política 1885-1895 (Saltillo: Archivo Municipal de Saltillo, 1985), p. 14. The new jefaturas were established in Sierra del Carmen, Ciénegas, Monclova, San Buenaventura, and Candela.

¹¹⁷Falcón, "La desaparición," pp. 430-431.

undermining the influence of rival political groups.¹¹⁸ Further insult was added in 1890 when Garza Galán placed the financial burden of supporting the jefaturas on the municipalities themselves.¹¹⁹

Adding to the strain of political centralization were economic policies imposed by Díaz and Garza Galán. Taxes on mid-sized urban and rural properties hurt the nascent middle class, while an 1894 state law ordered privatization of all communal lands, which were immediately grabbed by large landowners, especially foreigners. Federalization of water rights in the 1890s also had a significant economic and political impact.¹²⁰

The political centralization that excluded many Coahuilan elites from the political arena, as well as state and national economic policies, generated conflict and ultimately rebellion. When Garza Galán began a second term as governor after the electoral farce of 1889, an opposition society was

¹¹⁸This was the case in Parras and the Laguna region, areas where the influence of the Madero family was strong. See Hernández Chávez and Dávila del Bosque, "La querella," p. 14; Falcón, "Raíces de la Revolución," pp. 45-47. An 1891 federal law allowed governors to name jefes instead of holding local elections. See Douglas W. Richmond, Venustiano Carranza's Nationalist Struggle, 1893-1920 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p. 9.

¹¹⁹Hernández Chávez and Dávila del Bosque, "La querella," p. 14.

¹²⁰Richmond, Carranza, pp. 9-10. Richmond notes that by 1900, most large plots of land in Coahuila were owned by foreigners.

established in Coahuila.¹²¹ Rebellion finally broke out in several parts of the state when the Porfirian governor announced his intention to run for yet another re-election.

The revolt of August 1893 involved elements of all three of Coahuila's political factions. In the Monclova District the Carranza brothers played a major role. Emilio Carranza led the attack in Ocampo, while Jesús and Sebastián rallied mine workers and ranchers in Sierra Mojada. Venustiano helped coordinate strategy but took no part in the fighting.¹²² In the Rio Grande District and Laguna region the Madero clique was active, with Evaristo threatening to revolt, and relative Marcos Benavides, providing arms to the rebels of northern Coahuila and joining them in their depredations for one or two days. Planters of the Laguna's lower river zone, disgruntled over the Tlahualilo concession and the increasing control of the central government in water allocation, joined the call for Garza Galán's ouster.¹²³ The Catarinista movement, which had faltered after its abortive rebellion of 1891-1892, enjoyed a brief resurgence in Coahuila's northern border region at the beginning of the year. Many of its adherents joined in the uprising against Garza Galán.¹²⁴

¹²¹Cuéllar Valdés, Historia del estado, p. 180.

¹²²Richmond, Carranza, pp. 11-12.

¹²³Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 230-232.

¹²⁴Falcón, "Logros y límites," p. 95; Bryan, "Reyes," p. 45. Official reports of the revolt by Coahuilan officials may be found in Secretario de Gobierno to Juez 1o de Distrito

Although intended as a revolt to oust Garza Galán, the rebellion itself involved a series of strikes against local officials, the symbols of a new era of Porfirian and Galanista centralization. In several towns members of Coahuila's elite political factions led local inhabitants in deposing these imposed authorities and replacing them with leaders of their own choosing. The rebellion also caused a brief wave of banditry.¹²⁵ Both of these patterns would surface again in the 1910-1911 revolution of Francisco Madero.

Díaz and Reyes moved quickly to end the rebellion without alienating key members of Coahuila's political elite, whose support was part of the Porfirian regime's delicate game of control. Rebels achieved the ouster of Garza Galán, and the Carranza family, part of the emerging and increasingly important political clique led by Miguel Cárdenas, was rewarded with certain concessions. The family was allowed political control of its home base of Cuatro Ciénegas, and Emilio Carranza and others were given legislative posts. Emilio's brother, Venustiano, who had established himself as an hacendado of modest means in central Coahuila, enjoyed another stint as mayor of Cuatro Ciénegas, after being ousted under the Garza Galán administration. He would also serve

en el Estado, Saltillo, 19 August 1893, AGE: Copiadores, Secretario de Gobierno, 1893.

¹²⁵See Secretario de Gobierno to Juez 1o de Distrito en el Estado, Saltillo, 19 August 1893, AGE: Copiadores, Secretario de Gobierno, 1893.

brief terms as state senator and interim governor. The Carranza family received economic concessions as well, in the form of lower taxes and federal lands.¹²⁶

Reyes and Díaz also responded to grievances against the jefes políticos that had surfaced with the rebellion and were a major impetus for revolt. Except in Sierra Mojada and Torreón, jefaturas were abolished.¹²⁷ Yet while the 1893 rebels achieved both the ouster of Garza Galán and the abolition of the hated jefaturas, Reyes and Díaz continued to erode Coahuilan autonomy.¹²⁸ Immediately after the revolt, Reyes worked to prepare electoral slates for Coahuila's municipalities and to ensure the victory of desirable candidates.¹²⁹ The spirit of Hidalgo, it would seem, was

¹²⁶Falcón, "Logros y límites," pp. 98-99, 115; Richmond, Carranza, pp. 4-6. Falcón notes that only two of the 1893 rebels were actually punished, as Díaz chose a conciliatory approach.

¹²⁷Falcón, "Logros y límites," pp. 118-119; Hernández Chávez, "La querella," p. 15. Falcón lists only Sierra Mojada as an exception to the 1893 abolition, but Hernández Chávez notes that Torreón also retained its jefatura. The jefatura was abolished in both of these municipalities in 1898. That the jefaturas represented a major issue in the rebellion of 1893 may be seen in the importance it assumed in Reyes' activities to end the unrest and affect a peaceful transition of power in Coahuila. See for example, Reyes to Díaz, Saltillo, 4, 5, 12 September 1893, ABR, cop. 14, doc. 8563, 8566, 8584.

¹²⁸Falcón argues that abolition of the jefaturas actually enabled a greater degree of centralization, since Garza Galán had used the jefes, and other functionaries, to assert his independence from the central government. See "La desaparición," p. 434.

¹²⁹Reyes to Díaz, Saltillo, 8, 24 October 1893, ABR, cop. 14, doc. 8624, 8643.

victorious only in part. It found expression three years later in the Conspiracy of Monclova.

As an Indian frontier far from the center of power, nineteenth-century Coahuila developed a tradition of local autonomy, political independence, and economic self-sufficiency. The emergence of a new entrepreneurial class, the growth of a substantial middle class, and the steady increase in foreign investment, began to transform the state's economy after 1850. A modern and largely non-native workforce was also central to this transformation, which would link Coahuila to outside markets and transform its society. At the same time, however, older forms persisted, clashing with the modernizing mission of the Porfiriato. Dislocations were especially inevitable in northern and central Coahuila, with their heritage of communal landholding. The Laguna too had retained its shareholders and independent farmers, who would resist land concentration through banditry and rebellion.

The development of a political system dominated by three cliques that incorporated a small group of extended families and business partners, accompanied Coahuila's economic growth. While these political elites welcomed modernization they were, like the popular sectors, affected by the increasing competition for resources that such modernization created. Porfirian political centralization, moreover, was not always welcomed by local elites, many of whom had built their fortunes in the absence of central control or regulation. The

rebellion of 1893, and the key role played by the opposition to jefaturas, demonstrated the extent to which local autonomy was an issue that would drive Coahuilans to revolt.¹³⁰ By 1900 this issue had become a rallying point not only for many of Coahuila's elites but also for members of the popular classes. The grievances caused by the erosion of local independence, as well as the dislocations resulting from economic and social transformations, would find expression in the reform movements emerging after 1900.

¹³⁰Both Falcón and Hernández Chávez suggest that the opposition to the jefaturas was a key factor in the movement against Díaz and perhaps a key to the revolution of 1910. See "La desaparición," p. 436; "La querella," p. 15.

CHAPTER 2

PORFIRIAN POLITICS AND THE GROWTH OF MADERISMO

Coahuila's political situation remained volatile in the aftermath of the 1893 revolt. The ouster of the Garza Galán clique did not mean an end to the political aspirations of its members. Nor were the attempts of Díaz and Reyes to placate the Carranza family, entirely successful. At the same time, Díaz' policies were beginning to show the limits of the Porfirian political system. Just as the aging dictator failed to accommodate the Madero clan, so would the mission of Porfirian centralization alienate the Cárdenas faction. Porfirian exclusion, which also affected Coahuila's popular classes and growing middle sectors, ultimately encouraged the growth of three major reform movements: Reyismo, Magonismo, and the Antireelectionist movement of Francisco I. Madero.

The revolt of 1893, which reaffirmed the control of the central government over Coahuilan politics, highlighted the increasing political importance of Bernardo Reyes in northeastern Mexico, and marked the advent of Venustiano Carranza as a political contender in Coahuila. Reyes had already begun to build a personal power base in Nuevo León, eliminating political rivals and, in 1889, emerging as the state's governor. While indispensable to Porfirio Díaz' control of northeastern Mexico, Reyes' own political ambitions

generated suspicions and antagonism with the president's inner circle, the científicos.¹

The significant role played by Reyes in ending the Coahuilan revolt of 1893 and successfully negotiating the ouster of científico-supported Governor Garza Galán, increased this antagonism, as did the specter of Reyes as a presidential contender.² More alarming to Díaz himself, was the increasing political support for Reyes that had begun to emerge in northeastern Mexico. Despite Reyes' own reluctance to challenge the científicos or to appear disloyal to the Porfirian regimes, Reyismo had a life of its own. It appealed to the growing middle classes, excluded from Porfirian politics, and to labor groups and members of the Mexican Army.³ In 1908, the Partido Democrático was established to challenge científico political dominance. Reyes was presented as a vice-presidential candidate for 1910, and a progressive party platform that included the principles of direct suffrage

¹Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 32-33; 39-41. During the 1892 presidential campaign, Reyes erred in not sending timely support to the científico-sponsored nominating convention. Indeed, Reyes established his own political club, Unión y Progreso.

²Ibid., pp. 41-46; 52. In 1900, Reyes left Nuevo León to assume the post of Minister of War. Bryan argues that this was part of Díaz' attempt to check Reyes' political ambitions. Ibid., p. 59.

³Ibid., pp. 228-233. Bryan also notes that students, Freemasons, and German diplomats tended to support Reyes.

and municipal autonomy, was drafted.⁴

Reyista clubs emerged in many areas of Coahuila, including Saltillo, Torreón and Parras. Particularly in the Laguna, several prominent landowners and businessmen became members of the Partido Democrático. Many of these men had also served as volunteer officers in the Second Reserve of the Army, a controversial group established by Reyes as Minister of War.⁵

While Reyes himself never accepted the candidacy of the Partido Democrático and hastened to assure Díaz and the Reyistas of his personal support for the re-election of Vice-President Ramón Corral, his fate was sealed. In October 1909, Reyes began his political exile in Europe, sent by Díaz to study military tactics.⁶

Díaz' suspicions of Reyes extended to the influential Coahuilan, Venustiano Carranza. Also a member of the Second Reserve, Carranza was increasingly attracted to the progressivism and nationalism that had come to characterize

⁴Ibid., pp. 59, 221-222. Bryan presents Reyes as a progressive reformer and highlights his efforts as governor of Nuevo León to safeguard municipal autonomy, legislate accident compensation for workers, and implement other liberal policies.

⁵Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 226, 91-100, 92-93; Eduardo Guerra, Historia de la Laguna: Torreón, su origen y sus fundadores (Saltillo, Coahuila: Impresora de Coahuila, 1932), p. 120. Bryan lists Francisco Madero as a member of the Second Reserve, but does not specify whether this was the Francisco I. or his father.

⁶Ibid., pp. 243-245; 250.

the Reyista movement.⁷ In the aftermath of the 1893 revolt, Reyes worked closely with Carranza to reach a political settlement to the dispute. José María Múzquiz briefly occupied the post of governor before Carranza's political ally and 1893 gubernatorial candidate, Miguel Cárdenas, assumed the post. A lawyer and landowner of substance in Coahuila, Cárdenas enjoyed the support of many Coahuilan hacendados. His fifteen-year regime, however, did little to address the growing problems associated with Coahuila's social and economic transformation, and indeed, Cárdenas' policies contributed to those problems.⁸

With the political clique led by Cárdenas now dominant the Carranzas began to enjoy greater economic prosperity and political clout. For Díaz, this change represented a double threat. Not only was the Cárdenas faction identified with the growing political movement of Reyismo, but the Carranzas, particularly Venustiano, proved increasingly intransigent in the face of Porfirian attempts to control the political and economic life of Coahuila. Economic concessions such as tax breaks and land grants to the Carranzas did not always bring

⁷Carranza himself trained some of the military units of the Second Reserve, and several found a place in the federal army structure. Richmond, Carranza, p. 15.

⁸Richmond, Carranza, pp. 12-13. Biographical information on Miguel Cárdenas may be found in Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana (INEHRM) Diccionario histórico y biográfico de la revolución mexicana, vol. I (Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1990), pp. 277-278.

the expected support for the Porfirian regime. At times, Venustiano seemed more intent on supporting Reyes than the dictator who was largely responsible for Reyes' own power.⁹ Even toward Reyes, Carranza exhibited a remarkable degree of independence, and a determination to preserve his personal political autonomy on the local level.¹⁰

The triumph of Miguel Cárdenas and the Carranzas in 1893 was accompanied by continued demise of the Madero faction in Coahuilan politics. As part of the effort to centralize control over Coahuila, Reyes took care to impose local officials in the Laguna and in Parras (headquarters of the Madero family economic empire) who were not connected to the Madero clan. And while the family's economic fortune continued to grow throughout the Porfiriato, Evaristo was not always granted the economic favors that he requested.¹¹

In the realignment of Coahuilan politics, the followers of José María Garza Galán also found themselves in the uncomfortable position of political "outs." While Díaz and Reyes took care to placate the Galanistas, this still-powerful

⁹Richmond, Carranza, pp. 14-15. Venustiano refused official endorsement for the reelection of Díaz, and Emilio openly criticized the socioeconomic disparities caused by Porfirian policies. Venustiano was also suspected of plotting a Reyista revolt in 1898.

¹⁰Richmond provides the example of Carranza's failure, as municipal president of Cuatro Ciénegas, to ensure the respect of the town's residents for Reyes' military troops. See *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹Falcon, "Raíces de la Revolución," pp. 47-51. High taxes were imposed on the Maderos, and in the Laguna, disputes over water continued.

political faction became openly belligerent. When Miguel Cárdenas arrived in Saltillo to campaign for election, a brief scuffle and exchange of bullets occurred between the police and Garza Galán's henchmen.¹² Although Garza Galán himself retired to his hacienda in Múzquiz, he continued to be a source of concern for Reyes.

Garza Galán's hacienda became the headquarters of a Galanista campaign to unseat Cárdenas in 1896 and to provoke disorder during elections. Reyes sent federal troops to guard the Garza Galán estate, and to serve as a warning to supporters of the undermined cacique. The Galanista campaign generated some support in central and northern Coahuila, but Reyes' harassment prevented an effective challenge to the reelection of Cárdenas.¹³

Galanismo also found echo in the Rio Grande District of northern Coahuila, a center of revolt in 1893 and an area now controlled by Reyes' military subordinate, Coronel Fructuoso García. Sent to help pacify this restless frontier zone, García eventually became municipal president of the important municipality of Ciudad Porfirio Díaz and began to enjoy

¹²Reyes to Díaz, Saltillo, 21 September 1893, ABR, cop. 14, doc. 8603, 8606. Reyes' efforts to extract Garza Galán from Coahuilan politics apparently included a bribe to the ousted governor. See Reyes to Díaz, Saltillo, 23 September 1893, ABR, cop. 14, doc. 8610.

¹³Alberto Guajardo to Reyes, Múzquiz, 12, 23 July 1897; Marcos Benavides to Reyes, Allende, 6 August 1897; Reyes to Juan J. Villarreal, Monterrey, 19 August 1897; ABR carp. 26, leg. 5079, 5104, 5106; cop. 25, doc. 14174. See also Villarello Vélez, Historia de la Revolución, p. 34.

economic privileges as well.¹⁴ Local resentment toward García, who now represented the unwelcome intervention of Reyes, and who served as a reminder of Coahuila's increasing subordination to the Porfirian regime, took the form of Galanismo among some of the more prominent residents of the Rio Grande District.

Upon his arrival García noted that the local administration was full of frustrated Galanistas whose lackadaisical work and scandalous behavior were a constant concern. Municipal Council member Rafael Múzquiz, who had served several terms as mayor of Ciudad Porfirio Díaz during the Garza Galán administration and was both a local official and state legislator at the time of García's arrival, was particularly troublesome. Múzquiz and other local officials, including federal officers of the Ciudad Porfirio Díaz customs house, met frequently in Eagle Pass, Texas to express publicly their support for Garza Galán and to complain about Coahuila's lack of autonomy and continued subjection to Reyes.¹⁵

Reyes also faced the opposition of former jefes políticos, several of them relatives of Garza Galán. Manuel Rosas, uncle of Garza Galán and former jefe of the Rio Grande District, was especially intractable. He remained in northern Coahuila after his dismissal, and was frequently associated

¹⁴Falcón, "Logros y límites," pp. 121-122.

¹⁵Fructuoso García to Reyes, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 25 February 1894, ABR carp. 20, leg. 3929.

with Galanista plots.¹⁶

Galanista opposition continued throughout the Cárdenas administration, but in the end it was Díaz himself who effected the governor's ouster. When Cárdenas announced that he would not run for reelection in 1909, his close political ally, Venustiano Carranza, became a candidate. Carranza refused Díaz' demand that he withdraw from the contest. Díaz then determined to check Carranza, and remove the Cárdenas faction from Coahuilan politics. In the elections of October 1909, despite an impressive show of support for Carranza, Díaz ignored the electoral results and imposed as governor Jesús del Valle, a supporter of Garza Galán and a former jefe político.¹⁷

By the end of 1909, the political profile of Coahuila, and indeed of northeastern Mexico, had changed dramatically. Reyes, the hope of progressive reformers such as Carranza, had been sent into exile, and Díaz had refused to accommodate his supporters. With the Garza Galán clique reinstalled, the

¹⁶Reyes to Juan J. Villarreal, Saltillo, 13 September 1893; Reyes to Valeriano Valdéz, Monterrey, 13 February 1894; Plutarco Ornelas to Ignacio Mariscal, San Antonio, 12 December 1894; Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey 22 April, 6 May, 6 September, 26 December 1894; ABR, carp. 22, leg. 4291; cop. 13, doc. 8000, 8493; cop. 14, doc. 8760, 8763, 8767, 8854, 8929.

¹⁷Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 243-250; Villarello Vélez, Historia de la Revolución, pp. 116-117; Richmond, Carranza, pp. 18-19. A brief summary of the election of 1909 is also provided in INEHRM, Diccionario, pp. 324-325. Before the election, Cárdenas defied the attempt of General Gerónimo Treviño (who had recently replaced Reyes as Commander of the Third Military Zone) to install another man before the end of Cárdenas' term.

growth of a new reform movement led by the grandson of Evaristo Madero, gained momentum.¹⁸

As the revolt of 1893 drew to a close, and Reyes and Díaz worked to strengthen central control over Coahuila, Francisco I. Madero returned to his native state of Coahuila. He had just completed several years of schooling in France and the United States, receiving a thoroughly practical education in business and agricultural management.¹⁹ With his personal adoption of French spiritism while abroad, and in his later adherence to such things as homeopathy and vegetarianism, Madero perhaps proved himself to be unique among his Mexican peers. In his educational path, and the application of his knowledge and skills to the family business, however, Madero was typical of the new entrepreneurial class that had begun to emerge in northeastern Mexico before his birth. Furthermore, Madero's political activities in Coahuila did not simply operate within the confines of his personal beliefs and convictions. They also occurred within the context of, and were largely guided by, the exigencies of a local political system characterized by elite competition, family and kinship

¹⁸See Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 276, 269. Bryan argues that Reyismo (as well as Magonismo) were instrumental in the genesis of the Revolution, and crucial to the success of Maderismo.

¹⁹Madero's education is detailed in Stanley R. Ross, Francisco I. Madero: Apostle of Mexican Democracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), pp. 6-10. Ross' study remains the basic biography of Madero. See also Charles C. Cumberland, Mexican Revolution: Genesis Under Madero (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952).

loyalties, and a traditional resistance to central control.

Upon his return to Mexico, Madero became manager of family properties in San Pedro. As both an agriculturalist and an administrator, he proved himself an outstanding member of the Laguna's class of modern hacendados. His efforts included the improvement of cotton cultivation through the introduction of different varieties and through the use of modern machinery. In his relationship with workers, Madero also became known as one of the region's more progressive businessmen. Some of his attempts to foster good relations with his workers, including the application of his personal knowledge of homeopathic medicine to help cure their ailments, were seen as impractical by other members of the Madero family. Yet while his often unique personal convictions may have compelled Madero to extend his services beyond the ordinary, in his provision of medical care and education to workers and their families, Madero was not alone. The scarcity of labor that was characteristic of Coahuila, and particularly the Laguna, as well as the increasing competition for workers among the various new industries of northeastern Mexico, made such efforts a necessity to attract and hold laborers. Indeed, Madero's own father, whose activities included management of the family textile factory in Parras, was known for his conciliatory attitude toward workers, as well as his provision of good salaries, free medical services

and schools.²⁰

Madero's business dealings also reflected the inter-elite competition that was especially characteristic of the Laguna region. As a member of a family that was often the only significant Mexican representative in economic activities increasingly dominated by foreigners, Madero continued a tradition of resisting foreign domination over resources and markets. In 1906 he established a syndicate of local cotton growers to protect planters against the artificial lowering of prices by the cotton industry.²¹ Madero also became involved, as had his grandfather Evaristo and his father Francisco, in the explosive dispute over the waters of the Nazas River. He championed the cause of property owners of the lower river zone against the foreign-owned Tlahualilo Company, and in 1907 he published a study of the water issue.²² Indeed, it was the elite competition and conflict in which Madero participated that would make the Laguna a center of opposition to Díaz, and an important base of support for the several opposition

²⁰Ross, Madero, pp. 11-14; Vasconcelos, Evaristo Madero, pp. 139, 202-203.

²¹Francisco I. Madero to Antonio Gurza, San Pedro, 7 August 1906, Museo de Antropología e Historia, Archivo de Francisco I. Madero, reel 5 (hereinafter cited as AFM).

²²Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," p. 438. Madero also participated in the maintenance of irrigation works along with other lower river planters. See Eпитacio Sifuentes to Associates of Presa La Colonia, San Pedro, 26 August 1893, AFM, r. 1.

movements.²³

Francisco Madero's participation in the political life of Coahuila was guided not only by his personal convictions and strong belief in democracy, but also by his experiences as a member of an elite family that had witnessed the gradual erosion of its political and economic power and autonomy.²⁴ Madero's initiation into the volatile world of Coahuilan politics began with the municipal election of San Pedro in 1904. After forming a local political club that would become the basis of a broader political movement, and that included

²³See Meyers, "Politics, Vested Rights," p. 442; Meyers, "Interst Group Conflict," pp. 193-229. Meyers suggests that the Tlahualilo conflict may have served as a rallying point for opposition to Díaz, and argues that intra-elite competition was the most important cause of revolution in the Laguna. In addition to the dispute over the Nazas River, Laguna elites were divided over the virtual monopoly of the guayule industry by Rockefeller's Continental Rubber Company, and by attempts of the Compañía Jabonera to manipulate the cotton seed and soap industries.

²⁴Charles Cumberland, in an early study of the Madero revolution, argued that the Madero family had little interest in politics and that none of the Maderos suffered economically under the Díaz administration. He suggests that Francisco's background, had little to do with his rebellion, but was rather a product of Madero representation of "a combination of the new forces in Mexico: nationalism, humanitarianism, intellectualism, and national progress." See Mexican Revolution, p. 30. Clearly, however, Evaristo and other members of the Madero clan were politically active throughout the Porfiriato. The inability of the Madero's to make a significant impact on Coahuilan politics after Evaristo's ouster from the governorship in 1884 must be interpreted as the product of their political disenfranchisement by the Díaz regime, rather than as a supposed disinterest in politics. And this disenfranchisement clearly affected Francisco Madero's political activities and contributed to his evolution as a political figure. Additionally, Romana Falcón, while noting that the Madero economic fortune continued to grow during the Porfiriato, demonstrates that Evaristo no longer enjoyed special economic favors after his ouster as governor in 1884. See Falcón, "Raíces de la Revolución."

other San Pedro farmers, Madero worked for the election of local planter Francisco Rivas. Electoral fraud resulted in the Rivas' defeat, but the Club Democrático of San Pedro soon turned its efforts to impeding the reelection of Governor Cárdenas in the elections of 1905.²⁵

As a participant in local politics, Madero was frequently, and often reluctantly, compelled to operate within the cliquish political system of Coahuila--a system that often necessitated uneasy alliances between otherwise contentious political factions. Thus, in the 1905 governor's race, Madero agreed to support Frumencio Fuentes, the candidate of the Garza Galán clique and of científico Ramón Corral. Maderista and Galanista clubs met official resistance at every step of their campaign, and the expected Porfirian machinations again resulted in the reelection of Cárdenas. Madero, harassed by local authorities and threatened with arrest, briefly retired from Coahuilan politics, a victim of the local political system that counted him and the entire Madero clan as political outcasts.²⁶

²⁵Ross, Madero, pp. 35-36; Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 323-324. A list of the first officers of the San Pedro political club is included in INAH, Diccionario, pp. 297-298.

²⁶Ross, Madero, pp. 37-39; Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 328. The officers of several Maderista clubs complained of persecution by local officials. See Petition of J.M. Aguirre Hernández and Dámaso C. García, Parras, 25 July 1905 and Petition of Juan Long M. and Eduardo Elizondo, Múzquiz, 28 July 1905, AGN: Gobernación, secc. 1 (905), carp. 7, exp. 1; Madero to Trinidad Garza Cano, Madero to Aniceto Balderas, Madero to Díaz, San Pedro, 26, 27, 28 July 1905, AFM, r. 5; L. A. Guajardo to

By 1909 Madero was once again a prominent figure, but his attentions were now turned to national politics. Skeptical of Díaz' recent talk of the impending arrival of a new democratic era in Mexico, he had published The Presidential Succession of 1910, a commentary on Mexico's history and its problems. This book called for the end of the current regime and for the formation of a party that would represent the dual goal of effective suffrage and no reelection.²⁷ Significantly too, The Presidential Succession included proposals reflective of Madero's own experiences as a Laguna hacendado: creation of agricultural banks, better public education and other initiatives for workers, and the improvement of foreign relations.²⁸ In the spring of 1909, Madero assisted in the establishment of a national Antireelectionist club. Reflective of Madero's own limited political goals, the Antireelectionist program emphasized respect for the democratic process and municipal autonomy. Echoing The Presidential Succession and the needs and experiences of a modern elite, specifically that of northeastern Mexico, the platform also endorsed legal reform to help workers and policies that would assist businessmen through restrictions on monopolies and support for

Reyes, Múzquiz, 2 June 1905, ABR, carp. 36, leg. 7080.

²⁷For a summary and critique of Madero's book, see Ross, Madero, pp. 58-64.

²⁸Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," p. 337.

agriculture, industry, and commerce.²⁹

While Madero's focus was now on the presidential election of 1910, he was also a participant in the 1909 elections of his native state. With the científico strategy of diminishing Reyes' influence bearing fruit in the ouster of Cárdenas, members of the nascent Maderista movement, and Madero himself, supported Carranza, who was now identified as a Reyista. Once again, the outcome was predictable: using strongarm tactics, Díaz ensured the victory of del Valle, and actively persecuted members of the opposition.³⁰

By the end of 1909, with Bernardo Reyes still in exile, many Reyistas, including Carranza, began to drift into the Antireelectionist ranks. The alliance between Reyistas and Maderistas, however, was always tense. Madero had a personal dislike for Reyes himself and he voiced opposition to the Reyista movement.³¹ Reyes in turn, had expressed animosity toward the young Coahuilan, and had taken steps to crush his political ambitions. On the eve of the 1905 gubernatorial election, Reyes sent warning to Díaz of Madero's activities, and described him in particularly unflattering terms: ". . .

²⁹Ross summarizes the Antireelectionist program in Madero, p. 98. Friedrich Katz argues that Madero was "a perfectly coherent politician who reflected in his world view the ideology of the landowning class, tinged with a good dose of philanthropy." See Secret War, p. 41.

³⁰For an account of the 1909 election, see Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, pp. 343-350.

³¹Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 265, 268, 275.

of all of his family, [Francisco Madero] is the only one to whom nature has not been kind, for he is rachitic and exceptionally ugly, which inclines him to a certain melancholy . . . and which predisposes him to become easily upset."³²

While Madero publicly endorsed Carranza's bid for governor in 1909, he failed to provide him with real support, a fact that caused many Reyistas to resent Madero. Indeed, Madero was convinced that Carranza's bid for the governorship would fail, and his support for Carranza was of secondary importance to Madero's efforts to expand the activities of the Antireelectionist cause.³³ In turn, although Carranza himself was eventually drawn into the revolutionary movement led by Madero, he remained skeptical of Madero himself. A feeling of mutual distrust would plague the relationship between Madero and Carranza from the start, and would prove to be an obstacle after the overthrow of Díaz.³⁴

As Madero extended his political activities to the

³²Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey, 14 August 1905, ABR, carp. 36, leg. 7124. See also Reyes to Díaz, Monterrey, 24 August 1905, ABR, carp. 29, leg. 5746; Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 198-199.

³³See for example Madero to Carranza, San Pedro, 28 July 1909, AFM, r. 9.

³⁴Meyers, "Interest Group Politics," pp. 329-330; Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 224-225. Meyers suggests that the lack of Reyista support for Madero's revolution may have stemmed from Madero's lukewarm support for Carranza's candidacy in 1909. Ross erroneously states that Madero stopped actively campaigning for Carranza when he learned that Práxedes de la Peña, a friend of the Madero family, became the official candidate for governor. See Madero, pp. 76-77. In fact, de la Peña served only briefly as interim governor after the ouster of Cárdenas.

national level, the Antireelectionist movement in Coahuila continued to grow.³⁵ This local Maderista movement, built upon the San Pedro Antireelectionist club, developed within the context of a political system dominated by elites and characterized by strong family and kinship ties. Many local clubs were led by prominent landowners and businessmen.³⁶ Madero also counted among his supporters several relatives. The San Pedro club included uncles José María Hernández, and Angel and Catarino Benavides, the latter a landowner and businessman in northern Coahuila who included among his rebel credentials leadership in the 1893 revolt and connections to the Mexican Liberal Party.³⁷ Maderista sympathizers also included Marcos Benavides, another relative who had participated in the rebellions that were common to the state's border region.³⁸

As the Antireelectionist movement grew, Maderista clubs

³⁵In the aftermath of the 1904 municipal election of San Pedro, clubs were established in various areas including Saltillo, Parras, Viesca, Gagedo, Guerrero, Zaragoza, and Ciudad Porfirio Díaz. See Enríquez Terrazas and García Valero, Coahuila, p. 322.

³⁶The Antireelectionist club of Múzquiz, for example, consisted primarily of local hacendados or property owners of some means. For a list of its members see L. A. Guajardo to Reyes, Múzquiz, 12 June 1905, ABR carp. 36, leg. 7080.

³⁷Vasconcelos, Evaristo Madero, p. 205.

³⁸Marcos Benavides was a participant in the 1891-1892 rebellions of Catarino Garza and undoubtedly participated in the anti-Galanista revolt of 1893. It is not clear whether Benavides was a Reyista, but there are several pieces of correspondence indicating his role as a political informant for Reyes in northern Coahuila. See for example Marcos Benavides to Reyes, Allende, 6 August 1897, ABR carp. 26, leg. 5104.

in Coahuila began to attract other elements of Coahuilan society. The local club in Cuatro Ciénegas was led by Cesáreo Castro, owner of a small transportation business, and Vicente Flores, former professor and administrator of a local school, who had recently been dismissed from his job. Both men would play a prominent role in the revolution of 1910-1911.³⁹

Perhaps the most interesting of Madero's efforts to organize a political opposition involved the family hacienda "La Merced" in central Coahuila. Madero oversaw the operations of this property and carried on an active correspondence with hacienda administrator Cayetano Trejo. At Madero's urging, Trejo established a Maderista club in the municipality of Ocampo, and in 1905 was sent to represent the club at a statewide meeting.⁴⁰ Trejo's efforts to organize a political opposition eventually incorporated the workers of the Madero hacienda.

As national phenomena, Reyismo and Maderismo represented two of the major liberal reform movements that had arisen by the early 1900s to challenge the Díaz regime. In Coahuila, both garnered their initial support primarily from members of the elite; and both operated within the context of an already-

³⁹Pres. mun. Cuatro Ciénegas to Governor, 7, 8 June 1910, AGE: Siglo XIX; Various correspondence dealing with Maderista rebellions of 19 and 20 November 1910, AGE: Revolución, exp. 10,962.

⁴⁰Cayetano Trejo to Francisco Madero, Ocampo, 5 May 1905; Madero to Trejo, San Pedro, 4 August 1909, AFM, r. 4, 9. In the correspondence between Trejo and Madero, there is an interesting blend of politics, and discussions of efforts to improve the conditions and opportunities of hacienda workers.

existing system of cliquish state politics. Elite support for Reyismo tended to come from people like Carranza who, while not truly disenfranchised by Porfirian politics, supported the progressive reformism that Reyes had come to embody in his administration of the neighboring state of Nuevo León.⁴¹ Maderismo, however, included several elite Coahuilans whose political and economic fortunes had, in some cases, declined during the Porfiriato, following the ouster of Governor Evaristo Madero.⁴²

Both movements also gained adherents among workers and members of Mexico's growing middle class.⁴³ Middle class support for both political movements was an expression of the aspirations of a group that had emerged with, and profited from, the economic modernization of Mexico. This group, which included teachers, shopowners, merchants, clerical workers, and in some areas rancheros, was primarily a product of industrialization and urbanization--a process especially apparent in northeastern Mexico by the end of the nineteenth century.⁴⁴ Reyes in particular gained adherents among the

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 4-9.

⁴²Langston argues that Reyismo was a reform trend within the power elite, while the antireelectionist movement contained more political "outs." See "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 245-247.

⁴³Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 228-233.

⁴⁴Alan Knight notes the vagueness of the term "middle class," but suggests that, generally, its members "were endowed with a measure of property, education, and respectability." See The Mexican Revolution, vol. I (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), p. 43. This dissertation accepts Frans Schryer's view of

middle sectors in the rapidly-growing cities of northern Mexico, including Monterrey, Parras, Torreón, and Múzquiz.⁴⁵ But the rising middle class, motivated by the desire to match its economic clout with political power, and, in many cases, by its commitment to nineteenth century Liberal ideals, also found a new voice in Francisco Madero.⁴⁶

After 1905, as Madero expanded his activities to the national level, he began to contribute to other members of the political opposition, including Paulino Martínez, a particularly contentious journalist who sought refuge in Texas after repeated persecution by the Díaz regime. Madero also briefly supported the increasingly radical movement of Ricardo Flores Magón and the Mexican Liberal Party (PLM), which was formally established in 1905.⁴⁷ When the PLM turned to violence, however, Madero withdrew his support.

Although Reyismo and Maderismo embraced in their ranks some politically disenfranchised Coahuilans, these political

the Mexican ranchero as occupying an intermediate position between landless peons or sharecroppers, and elite hacendados. See Schryer, The Rancheros of Písaflares. The History of a Peasant Bourgeoisie in Twentieth-Century Mexico (Toronto, 1980), pp. 6-8.

⁴⁵Ibid., 62.

⁴⁶Ibid., 63-71. Knight argues against the view of a "downwardly mobile" middle class and concludes that "Maderismo was above all a profoundly political and ideological movement."

⁴⁷Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, pp. 44-45; Ross, Madero, pp. 40-42. Other Maderistas in Coahuila, including Dr. Juan Long, president of the Múzquiz Antireelectionist club, also supported the early activities of the Flores Magón's. See Alberto Guajardo to Reyes, Múzquiz, 22 March 1901, ABR, carp. 34, leg. 6606.

movements primarily represented the views of groups who were beneficiaries of the economic growth that reached a height during the Porfiriato. The more radical movement of Magonismo, however, found support not only in members of the disgruntled middle class, but also among the working class. After 1900, this latter group was increasingly politicized by, and vulnerable to, an economic system heavily dependent on outside forces.

Magonismo, which found formal expression in the PLM, endorsed the principle of no-reelection and other moderate Liberal views. At the same time, the PLM was also characterized by its anarcho-syndicalist leanings, and supported more radical ideas, including that of agrarian reform. Coahuila, as well as the other northern states of Sonora and Chihuahua, was a center of PLM activity. Del Río, Texas, located just across the border from the Coahuilan town of Las Vacas, was the southwest Texas headquarters of the PLM, and Magonista leaders had established party newspapers in Del Río.⁴⁸ Coahuila itself was part of the PLM's "Third Military Zone," which included Tamaulipas, Zacatecas, Chihuahua, and Texas. Several PLM groups emerged in northern Coahuila. Torreón and Saltillo were also home to Magonista clubs.⁴⁹

⁴⁸W. Dirk Raat, Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903-1923 (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1981), pp. 21, 28-29.

⁴⁹Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 195-196; Jean Dale Lloyd, "Los levantamientos del Partido Liberal Mexicano en 1906," in Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana, vol. 3:

Always a center of rebellion and stubborn independence, the Rio Grande District was the area of most PLM activity within the state.⁵⁰ And although little record exists of specific PLM groups, many in Coahuila were located in areas where mining was the main activity. Group leaders in these areas tended to be businessmen, sometimes Mexican industrialists adversely affected by the expansion of foreign influence. PLM members also included small and mid-sized merchants whose businesses were hurt by the commercial monopoly held by foreign mining companies such as ASARCO. An important PLM group existed in one of the mining communities of the wealthy Sierra Mojada region, where ASARCO used its control of the local water supply to secure mining labor, offering water in return for work.⁵¹

While local PLM leadership often had a distinctly middle class character, Magonismo also generated significant support

Campeños, terratenientes, y revolucionarios 1910-1920, ed. Oscar Betanzos (Mexico: Siglo XXI Editores, 1988), pp. 48-49. PLM activities of the Third Military Zone were coordinated from Laredo, Texas by journalists Jénaro and Crescencio Villarreal Márquez.

⁵⁰Langston notes that this area had been most affected by land concentration, and had been a center of conflict over local elections, and disputes over land, water, and taxes. See "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 195-196.

⁵¹Lloyd, "Los levantamientos," pp. 52-53. Lloyd observes that throughout Mexico, support for the PLM in the early 1900s came from areas characterized by the development of a dynamic, capitalist economy. He attributes middle-class support for the PLM to the intrusion of foreign entrepreneurs who extended their influence into small business and who contributed to the expropriation of lands. Ibid., pp. 41-45.

among miners, and other industrial and agricultural workers.⁵² This was especially true in northern Coahuila and the Laguna. It was in these two regions that the PLM staged small-scale revolts in 1906 and 1908.

On September 26, 1906 a small group of PLM rebels crossed into Coahuila from Del Río, attacking the small town of Jiménez. After sacking several houses, kidnapping the municipal president and other local officials and extracting forced loans, the rebels appropriated guns and horses from local residents. They then scattered with the approach of federal forces. Several rebels were caught after crossing back into Texas, but despite the aggressive efforts of the Mexican government to have them extradited for punishment, a United States federal commission in San Antonio refused, due to the exclusively "political" nature of the rebels' activities.⁵³

The Jiménez attack was led by Juan José Arredondo and Calixto Guerra. Natives of northern Coahuila, they were well-known to residents on both sides of the border. While little

⁵²Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 186-188. Langston list rancheros, petty merchants, miners, and industrial and agricultural workers as the supporters of Magonismo. Lloyd's study suggests that, at least in 1906, PLM support in Coahuila did not include significant groups of agricultural workers. See "Los levantamientos," p. 42.

⁵³Various accounts and correspondence of the Jiménez attack and extradition proceedings may be found in ARE. See for example Diligencia practicada en Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 11 October 1906, ARE, exp. 11-8-164; Francisco Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 8 October 1907, ARE-LE 1243. See also Raat, Revoltosos, pp. 37, 129-131.

information is available on Guerra, the fifty-six year old Arredondo was a former Captain and commander of the Rio Grande District and had served as municipal president of the northern population of Morelos. Perhaps a victim of the abolition of military colonies and the land concentration that displaced many smallholders in northern Mexico, by 1906 Arredondo had become a resident worker of an hacienda in northern Coahuila and a member of an underground PLM club in Jiménez.⁵⁴

Mexican consular official Francisco Villasana was quick to downplay the attack, noting that it was purely an act of banditry with no revolutionary overtones. Jiménez Chief of Police Mariano González noted that such attacks had occurred before, under the pretext of smuggling goods or stolen animals into Texas.⁵⁵ Villasana insisted that the sensationalist

⁵⁴Report of Corl. Fructuoso García, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, n.d. (1907) and Testimony of Juan José Arredondo, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, n.d. (1907), ARE-LE 855. As a member of the popular classes, Arredondo was typical of the PLM rebels who participated in the 1906 attack. Yet the Jiménez raid also counted on the financial support of wealthy Jiménez rancher, Patricio Guerra, who fled Coahuila after the attack and was arrested in Texas.

⁵⁵Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 8 October 1907, ARE-LE 1243; Testimony of Mariano González, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 27 September 1906, ARE-LE 854(5). The connection between PLM activity and the banditry and smuggling that was typical of Coahuila's border zone, was perhaps more than circumstantial. In 1906, Del Rio PLM leaders included Pedro N. González who had been an arms smuggler as early as 1892 and who smuggled arms to Jiménez and Eagle Pass in preparation for the 1906 attack. See Raat, Revoltosos, pp. 94-95. It is also interesting to note that the PLM program included the re-establishment of the Free Zone which had been abolished in 1905, apparently to the detriment of Mexican border towns. This contributed to a new wave of banditry and smuggling in the border area. See San Antonio Daily Express, 1 January 1907, in ARE-LE 855(1); Programa del Partido Liberal, manifesto printed in Regeneración, St. Louis, 1 July 1906,

press of the border region had inflated the event, and he emphasized the report of a conservative newspaper which likened the PLM rebels to Christian Scientists who were "conducting their revolution by absent treatment." The pursuit of rebels by Coronel Fructuoso García, insisted the newspaper, while it revealed no revolutionaries, had instead disclosed the existence of "several able bodied and picturesque liars" in the border region.⁵⁶

Despite Villasana's claim that the 1906 attack was an affair of little consequence, Mexico's unsuccessful attempts to extradite the apprehended rebels highlighted two difficulties that had plagued Mexican authorities throughout the nineteenth century, and would continue to hamper their efforts to control Coahuila's border region: the rebel sympathies of residents on both sides of the Coahuila-Texas border, and the reluctance of many Texas officials to prosecute rebel groups. The sympathies of the largely Mexican and Mexican-American population of Del Rio made that town a convenient meeting place for the PLM. Local authorities, many of whom were themselves rebel sympathizers, were slow to pursue banditry and other illegal activities. Indeed, Del Rio had become not only a center of Mexican rebels and exiles, but also the site of feverish political activity among the Mexican-American population. For several years before the

in ARE-LE 1242.

⁵⁶Rio Grande News, Eagle Pass, 12 October 1906, in ARE-LE 1242.

attack, these residents had formed two political factions, the "Colorados" and "Azules," which competed fiercely in the local elections of south Texas. Several Mexican authorities hinted that the reluctance of county judges and other local Texas officials to prosecute rebel activity was a response to political pressure and the need for the votes of the sizeable Mexican-American population.⁵⁷

As part of a broader attempt by the PLM to begin a general revolt, the Jiménez raid ultimately failed. PLM groups in other areas of Coahuila did not respond so that the raid in northern Coahuila was an isolated incident.⁵⁸ PLM leaders in the border region regrouped, however, and in June of 1908 staged another raid on the border town of Las Vacas. In a haphazard assault that lasted two hours, some forty rebels attacked the town's military barracks. After a fight that left several combatants dead, many rebels again took refuge in Texas.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Enrique Creel to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Washington, 28 March 1907; Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 8 October 1907, ARE-LE 1243.

⁵⁸Lloyd, "Los levantamientos," pp. 51-56. Lloyd suggests that a lack of arms or government persecution may have prevented other groups in Coahuila from acting in 1906. He also notes that the Jiménez attack itself enjoyed little support from the residents of Jiménez. Francisco Madero did not support the 1906 raid, and urged the Del Rio PLM not to act. Madero to C. V. Márquez, San Pedro, 24 August 1906, AFM, r. 5.

⁵⁹Accounts of the Las Vacas raid may be found in ARE. See for example Albino Dorantes to Gen. Jefe de la 3a Zona Militar, Las Vacas, 1 July 1908, in "Diligencias Practicadas por Corl. Antonio Carrión, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 19 July 1908, ARE-LE 820; Report of David González Treviño, Juez Primera de Letras del Departamento de

Calixto Guerra and Patricio Guerra, also participants in the 1906 revolt, were detained in Texas. Despite the cooperation of Mexican and American officials, Calixto Guerra was ultimately released, and only two participants were convicted and imprisoned in the United States. Once again, Mexican prosecutors were forced to contend with south Texas politics as they sought extradition of the Las Vacas rebels.⁶⁰

Las Vacas insurgents included Guillermo Adam, a day laborer from northern Coahuila who was lured into the PLM ranks in Del Rio while on his way to work on the Texas railroads. Offered one peso daily by a PLM recruiter, Adam soon found himself back in northern Coahuila, where he was armed and given instructions for the ensuing PLM raid on Las Vacas.⁶¹ While it is difficult to document the provenance of

Rio Grande, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 4 September 1908, ARE, Exp. 15-20-91.

⁶⁰Raat, Revoltosos, pp. 52-53, 131-132; Venustiano Carranza to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Saltillo, 8 October 1908; Secretary of Foreign Relations to Carranza, Mexico, 23 October 1908; Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 16 April 1909; Bulletin of Liga Defensora, Chicago, 9 June 1909, ARE, Exp. 9-7-19. In Grand Jury trials held in San Antonio, several rebels were defended by U.S. lawyer and founder of the Political Refugee Defense League, John Murray. Despite the cooperation of U.S. marshalls and the existence of an active espionage system involving both Mexican and American agents, some Mexicans, and many Texas residents, remained suspicious of the political motives of American officials. See Raat, Revoltosos, pp. 162, 185-188, 195; Moisés García to Federico Gamboa, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 20, 31 August 1908, ARE, Exp. 15-20-91.

⁶¹Testimony of Guillermo Adam in report of David González Treviño, Juez lo de Letras, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 4 September 1908, ARE, Exp. 15-20-91. When questioned, Adam claimed he was coerced into joining the PLM ranks.

most PLM rebels, Adam's situation was probably common, especially by 1907, when Mexican workers began to feel the brunt of an international economic crisis.

The Las Vacas raid occurred concurrently with another PLM-sponsored raid on the Laguna town of Viesca. On June 24 a small group of some fifty rebels assaulted and robbed the local bank and post office, temporarily imprisoned municipal officials, tore up railroad tracks, and committed other depredations before fleeing north into Matamoros. A few rebels were captured, and local officials responded with the arrest, and some executions, of suspected workers and members of the middle class.⁶²

Although the 1908 Las Vacas and Viesca raids failed to generate the broader rebellion planned by PLM leaders, Magonista activity continued in the form of guerrilla movements based in the mountains of northern Coahuila.⁶³ In its continued ability to attract workers, the PLM opposition reflected broader economic forces that had begun to produce a

⁶²American newspaper reports of the Viesca attack may be found in ARE-LE 935. See for example San Francisco Examiner, 28 June 1908; San Antonio Daily Express, 26 June 1908; St. Louis Times, 27 June 1908; St. Louis Post Dispatch, 28 June 1908. See also Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 270-273, 276. By 1910, several rebels were still held in the state penitentiary of Saltillo. See Luther T. Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 9 July 1910, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Mexico, 1910-1929, 812/334. [Hereinafter cited as NA, followed by file number].

⁶³Raat, Revoltosos, pp. 35, 240. The guerrilla campaign which persisted to the eve of Madero's revolt, was led by Jesús M. Rangel and included some 500 rebels.

sizeable group of unemployed and restless laborers. Like Guillermo Adam, these workers provided ready recruits, both in the border area and in the Laguna.

With an economy largely dependent on foreign capital and markets, Coahuila, like the rest of Mexico, was vulnerable to market forces.⁶⁴ With its modern workforce--unique to northern Mexico--Coahuila also experienced the economic crisis of the early 1900s in the form of widespread popular unrest. The steady contraction of cotton and guayule markets after 1900, coupled with periodic droughts, flooding, and a grasshopper plague, especially hurt the Laguna region. Jobless workers left the area in large numbers, searching for work elsewhere. By 1910, the town of Matamoros was almost bankrupt, having lost harvests to drought and frosts for three consecutive years.⁶⁵ The mobility of the labor force had already caused a labor shortage in the Laguna by 1906, as workers left to seek better jobs in the mines and industry. Hacendados became so desperate that they were compelled to import Chinese and Japanese workers to pick the cotton crop.⁶⁶

Other sectors of Coahuila's economy experienced recession after 1900. By 1906, a decline in the silver market had

⁶⁴See Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, pp. 116-118. Ruíz notes that 90 per cent of manufactured goods sold in Coahuila were from the United States, and that the guayule and coal industries relied on U.S. markets and capital.

⁶⁵Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, p. 91; Pres. mun. Matamoros to Matamoros Ayuntamiento, 1 January 1910, AGE: Siglo XIX.

⁶⁶Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, pp. 83-84.

caused several Coahuilan mines to shut down, causing problems for related enterprises. Between 1901 and 1910, Coahuila's textile work force had dramatically declined.⁶⁷ Outside of the Laguna, drought affected hacendados and smallholders alike. Smallholders of independent farming communities and residents of several municipalities of northern Coahuila complained of a lack of water and food, and many asked for a revision of taxes on their land and water, noting that drought had made their lands almost worthless.⁶⁸

By 1907, Mexico itself was facing an agricultural crisis in which basic commodities were scarce and prices inflated. The international financial crisis of 1907 heightened the danger of unrest, particularly in the Laguna, as thousands of migrant workers returned from the United States in search of work. Many of them had already been politicized by exposure to American unionism and to the PLM.⁶⁹ In addition, those wandering across the border in search of work provided ready recruits for the sizeable PLM contingency along the border.⁷⁰

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 91, 124-126.

⁶⁸Residents of San José del Aura to Governor Cárdenas, 14 September 1904; Residents of Allende, Rosales, and Gigedo to Governor del Valle, 22 August 1910, AGE: Siglo XIX.

⁶⁹Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 250-263, 266-268.

⁷⁰See Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 198-200. Meyers also attributes the 1908 Viesca revolt to worker unrest. See "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 270-273. One Texas newspaper noted that the Las Vacas rebels included some federal soldiers, who deserted to join rebel ranks, lured by the promise of more money. Houston Chronicle, 28 August 1908, in ARE-LE 935.

The economic problems that began to affect Coahuila in 1900 and climaxed in the 1907 recession also had repercussions for the middle class of northern Mexico. Inflation and higher taxes took their toll on members of the middle and working classes. The discontent of both groups, moreover, was increasingly expressed as resentment toward foreigners and foreign investment.⁷¹

Despite the economic troubles that encouraged PLM activity along the border and contributed to a new wave of banditry in the Laguna, Francisco Madero insisted that the failures of the Jiménez, Las Vacas, and Viesca revolts were proof that Mexicans wanted not revolution, but a more democratic movement.⁷² As a presidential candidate in 1910, however, Madero's persistent faith in democracy and peaceful reform was shaken when he was continuously harassed, and finally imprisoned, at the behest of Díaz. Although Madero continued to endorse a program of moderate change for Mexico, he was now forced to move beyond the realm of formal political competition to realize his goals.

By 1909, the political machinations of Díaz and the científicos had alienated a large sector of the Coahuilan

⁷¹Katz, Secret War, pp. 10-11. Members of the middle class often responded to the economic crisis with the establishment of unions and mutual aid organizations, and with greater political involvement. But, as Meyers notes, they tended to support Reyes over the radical PLM. See Meyers, "Interest Group Conflict," pp. 277-281.

⁷²Madero to José D. Espinosa, San Pedro, 7 July 1908, AFM, r. 7.

elite. Reyismo, which gave expression to the aspirations of Mexico's middle and laboring classes, and which garnered the support of Venustiano Carranza and other Coahuilan elites, had faded. The Antireelectionist movement, meanwhile, continued to grow, attracting some Reyes supporters in an often uneasy alliance. Like the Reyes movement, Madero had an elite core of support, including several of his relatives. Madero's plan for change, with its advocacy of progressive economic reforms, reflected his background as a member of northeastern Mexico's entrepreneurial elite. At the same time, Madero's insistence of the political goals of effective suffrage, no re-election and municipal autonomy, echoed the sentiments of several Coahuilans, who, like the Madero family, had been relegated to the edge of the Porfirian power structure.

Finally, the increasingly radical PLM, with its middle class leadership and significant following among Mexican workers, found a home in northern Coahuila, the border zone, and even in the Laguna. Magonismo, moreover, was an important reflection of Coahuila's economic vulnerability. After 1900 economic crisis and dislocation generated popular unrest and provided recruits for rebel movements. This same factor would help give the Maderista revolt of 1910-1911 its unique quality.

CHAPTER 3

REGIONS AND REBELLIONS:

THE MADERISTA REVOLT OF 1910-1911

In June, 1910, Madero passed through Saltillo on the campaign trail. In anticipation of his visit, members of the local Antireelectionist club, Francisco Martínez Ortiz, Serapio Aguirre, Adolfo Huerta Vargas, and Benigno Ramos Fuentes circulated flyers inviting people to meet Madero at the railroad station. Censured by local officials for failing to get permission to publicize the event, each man was fined. Although the visit caused no real unrest, local authorities tormented Madero and his supporters.¹

A few days later, Madero was arrested in Monterrey and transferred to prison in San Luis Potosí for safekeeping during the approaching elections. After the unsurprising Díaz victory, Madero escaped from San Luis Potosí and fled to the United States. From exile in San Antonio, he issued the Plan of San Luis Potosí, calling for revolution, and repeating his commitment to the political principle of effective suffrage and no reelection. Like the earlier Antireeleccionist platform, Madero's plan was primarily political in nature,

¹Order of Pres. mun. Saltillo, 5 June 1910, Archivo Municipal de Saltillo, Fondo Presidencia Municipal, carp. 154/2, leg. 7, exp. 1-3.

reflective of Madero's own background as a landowner and member of the elite, although Madero leaned extremely cautious support to agrarian reform.² While the large-scale displacement of a traditional peasantry had not occurred in Porfirian Coahuila, many smallholders and former military colonists, particularly in northern Coahuila, had experienced the effects of land concentration. A tradition of agrarian rebellion, moreover, had developed in the Laguna. Madero's own experience, however, was with a modern agrarian workforce consisting of landless, salaried workers, most with few traditional ties to Coahuila.³

On the eve of Madero's revolution, Coahuila was characterized by political division. The cliquish political competition among elites that was characteristic throughout the Porfiriato was still a divisive force. The opposition movement, too, consisted of separate groups, often at odds with one another. Many *Reyistas*, including Venustiano Carranza, were reluctant and belated allies to the *Maderista* cause, and Madero's recent withdrawal of support from the PLM had generated some animosity, particularly in northern Coahuila and the border region. The *Maderista* movement itself stood on uncertain ground. Although many of its members were dedicated reformers from the middle class, in his coordination

²For discussions of the Plan of San Luis Potosí see Ross, *Madero*, pp. 115-116; Cumberland, *Mexican Revolution*, p. 107.

³For summaries of the Plan of San Luis Potosí, see Ross, *Madero*, pp. 115-116, and Cumberland, *Mexican Revolution*, p. 107.

of the statewide movement, Madero seemed to rely more on the efforts of a small group of wealthy friends and relatives. In addition, Porfirian persecution of Antireelectionist groups hampered the movement's success and resulted in the disbanding of some groups. The November 1910 call for revolt, for example, found the Antireelectionist club of Ciudad Porfirio Díaz broken by persecution and its president exiled in Texas.⁴

While working class support for Madero did exist in some areas of the state, the economic crisis that caused jobless workers in the thousands to wander about Coahuila and into Texas in search of work, was hardly conducive to the coordination of a revolt. Yet this same factor would ultimately provide the recruits needed for a Maderista victory in Coahuila. The result was a largely spontaneous, popular revolt, heavily tinged with elements of banditry, which, while responding to the opportunity created by Madero's call for revolution, would outlast any political victory.

After the publication of the Plan of San Luis Potosí, rumors surfaced of a planned rebellion in several areas of Coahuila, including Torreón, Saltillo, and the border region. When Madero approached the border for the planned November revolt, anticipating a force of three hundred led by Catarino Benavides, he was greeted by only ten poorly-armed men. He was forced to retreat. A later attempt to cross into Coahuila

⁴Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 3 November 1910, NA, 812/444.

likewise met with disappointment, and Madero turned his attention to the neighboring state of Chihuahua, which promised more success.

Despite their reputation for rebelliousness and defiance of central authority, residents of northern Coahuila did not respond to Madero's call. As local officials combed the border zone, they found no rebel activity, and only noted that several Maderistas had apparently crossed into Texas. The southeast was quiet as well. Rebels briefly captured Gómez Palacio, Durango, but Coahuila's Laguna region experienced no revolt. Isolated incidents of banditry did occur in the Laguna, but were probably more of a response to drought and financial crisis, banditry being a traditional outlet of the region's smallholders. By the end of November, Matamoros authorities reported that several thefts of corn had been the only result of the 1910 revolution. Only in central Coahuila did significant rebel activity occur in 1910.⁵

The Maderista uprising in this region was centered in the hacienda "La Merced" in the municipality of Ocampo, which contained several other properties owned by the Madero family. The revolt began a few days before the planned November

⁵Information and reports about the 1910 revolution in Coahuila may be found in AGECE: Revolución, exp. 10,962: "correspondencia varia sobre las rebeliones maderistas de 19 y 20 noviembre 1910." See for example Pres. mun. Monclova to Governor, 21 November 1910, Pres. mun. Cuatro Ciénegas to Governor, 19 November 1910, Pres. mun. Zaragoza to Governor, 19 November 1910. This expediente is one of the only primary sources of information on the 1910 revolt. Richmond mentions other local revolts, including one led by Jesús Carranza in Cuatro Ciénegas. See Carranza, p. 23.

revolution, and was led by Cayetano Trejo, hacienda administrator and president of the Ocampo Antireelectionist club. Trejo, along with some fifty rebels, apprehended Ocampo municipal president and ranchero Pedro Martínez and two of his relatives. Insulted by the rebels and unceremoniously "deposed" from his political office, Martínez was pressed for a loan by the insurgents, who then fled to their base at La Merced. Rebel activity continued in the Ocampo-Cuatro Ciénegas area into December, and a few men were captured and imprisoned. Using La Merced as their base, small groups ventured out to commit isolated acts of banditry, burning bridges and destroying railroad tracks. A few skirmishes occurred between federals and a larger group of rebels led by ex-federal officer Manuel Escudero.⁶

The rebels of central Coahuila consisted of a true cross-section of Coahuilan society. They included hacienda workers from La Merced and from the neighboring hacienda of San Francisco. Laborers from the neighboring mining community of La Mula also participated, but so did several small businessmen and a few professionals from Ocampo and Cuatro Ciénegas. The rebel profile included several men with small transportation businesses, including Cesáreo Castro, president of the Antirreelectionist club of Cuatro Ciénegas; Vicente Flores, former professor and administrator of a Cuatro

⁶Pres. mun. Cuatro Ciénegas to Governor, 28 November 1910, exp. 10,962, AGECE: Revolución; Report of Pres. mun. Cuatro Ciénegas, 14 November 1910, AGN: Gobernación, secc. 1, carp. 3, exp. 2.

Ciénegas school (who had been dismissed in 1908); a tailor; an Ocampo farmer; an ex-Army officer; a day laborer; a contractor for the mines of La Mula; and a blacksmith. Several workers from the Madero family property "Australia" and the guayule factory of the same name also took part in the revolt. Ernesto Treviño, administrator of the guayule factory, was identified as a ringleader. His ranks included Apolinar Sánchez, an office teller for the guayule factory, Francisco de Anda, factory worker, and Toribio de los Santos, a cowboy from the Australia property.⁷

By the end of November, with Madero back in San Antonio and only isolated rebel activity occurring in Coahuila, officials reported the end of the Madero revolution. American consular agent Luther Ellsworth attributed Madero's failed incursion into Coahuila to the heightened vigilance by U.S. and Mexican officials in the border region. Del Rio Mexican agent Manuel Cuesta offered the interesting explanation that Madero had advanced warning of government attempts to suffocate his rebellion, because the Maderista sympathizers of Lorenzo González Treviño's cattle company had tapped the telegraph wires of the border area and were providing Madero with official information.⁸

Madero's inability to generate more support for a

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 19, 20, 21 November 1910, NA 812/428-435; Cuesta to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 24 November 1910, ARE-LE 614.

revolution in 1910, while partly the product of official persecution of the Antireelectionist movement, was also due to the hesitancy of several leading figures, including Venustiano Carranza. Carranza wanted to achieve better organization before taking action and was reluctant to act alone in Coahuila, with Madero still in San Antonio.⁹ In January 1911, Carranza would join Madero in Texas. Yet while he helped in recruitment and preparation, Carranza hedged on taking a more active role in the revolution that eventually succeeded in ousting Díaz.¹⁰

The revolution, which eventually gained momentum in 1911 and took Madero as its leader, was a combination of organized revolt and spontaneous popular rebellion. The capture of specific towns in Coahuila and the drive to gain control of the state was accompanied by, and in many cases dependent on, the more localized outbursts that struck at the symbols of Porfirian control and abuse. The Maderista victory was followed by local demands for political change. Many Coahuilans petitioned for the redress of grievances and inequities that had accompanied the process of economic modernization, and that were encouraged by Porfirian policies. Multi-faceted and lacking a single unifying theme or purpose,

⁹Villarello Vélez, Historia de la Revolución, p. 187; Richmond, Carranza, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 24. Richmond notes that Carranza did commission expeditions in central Coahuila in 1911, and his brother Jesús helped in the capture of Cuatro Ciénegas and Monclova.

this unruly rebellion was inherited by Carranza and President Madero.

The main foci of Maderista revolt in 1910, central Coahuila experienced significant rebel activity in 1911 as well. In January, Pablo González, a native of Nuevo León and a salesman for American companies in Coahuila and Chihuahua, rose in arms with some sixty men, including store clerk Gregorio Osuna. At the urging of Venustiano Carranza, brother Jesús Carranza and nephew Fernando Peraldi Carranza also revolted. They were joined by the son of a prosperous Nadadores family, Lucio Blanco. Maderista rebels in the northernmost municipality of Múzquiz were led by brothers and former Reyistas, Luis Alberto and Evaristo Guajardo, who incorporated into their ranks Cayetano Ramos Falcón--son-in-law of former governor Miguel Cárdenas-- and his small contingency of miners and hacienda cowboys from Lampacitos.¹¹ With the coordinated efforts of these leaders, Cuatro Ciénegas and Monclova were in Maderista hands by May. Finally, in a pattern that likely repeated itself in central and northern Coahuila, the Madero rebellion gained unexpected adherents in a small group of federal soldiers who revolted in Monclova

¹¹See Villarello Vélez, Historia de la Revolución, p. 187; Gerónimo González Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 20 May 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/28, Tomo III. Partial profiles of several Coahuilan rebels is provided in Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, p. 233, and INEHRM, Diccionario.

under the leadership of Lieutenant Julio Escobar.¹²

Coordinated rebel advances, however, were also accompanied by more isolated incidences of banditry and guerrilla warfare. Small groups of Maderista insurgents attacked local haciendas, enlisting workers and appropriating guns, horses, and other goods. Leaders of these bands were usually recognized by local officials, and they often left receipts, promising indemnity after the revolution.¹³

For local officials, the Maderista revolt brought not only the danger of rebel attacks from without but also the threat of rebellion from local residents. In March, the municipal president and other local officials of Monclova were attacked by a small group of farmers from the independent agricultural community of Castaños. In a spontaneous display of hostility toward the municipal government, several Monclova residents joined the rebels, opening fire on the officials.¹⁴ The lands of Castaños had likely been encroached upon during the Porfiriato, since survey companies were especially active in the Monclova District.¹⁵

In central Coahuila and throughout the state, the symbols

¹²Pres. mun. of Monclova to Governor del Valle, 17 May 1911, AGECE: Revolución; Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 16 May 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/28, Tomo II.

¹³See for example, Pres. mun. Monclova to Governor del Valle, 27 March 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

¹⁴Pres. mun. Monclova to Governor del Valle, 27 March 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

¹⁵See Favret Tondato, Tenencia, pp. 85-87.

of Porfirian authority and caciquismo were threatened by Maderistas. In Múzquiz, the heart of the economic and political empire of the Garza Galán family, rebels led by Evaristo Guajardo apprehended Juan Garza Galán and took the local cacique bound and gagged to the mining community of Palau. There he was held until a federal force dislodged the rebels and freed "one of the staunchest supporters" of the Díaz regime.¹⁶

By early 1911, a coordinated Maderista revolt was also taking shape in southeastern Coahuila. In February, Dr. Rafael Cepeda published an act of rebellion in Saltillo, which found adherents in Serapio Aguirre and other members of the local Maderista club. Schoolteacher Gertrudis Sánchez rallied the workers of haciendas in the vicinity of Saltillo. Francisco Coss, who had worked in the mines of southeastern Coahuila, and whose rebel credentials included participation in the 1906 PLM raid on Las Vacas, joined the ranks. The forces of Cepeda also included Luis and Eulalio Gutiérrez, brothers of a modest background. Eulalio Gutiérrez, like Coss, had worked as a miner and was a member of the PLM. In 1908, he participated in the raids on Viesca and Las Vacas, and in 1910 he was part of a small revolt in southern

¹⁶Jefe Político of Monclova to Governor del Valle, 11 April 1911, AGECE: Revolución; Tte. Ricardo Villegas to Corl. Jefe de la Línea Ricardo Peña, Múzquiz, 10 April 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/28, Tomo I.

Coahuila.¹⁷

Using the surrounding hills as a refuge, the Maderista rebels staged frequent guerrilla attacks, cutting the lines of communication, raiding for arms, and gaining recruits. Men left Saltillo constantly to join the small bands of revolutionists operating in the surrounding hills. Rebel activity in the vicinity of Saltillo, which continued into May, underscored the widespread sympathy of Saltillo residents toward the Maderistas. There was also a common feeling of animosity toward the town's large foreign population, which included Americans, Germans, and British. American Consul Thomas Voetter remarked that a latent xenophobia had existed in Saltillo for many years, but he also emphasized the strong sentiment of the people that they "have been deprived of some of their rights in the matter of local self-government." Resentment toward the 1909 ouster of Miguel Cárdenas still lingered, as did animosity toward the científicos. For Saltillans, remarked Voetter, the revolution was "favored as a means to bring about . . . increased self government," and to end the domination of the científicos.¹⁸ ✓

On April 16, miner Enrique Adame Macías led an assault on the town of Parras. In anticipation of the attack, and with a federal garrison numbering only twenty-five men, local

¹⁷Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución, pp. 187-189. For profiles of these rebels see INEHRM, Diccionario.

¹⁸Voetter to State Department, Saltillo, 18, 27, 29 March, 3 April, 4, 12 May 1911, NA, 812/1060, 1198, 1199, 1281, 1711, 1828.

officials had solicited and obtained arms and munitions from area businessmen and hacendados, including the Madero family. With the arrival of the Maderistas, however, several residents left the plaza to join the rebels, who approached the town with a force of some three hundred men. After pounding Parras with gunfire and dynamite for nearly twelve hours, a group of townspeople presented a flag of truce, compelling the municipal president to surrender.

In the ensuing confusion, Parras residents, including several workers from the local businesses of the Madero family, joined rebels in destroying local archives, freeing prisoners, and looting. Threatening to apprehend the municipal president and sacking his private residence, the townspeople forced him to take refuge in the house of Salvador Madero. Prominent locals helped to negotiate a truce that allowed foreigners to leave. Fighting continued in the area of Parras into early May, as federals tried to recapture the town. Exiled municipal judge Graciano Patino commented that Parras was "in the most complete anarchy," and an American official in Saltillo reported that some two hundred bodies remained unburied, strewn about the town's streets. Finally, on May 3, federal troops ended their offensive and retreated.¹⁹

¹⁹Reports of the attack on Parras may be found in exp. 11,097: "Correspondencia varia sobre sucesos ocurridos en Parras los 16 y siguientes del mes de abril 1911," 24 April 1911, AGECE: Revolución; G. Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 16 May 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/27, Tomo I; and Paul Voetter, American Consul

Beginning with the raid on Gómez Palacio in November 1910, the Laguna region of Coahuila and Durango was the site of a significant popular movement influenced not only by Maderistas, but also by Reyistas and the PLM. The region's popular movement was largely a product of the economic crisis that had produced large numbers of jobless workers. As in other areas of the state, rebel activity included attacks on the symbols and representatives of central authority.²⁰

While largely spontaneous in nature, the 1910-1911 revolution in the Laguna was also an expression of the long-standing problems facing the region's free agricultural settlements. Matamoros and Viesca, with a history of agrarian revolt and social banditry, and most recently affected by land and resource disputes which multiplied with Porfirian development, were centers of popular rebellion throughout the revolution.²¹ Despite the unorganized nature of rebel activity in the Laguna, by the spring of 1911, insurgent

in Saltillo to State Department, 20, 21 April, 2, 14 May 1911, NA 812/1415, 1495, 1678, 1855. Parras officials especially blamed the Madero family for arming their workers before the attack. Voetter attributed the damage done to the property of Parras officials to the townspeople, not the revolutionists.

²⁰Meyers provides an excellent study of the Laguna's popular movement in "Second Division of the North," pp. 448-486. Meyers notes the importance of timing in the 1910-1911 rebellion: by November of 1910, with the cotton harvest completed, large numbers of idle workers would have been gathered in the Laguna's towns, providing recruits for rebel groups. Accounts of banditry and guerrilla activity in the Laguna may be found in AGECE: Revolución. See for example, Jefe Político of Viesca District to Governor's Secretary, Torreón, 16, 18 January, 9 February, 14 March, 1911.

²¹Meyers, "Second Division," pp. 457, 461, 471-473.

forces were coordinated under several prominent leaders, paving the way for the capture of San Pedro and Torreón. In late April, some five hundred rebels, led by Sixto Ugalde (a native of Matamoros), Gregorio García, Francisco Palacios, Orestes Pereyra and others, occupied a hacienda on the outskirts of San Pedro. Defended by only 140 federal troops, the town itself had been fortified with cotton bales and sacks of dirt. Hacendado and staunch Porfirista Carlos Herrera sustained a volunteer force, and several residents had armed themselves in anticipation of the attack. On April 26, Captain Luis M. Rivera ventured out to the rebel base with a small force of federals. Realizing the extent of the opposition forces, Rivera hastily retreated, but upon entering San Pedro was surprised by a group of hostile residents who loudly expressed their support for Madero. While Emilio Madero gave refuge to the federal troops and town officials in his nearby house, Ugalde and the rebels occupied the town.

In an agreement reached between Emilio Madero and the rebel leaders, federal troops were promised safe passage out of San Pedro. As they left, however, the troops were attacked by a mob that stripped the soldiers of their guns and clothing, leaving many in their underwear. Taking refuge in a local hacienda, the humiliated soldiers finally made their way to Monterrey. With local officials deposed, several residents of San Pedro met to name their own leaders. A Torreón newspaper likened the capture of San Pedro to a

"barbaric Indian attack," and warned that with this strategic town in Maderista hands, Torreón would soon fall.²²

With Viesca and Matamoros also in rebel hands, and the railroad connecting the Laguna to Saltillo and Monterrey destroyed, eight hundred federal troops led by General Emilio Lojero clung tenaciously to Torreón. On May 9 a rebel attack by over four thousand men, representing the coordinated forces of Sixto Ugalde, José Agustín Castro, Benjamín Argumedo, and other rebel leaders, began. After several days of fighting, Lojero and the Federals evacuated, leaving Torreón in rebel hands. Joined by local residents, the insurgents began sacking local stores, offices and banks. One businessman noted that "to give an excuse to plunder a certain store containing desirable goods, somebody had only to cry that shots had been fired from the roof, and immediately the mob would break in the door and plunder."²³ The riot that ensued generated one of the first and most significant acts of anti-foreign violence of the Mexican Revolution: the massacre of over two hundred Chinese residents of Torreón.

Relative newcomers to the Laguna, the Chinese population of Torreón numbered around six hundred. By 1910, they had

²²Exp. 11,136: "Varia sobre sucesos el 23 de abril en San Pedro," 1 May 1911, AGECE: Revolución; Capt. Luis M. Rivera to Gral. Jefe de la Zona, Monterrey, 8 May 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/27, Tomo III; Rivera to Treviño, Monterrey, 8 May 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/28, Tomo II. A brief account of the San Pedro attack may also be found in INEHRM, Diccionario.

²³C. A. Haberlein, report of federal evacuation of Torreón, 25 May 1911, NA, 812/2026.

become one of the region's most prosperous foreign groups, with interests in banking, restaurants, laundries, and other businesses, as well a virtual monopoly over the local sale of foodstuffs. Their success, exclusivity, and distinct culture, which often included the use of opium, caused strong resentment among many Mexican residents of Torreón. Open expressions of anti-Chinese sentiment were common, and in a speech preceding the rebel capture, Maderista leader Jesús Flores had urged the extermination of the Chinese, claiming that they were "dangerous competitors for the common people of Mexico." During the attack on the town, several members of the Chinese community had armed themselves at the urging, and perhaps with the help, of General Lojero. As the Maderistas entered the town, they found several armed Chinese guarding the Chinese Bank, some of whom fired on rebel troops.

With the arrival of Emilio Madero, order was finally restored in Torreón. A special headquarters was established to hear the complaints of the remaining Chinese residents, and the national government began an investigation, which resulted in the promise of indemnity by the Mexican government--a promise that was lost in the continuing revolution.²⁴ The

²⁴Accounts of the capture of Torreón and the Chinese massacre may be found in AGECE: Revolución, exp. 11,145. See for example Governor del Valle to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Saltillo, 23 May 1911, Secretary of Foreign Relations to Governor del Valle, Mexico, 23 May 1911. See also Gen. Emiliano Lojero to Secretary of War, n.p., 31 May 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/28 Tomo II; J.D. Carothers to State Department, Torreón, 19, 22 May 1911, NA, 812/1895, 1968; C. A. Haberlein, report of federal evacuation of Torreón, 25 May 1911, NA, 812/2026. An excellent study of the

Chinese massacre, while certainly the most notable anti-foreign incident in Coahuila, was not the last. The next victims would be the Spaniards of the Laguna, who would incur the wrath of Pancho Villa.

The rebel groups that achieved a victory in the Laguna by May 1911 were composed primarily of members of the popular and middle classes. Rebel ranks included men of many occupations: agricultural and industrial workers, artisans, small landowners, and teachers.²⁵ Members of the elite, still

Chinese massacre, including information about the Chinese community itself, is provided by Leo M. Dambourges Jacques in "The Chinese Massacre in Torreón (Coahuila) in 1911," Arizona and the West 16 (Autumn 1974): 233-246. Anti-Chinese activity continued in the Laguna long after the Mexican Revolution. In 1934, Torreón residents established the Anti-Chinese Committee of Torreón, which adopted as its motto: "For the Country and for the Race." The Committee campaigned for the permanent departure of the Chinese from the Laguna, as well as other areas of Mexico, in order to achieve the "cleansing of commerce and of the [Mexican] race." See Hipólito C. Méndez and Manuel S. Mendoza to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Torreón, 20 July 1934, ARE, Exp. III-294-35.

²⁵Meyers suggests a profile of the rebels in "Second Division," p. 466. Occupational information and descriptions of family background of some rebel leaders may also be found in INEHRM, Diccionario, and in the service records of AHDN-CP. See for example, Hoja de Servicios del C. Gen. Brig. Benjamín Argumedo, Mexico, 19 May 1914; José M. Pérez Treviño, Vista en consejo de Guerra Extraordinaria, Durango, 29 February 1916; Extractos de Antecedentes Militares del C. Extinto Gen. Benjamín Argumedo, Mexico, 21 April 1941 and 21 February 1945, in "Argumedo, Benjamín," AHDN-CP, XI/III/2-70. Hoja de Servicios del Gen. de Div. Francisco L. Urquiza Benavides, Mexico, 25 January 1941; Extracto de antecedentes militares del Gen. de Div. Francisco Urquiza Benavides, Mexico, 9 April 1953; Hechos de Armas del C. Gen. de Div. Francisco Urquiza Benavides, Mexico, 11 January 1954 and 1 July 1955; Acta de Nacimiento (copy) of Francisco Urquiza Benavides, Mexico, 11 November 1959; in "Urquiza, Francisco," AHDN-CP, XI/III/1-246, Tomo 5. J. Agustín Castro to Secretary of War, 5 December 1931; Account of military services of Toribio V. de los Santos by Alfredo Breceda, Mexico, 5 December 1931; E. Aguirre to Secretary of War, Mexico, 8 December 1931; copy of de los Santos'

divided by the cliquish political competition which characterized the entire state, did not participate.²⁶

After Madero's abortive incursion into Coahuila, and through the spring of 1911, when Madero achieved a national victory, the northern region remained an area of only sporadic rebel activity. Calixto Guerra, a participant in the 1908 Las Vacas revolt and would-be revolutionary of 1910, continued his efforts to recruit men and gather supplies. Recruits were found in the workers and cowboys of local haciendas and ranches, from which Guerra and his men also appropriated arms, cattle, and other goods. Ill-equipped local officials gave chase to the illusive revolutionaries, and federal troops were constantly hampered by the international border, which the rebels freely crossed in search of refuge.²⁷

PLM activity, perhaps connected to the Maderista movement, continued in northern Coahuila as well. The immense

marriage certificate, San Pedro, 10 March 1917, in "de los Santos, Toribio V.," AHDN-CP, XI/III/3-2789, Tomo I. Testimonio de la escritura de protocolización de los diligencias de jurisdicción voluntaria . . . por la Señora Sabina García, viuda de Ugalde," Torreón, 15 August 1918; copy of marriage certificate of Sixto Ugalde, Matamoros, 13 November 1873, in "Ugalde, Sixto," AHDN-CP, XI/III/3-1678.

²⁶Meyers, "Second Division," p. 455.

²⁷Jefe de Seguridad Pública to Governor del Valle, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 23 January 1911; letter of Francisco Ríos, administrator of Hacienda San Graciano, 13 January 1911; Pres. mun. of Rosales to Governor del Valle, 13 April 1911; Pres. mun. of Hidalgo to Secretario de Gobierno, 24 April 1911, AGECE: Revolución. G. Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 11 January 1911; Corl. José Montalvo to Treviño, n.p., n.d., AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/28, Tomo I. Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 29 May 1911, AHDN: Revolución, XI 481.5/28, Tomo III.

Hacienda La Babia of General Gerónimo Treviño, centered in Múzquiz, was seized and converted into a center of rebel operations, and guerrilla attacks frequently occurred from an insurgent base in the Burro Mountains. American Consul Ellsworth reported rumors of an arms ring linking San Antonio and Comstock, Texas to the Burro Mountain rebels.²⁸

Although rebel activity in northern Coahuila remained sporadic during the 1910-1911 Maderista revolt, the border zone continued to be a volatile area. Mexican and American officials confronted the problems of arms smuggling and rebel recruitment, and their efforts to prosecute revolutionary activities were hampered by the widespread sympathies enjoyed by rebel groups in the Texas border towns.²⁹ León Gómez, Mexican consular agent in Del Rio, reported that nearly universal hostility toward the Mexican government existed among the town's Mexican population, and that American residents were sympathetic to the rebel cause. Many Texas county authorities also displayed sympathy for the Maderistas, and local prosecution of neutrality violations by Mexican

²⁸Ellsworth to Secretary of State, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 16, 20, 26 January 1911, NA, 812/658, 663, 668.

²⁹Before and after Madero's attempted revolt of November 1910, authorities complained that border area merchants freely sold arms and munitions to "all comers." A major smuggling point was the Indian Ranch, a property which stretched along the Texas-Coahuila border for some fifty miles and which was owned by a personal friend of Francisco Madero. Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 28 November, 5 December 1910, NA, 812/523, 547.

rebels was less than rigorous.³⁰

The sympathies of the Texas and Mexican border population increased with reports of the sometimes brutal persecution of captured Maderista rebels. Suprised by federal troops near the northern town of Rosales, a small group of rebels was apprehended and executed in the town schoolyard, before an audience of children. The outraged community of Mexican exiles in Eagle Pass issued a public protest against the crime.³¹

Just as the Texas border towns had provided a refuge for the economic and political exiles of the Porfiriato, so did the Texas-Coahuila border provide an avenue of escape for the residents of Mexican border towns. People passed as easily as guns across the usually dry river bed separating Ciudad Porfirio Díaz from Eagle Pass, and rumors of an impending rebel attack could generate a mass exodus to Texas of residents and local Mexican officials.³²

The success of the Maderista revolt of 1910-1911 was due not only to the spontaneous and often overwhelming display of popular support in many areas of Coahuila, but also to the failure of local defense against the rebels. As revolutionary

³⁰Gómez to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 15 January, 27 March, 4, 15 April 1911, ARE-LE 625, 645, 650, 658.

³¹Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 22 May 1911, NA, 812/1956.

³²Francisco Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 10 April 1911, ARE-LE 651; Ellsworth to State Department, May 1911, NA, 812/1892.

activity increased in 1911, local officials scrambled to organize their own security forces. Despite the willingness of many elites to lend support, several areas had difficulty in recruiting and retaining volunteer soldiers. The mayor of Sierra Mojada reported that the offer of money and horses did little to retain volunteers, and that the security force changed personnel every other day. Even when the promise of monetary reward succeeded in attracting volunteers, they were often of dubious loyalty.³³

Army garrisons were frequently outnumbered and federal troops hedged on pursuing rebel groups. Rumors that the Mexican government was almost helpless to defend the border area were heightened when the mayor of Ciudad Porfirio Díaz was forced to buy arms in Eagle Pass to supply government troops.³⁴ In the Laguna, soldiers turned their attention to the apprehension and imprisonment of unemployed workers, and in the border region, migrant laborers attempting to enter Coahuila were apprehended and thrown in jail.³⁵

Local demands for defense strained the state treasury.

³³Municipal presidents of Sierra Mojada, General Cepeda, and Ramos Arizpe to Governor's Secretary, 5, 20, 21 April, 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

³⁴Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 13 January 1911, ARE-LE 627.

³⁵Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 26 January 1911, NA, 812/688; General of Third Military Zone to Governor del Valle, 24 March 1911, AGECE: Revolución. Workers on their way to the United States were also apprehended and imprisoned in Saltillo. See petition of various workers to Governor del Valle, Saltillo, 18 February 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

Governor del Valle was compelled to use the revenues of coal companies in central and northern Coahuila to provide an auxiliary force for guarding the railroad. In response to the Maderista revolt, del Valle also revived the hated institution of the Jefatura Política in central Coahuila and the Laguna region.³⁶

The efforts of Governor del Valle to persecute the Maderista rebels was accompanied by the renewed efforts of the Díaz regime to punish the entire Madero family. Few of Francisco's relatives were enthusiastic supporters of his political activities, and after his grandson issued his revolutionary plan, Evaristo Madero sent his sons to Mexico City to prove his loyalty. When revolution broke out, however, Díaz and the científicos began to destroy the family's fortune, while the Maderos took refuge in San Antonio. By early 1911, American Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson reported that the family's credit had been cancelled and its loans called in.³⁷

Official persecution of the Madero family did little to

³⁶Unnumbered expediente and various correspondence of the State Treasury, 26 April 1911, AGECE: Revolución; Decree no. 1152 and unnumbered Decree, 10 January and 7 April 1911, AGECE: Fondo Decretos.

³⁷Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 29 October 1910; Wilson to State Department, Mexico, 8 February 1911, NA, 812/354, 797. See also Langston, "Coahuila in the Porfiriato," pp. 232-234. During the presidential campaign of 1910, Díaz and the científicos had attempted to use an economic dispute in Coahuila to frame Francisco Madero and embarrass his family. See Vasconcelos, Evaristo Madero, pp. 252-256; Ross, Madero, pp. 97-98n.

halt the popular movement that gave definitive expression to Maderismo in Coahuila. By the end of May 1911, a combination of coordinated rebel attacks and more spontaneous outbursts had resulted in the capture of several important towns, the deposition of many local officials, and the disruption of communications within the state. The national victory of Maderismo, sealed by the May 21 Treaty of Ciudad Juárez, seemed to endorse these popular victories.

The reality, however, was quite different. Madero's failure to sanction the complete dismantling of the old regime, presented immediate problems on the local level. In Coahuila, popular triumphs were marred by the perpetuation of a Porfirian system that many elites were ill-disposed to eliminate. And the continuation of the economic crisis, exacerbated by the dislocations of revolution, ensured the persistence of popular unrest.

Official persecution of the Antireelectionist movement, the dislocations of a major economic crisis, elite political division, and the hesitancy of several leading political figures to answer Madero's call for an uprising, hampered the development of a coordinated revolt in 1910. By 1911, however, Madero's rebellion had finally gained momentum. In its character and tone it was largely a popular revolt, although the support of workers and other groups was more a reflection of the immediate economic situation than an informed expression of support for the moderate principals

championed by Madero. The localized outbursts that existed side-by-side with the more coordinated campaigns of Maderista groups responded to the opportunity created by Madero's movement. Through such outbursts, popular expression against caciquismo and the loss of political autonomy, the effects of land concentration, and even the dominance of foreigners in some sectors of the economy, worked their way into the revolution. These outbursts also helped create an unruly rebellion with no unifying theme or purpose--a rebellion that would outlast Madero's national victory.

CHAPTER 4

MADERO, CARRANZA AND COAHUILA:

THE DUAL ADMINISTRATION

On June 3, 1911, a victorious Madero arrived in Ciudad Porfirio Díaz enroute to Mexico City. In an open car, he crossed into Mexico over the International Bridge which had been decked in palms and flowers. Americans and Mexicans greeted Madero with wild enthusiasm, and Mexican Consul Francisco Villasana noted a restored sense of confidence among the border population. With equal enthusiasm, Venustiano Carranza was received in northern Coahuila a few days earlier, accompanied by 150 armed Maderista soldiers. Despite his reluctant participation in the Madero revolt, Carranza was designated Coahuila's interim governor, a concession to a man who, in the words of an American official, was "one of the most universally popular men in the state of Coahuila."¹

The Maderista victory seemed to auger well for Coahuila's popular movement. From 1911 until the tragic end of the Madero presidency in 1913, both Madero and Carranza were

¹Francisco Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 5 June 1911, ARE-LE 663; Luther T. Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 2, 3 June 1911, NA 812/2064, 2068; Voetter to State Department, Saltillo, 3 April 1911, NA 812/1281.

confronted with numerous demands for concrete change and for the elimination of the Porfirian system. At the same time, however, Coahuila continued to experience popular unrest, economic dislocation, and political factionalism. Refusing to effect significant reforms, Madero quickly lost support in his native state. Governor Carranza, meanwhile, began to lay the foundations for his own Constitutionalist movement.

As Madero began his campaign for the presidency, and Carranza prepared for the gubernatorial election of November, the popular revolt that had resulted in the victory of Maderismo in Coahuila continued to find expression in demands for local political and economic change. Madero's victory revived many Maderista clubs (the victims of Porfirian persecution) and encouraged the creation of others. With a new sense of confidence, Coahuilans of all classes campaigned for Madero and Carranza as they protested against local officials who had not been immediately removed by the revolution, and asserted their right to choose their own local leaders. ✓

The capture of Coahuilan towns by Maderista forces was often accompanied by the deposition of local authorities, and their replacement, usually by members of local Antireelectionist clubs.² Popular protest after Madero's

²After the capture of Torreón, Manuel Oviedo, a schoolteacher and president of the local Antireelectionist club, was installed as mayor. A meeting of townsmen after the capture of San Pedro replaced newly-exiled officials with Maderista sympathizers. See Vélez, Historia de la revolución, pp. 191-192; account of El

victory also resulted in the replacement of Porfirians. In Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, Maderistas pressed for the resignation of municipal leaders, including customs officials, and Rafael Múzquiz, officer of the local Maderista club, became mayor.³ In central Coahuila, complaints against the Garza Galán family--the "old caciques" of Múzquiz--were frequent.⁴

Political demands were accompanied by petitions to rectify the abuses of the Porfirian economic system. In northern Coahuila, ranchers requested the re-opening of an old road used to transfer cattle to a local railroad station. The road was closed off by a wealthy family that had been granted a special concession during the era of Governor Cárdenas. Smallholders given lands during the Liberal administration of Victoriano Cepeda and deprived of those lands during the Porfiriato also petitioned for the return of their independent holdings.⁵

Demands for the return of communal lands and the properties of independent farmers also issued from the vast

Nacional, 5 May 1911, in AGECE: Revolución, exp. 11,136.

³Ellsworth to Secretary of State, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 18 June 1911, NA 812/2159.

⁴See for example, People of Las Esperanzas to Carranza, 13 July 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

⁵People of Gigedo to Ayuntamiento, 10 July 1911; Alberto Santos to Francisco Madero, Del Rio, 2 February 1912, AGECE: Revolución. Some of the lands taken from independent farmers had been granted to foreigners. Coronel Fructuoso García, Reyes' appointed leader in northern Coahuila, had also appropriated land in the Rio Grande District.

central region, which had witnessed dramatic economic growth with the development of mining. As governor, Carranza also received petitions for the opening of blocked roads, cut off by barbed wire as prominent foreign and Mexican entrepreneurs enclosed their lands.⁶ Several petitions for land involved smallholders whose claims dated from the Reform era, and included petitions for the scarce water that was crucial to the farmers of central Coahuila. San Juan de Sabinas, established as a municipality of independent farmers by Benito Juárez, saw much of its land and water engulfed by the new municipality of Sabinas, created by a decree of Miguel Cárdenas. The new municipality had been carved out to accomodate foreign mines and survey companies, depriving the older community of both resources and an adequate tax base with which to support its local government. In 1912, the residents of San Juan de Sabinas petitioned Carranza for a redrawing of the old municipal boundaries.⁷ The governor also received a request for the re-distribution of communal lands in Abasolo, where expropriation during the Porfiriato had left

⁶Petition of people of Abasolo for return of ejidal property, 20 August 1911, exp. 10,998; Opening of a road from Candela to Progreso, 9 February 1912, unnumbered exp., AGECE: Revolución. It is difficult to document the extent to which Carranza responded favorably to such petitions, and at least a few landowners defied his orders.

⁷Pres. mun. San Juan de Sabinas to Carranza, 20 January 1912, AGECE: Revolución.

disenfranchised smallholders to work as day laborers.⁸✓

Independent farmers of the Laguna also sought redress of Porfirian abuses. The local government of Matamoros petitioned Carranza for the return of lands separated from the municipality and annexed to the neighboring community of Viesca--a change initiated by prominent landowners Manuel de la Fuente and Miguel Cárdenas, and one that effectively exempted these lands from further taxes.⁹

Although himself a landowner, Carranza did respond favorably to several of these petitions. In particular, he forced hacendados to share water with smallholders and communal landowners. Yet Carranza did not take significant steps toward true agrarian reform in his native state. Furthermore, his rulings were not always obeyed by wealthy landowners, and the privileged members of the Coahuilan legislature tried to block decrees which threatened hacienda lands.¹⁰ Frustrated with the slow pace of change, many Coahuilans were quick to rectify Porfirian abuses themselves. This was particularly true in central Coahuila, where smallholders had developed a tradition of barbed wire cutting

⁸Demarcation of ejidal lands of Abasolo Nuevo, 7 September 1912, exp. 11,192, AGECE: Revolución.

⁹Ayuntamiento of Matamoros to Carranza, 25 September 1912, AGECE: Revolución.

¹⁰Richmond, Carranza, pp. 37-38. Richmond also argues that Carranza "considered ranchers and medium-sized hacendados the backbone of Coahuilan society." See Richmond, "Factional Political Strife in Coahuila, 1910-1920," Hispanic American Historical Review 60 (February 1980): 55.

and other methods of frontier justice during the Porfiriato.¹¹

Particularly in the Laguna, demands for change took the form of anti-foreign sentiment. The Maderista victory created panic among the sizeable foreign population of Torreón. The large Spanish community, which consisted of several prominent hacendados, was especially threatened. On a rancho near Torreón, peons rounded up and beat several Spanish employees, killing two of them. Leaflets and other anonymous publications circulated, encouraging Mexicans to kill and rob foreigners. With the approach of the independence day celebration of 1911, Torreón residents were urged to kill all Spaniards. Attacks on Chinese businesses in Torreón also continued. Despite the reassurances of Maderista leaders, foreigners began to leave the Laguna in large numbers. They were joined by many wealthy Mexican families as well.¹²

While Carranza could do little to stem anti-foreign

¹¹Accounts of independent action to reclaim lost land and water may be found in AGECE: Revolución. See for example, Pres. mun. Nadadores to Governor's Secretary, 22 July 1911; Complaint of Ismael Castro against Mayor of Abasolo, Abasolo, 2 January 1913, Exp. 11,340; Reports of Andrés G. García, 1 September 1911, Exp. 11,177. At the end of 1911, Carranza sent Andrés García to investigate and attempt the resolution of various water and land disputes. García's efforts were only partially successful.

¹²Exp. 11,124: Protection for Spanish residents of Torreón, 6 July 1911; Unnumbered exp.: Death of Spaniard Gumersindo Solares in Torreón, 23 October 1911; Gobernación to Carranza, Mexico, 26 July 1912, AGECE: Revolución. See also Freeman to State Department, Durango, 9 September 1911, NA 812/2360. There is some indication that Spanish landowners in the Laguna were especially resented because of their harsh treatment of workers. See interview of Adrian Aguirre Benavides by Jaime Alexis Arroyo, Mexico, D.F., February 1961, INAH/AP, 1/19; and Mayor of Torreón to Carranza, 17 October 1911, AGECE:Revolución.

sentiment, particularly among Coahuila's popular classes, he did take steps to ensure that foreign concessions were negotiated with greater regard for Mexico's welfare. Carranza also acted to eliminate tax exemptions and special privileges granted during the Porfiriato to both foreign and Mexican entrepreneurs. As part of a broader plan to equalize taxes and to promote fiscal independence, Carranza allowed municipalities to collect taxes from hacendados and others previously enjoying exemptions.¹³

The Maderista revolution also provided added impetus to the workers' movement in Coahuila. Industrial and agricultural workers, many already politicized by their exposure to the radicalism of the PLM and of American unions, organized in large numbers and became increasingly vocal. The Unión de Mineros Mexicanos (UMM) was established in central Coahuila in July of 1911, and several branches were founded throughout the state. Other workers' organizations were created as well, including a union of railroad workers in Monclova, which urged its members to participate actively in elections and work for the "Mexicanization" of the

¹³Ibid., pp. 27-30. Richmond notes that Carranza's efforts at fiscal reform were also sometimes blocked by the Coahuilan legislature. Porfirian tax breaks for foreign investors not only angered locals, but also left many municipal governments strapped for funds. See Pres. Mun. of Zaragoza to Governor's Secretary, 1, 9, 21, June 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

railroads.¹⁴

While lacking the institutional base of industrial workers, agricultural laborers in some areas of Coahuila also became more vocal after Madero's victory. In central Coahuila, the mayor of Sacramento complained that since Madero and Carranza had assumed their respective offices, day laborers refused to work, and demanded their own land and water, as well as the dismissal of their debts.¹⁵

1911 and 1912 were years of great labor agitation in Coahuila, much of it centered in the mining communities. Accustomed not only to generous economic concessions but also to a large degree of control over the mining communities and their workers, mine owners and administrators found their power disputed by an increasingly politicized workforce. Because of the prevalence of foreigners in the mining industry, worker protest often had a strongly anti-foreign tone. Miners complained of the arbitrary acts of mining company administrators, owners, and company police; and they demanded better wages and living conditions, as well as an end to the company store. At the Fenix coal mines in northern Coahuila, workers struck against the monopoly Americans had over the management of the mines. The exclusive control held

¹⁴Mining community of El Menor to Carranza, n.d. (1911); Pres. mun. Monclova to Governor's Secretary, 5 July 1911, AGECE: Revolución. See also Ruíz, Labor and the Ambivalent Revolutionaries, pp. 44-63.

¹⁵Pres. mun. Sacramento to Governor's Secretary, 12 July 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

by mining companies over all commerce within the mining camps and the artificially high prices that this caused were additional sources of complaint.¹⁶ Union recognition was an issue as well, with many companies refusing to recognize the UMM and threatening to dismiss union members.¹⁷

Disputes within some mining communities extended into the political arena. Elections for local officials in central Coahuila polarized the Rosita mining camp into two parties, one including managers and high-level employees of the *Compañía Carbonífera de Sabinas*, and the other formed by workers. The miners of Rosita described the situation in terms of a class struggle, revealing the influence of anarcho-syndicalist and socialist ideas: the town was split between a "propertied" class and other "supporters of the old regime," and the "proletariat." Workers appealed to Carranza for justice against the "inhuman foreigner." When work was suspended, they complained that foreign companies were practicing "extortion" on workers, "cynically ignoring the laws that regulate the fight between capital and labor."¹⁸

¹⁶Examples of strikes and worker complaints may be found in AGECE: Revolución. See for example, Workers of Palau to Carranza, 30 June 1911; Workers of *Compañía Carbonífera Rio Escondido* to Carranza, 18, 20 May 1911; *Unión de Mineros Mexicanos*, El Menor, to *Compañía Carbonífera del Norte*, 8 February 1912; UMM Palau to Manager of Coahuila Coal Company, 24 February 1912.

¹⁷See for example UMM Rosita to Carranza, 14 November 1911, AGECE: Revolución

¹⁸*Club Benjamín Canales*, Rosita to Carranza, 20 November 1912; Miners of Palau to Carranza, 7 November 1911, AGECE: Revolución. In the mines of Rosita, men and women attended classes on "History and

Faced with the increasing unrest among Coahuila's miners, Carranza attempted to address some of their complaints. In response to a petition of laborers and merchants against a foreign investor who had closed his mining camp in central Coahuila to all outside commerce, forcing all workers to buy at the company store, Carranza ordered the opening of the camp to all local merchants. He also supported local efforts to force mining companies to pay property taxes, and encouraged the peaceful settlement of mining strikes. Carranza's efforts helped establish better conditions for many Coahuilan workers; and in 1913, Coahuila enacted one of Mexico's first accident protection laws. Carranza's efforts to help the workers of Coahuila's mining communities and to break the Porfirian system of foreign privilege, however, were often met with defiance.¹⁹

Socialism," taught by a local UMM official. See UMM Rosita to Carranza, and Señoras y Señoritas of Rosita to Carranza, 2 April 1911, AGE: Revolución. Mining companies were notably concerned about socialist propaganda, as were Maderista officers who feared that some workers might be in contact with the Magonistas. See Ejército Restaurador Puerto del Carmen to Carranza, 16 June 1911, AGE: Revolución.

¹⁹People of Cloete Mine, Agujita to Carranza, 6 December 1911; Pres. mun. Sabinas to Governor's Secretary, 6 December 1911, 7, 19 September 1912, AGE: Revolución. After a brief period of time, Cloete re-established the company monopoly on commerce within the mining community of Agujita. See Merchants of Cloete to Carranza, Sabinas, 26 August 1912, AGE: Revolución. See also Richmond, Carranza, pp. 35-37. In "Factional Political Strife," Richmond describes Carranza's labor policies as modest and sometimes ambivalent. And indeed, his support of unionism was accompanied by a desire to discourage strikes: in 1911, Carranza ordered local officials to punish those initiating strikes among workers of the mines, ranchos, haciendas, and factories, and those impeding others who wished to work. See Circular no. 119, section 3, Saltillo, 4

Carranza's reforms, while not always far-reaching or successful, helped the governor develop an important personal base of support, particularly among the state's workers. Carranza also appealed to Coahuilans of all classes with his campaign for better health, an improved educational system, and a crusade against vice. Efforts to promote better sanitation included the cleanup and regulation of food industries and the provision of vaccinations. Educational improvements consisted of financial help for rural schools and the prompt and adequate payment of teachers. A tax on alcohol, the prohibition of gambling, and the regulation of prostitution were among Carranza's anti-vice measures.²⁰ In Torreón, the Chinese community frequently requested permission to smoke opium. Although the municipal president suggested that this "ugly vice" be allowed as long as it did not spread to the Mexican population, Carranza refused permission, claiming that opium caused depression.²¹

One scholar has referred to the Carranza governorship as

December 1911, AGECE: Fondo Circulares.

²⁰Richmond, Carranza, pp. 31-34; Reglamento sobre Prostitución, in Pres. mun. Saltillo to Governor's Secretary, 6 March 1912, AGECE: Revolución.

²¹Pres. mun. Torreón to Carranza, Pres. mun. Torreón to Governor's Secretary, 4, 10, October 1911, AGECE: Revolución. Opium was imported through several commercial houses in Torreón to be sold by Chinese dealers. See Richmond, Carranza, p. 33.

populist but politically moderate, and even authoritarian.²² Indeed, although Carranza emphasized democracy and municipal autonomy, his administration was in reality highly centralized. The continuing unrest in Coahuila, and the need to pacify the state, compelled Carranza to continue the time-worn practices of rigging elections and punishing opponents.²³ While Carranza passed a law that promised autonomy in the election of local officials, he also used the Jefatura Política, which had been revived during the Maderista revolution, to help gain control over the municipalities.²⁴

Carranza's efforts to gain political mastery over Coahuila often met with resistance. As interim governor, he acted quickly to remove local Porfirians, but his designated replacements did not always meet with approval. In the wealthy mining region of Sierra Mojada, Carranza's designation of nephew Fernando Peraldi as municipal president generated popular protest. Led by Maderista army leader Juan B. Silva, residents of local mining communities presented a petition at

²²Richmond, Carranza, p. 27; Richmond, "Factional Political Strife," p. 51. For another interpretation of the Carranza administration, see William H. Beezley, "Governor Carranza and the Revolution in Coahuila," Americas 33 (October 1976): 50-61.

²³Richmond, Carranza, p. 56. Richmond contends that Carranza rigged the November 1911 elections which resulted in his own election as governor. Ibid., p. 26.

²⁴Ibid., p. 39. Through the issuance of several decrees in 1912, for example, Carranza created a temporary Jefatura for the Laguna region, then extended its existence into 1913. See Unnumbered Decree, Saltillo, 22 March 1912; Decrees 1298, 1393, Saltillo, 19 July, 12 November 1912, AGE: Decretos.

a municipal meeting protesting the imposition of Peraldi and asking for the right to choose local officials through a popular vote. Assuring the petitioners of his support for Maderismo, Peraldi publicly announced that he would not assume his post unless it met with the people's approval. Carranza promptly negotiated a replacement, but was also quick to find Peraldi another post in Sierra Mojada. Eventually, however, local Maderista clubs petitioned again for the removal of Carranza's imposed officials. The Governor's efforts to control the political life of this mining region would soon generate a local rebellion.²⁵

Popular attempts to force the renunciation of other officials imposed by Carranza or fraudulently elected occurred in other municipalities as well. In Juárez, protests against the newly-elected municipal president raised fears that members of the defeated opposition would stage a coup against local authorities as they had done in 1887. Abasolo residents blocked the installation of newly-elected officials with the impassioned appeal: "no more tyranny, no more caciques."²⁶

With the approach of the presidential election of November 1911, political competition in Coahuila took the form

²⁵People of Esmeralda to Juan B. Silva, 11 June 1911; People of Sacramento to Carranza, 14 June; Pres. mun. Esmeralda to Governor's Secretary, 18 June 1911; Club Antireeleccionista "Evaristo Madero," and Club Antireeleccionista "Igualdad" to Carranza, 30 September 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

²⁶Club Liberal Progresista to Carranza and Pres. mun. of Juárez to Governor's Secretary, 5, 6, January 1913; Residents of Abasolo Nuevo to Carranza, 1 January 1912, AGECE: Revolución.

of a struggle between local Maderista and Reyista groups. Called home from Europe as the Díaz' regime faltered, Reyes arrived in Mexico after the Treaty of Ciudad Juárez sealed Madero's victory. In August, he accepted the presidential candidacy proposed by several Reyista clubs. Pressure tactics of Maderista groups, as well as Reyes' declining popularity caused the aging strongman to abandon the campaign, however. By the end of September he had left Mexico for San Antonio, Texas, where he plotted revolt.²⁷

Reyes' candidacy revived several Reyista groups in Coahuila. But Maderista clubs, apparently aided by local and national officials, continually harassed the Reyista opposition. In the Laguna, formerly a strong base of support for Reyes, Madero supporters imprisoned officers of Reyista clubs and used armed force to prevent Reyista gatherings. In Torreón, the mere announcement of a public demonstration for Reyes brought Maderistas into the streets, brandishing guns and shouting "Death to Reyes!" Hoping for protection, several Reyista clubs petitioned Carranza for help. The governor, himself a former adherent of Reyismo, did little to ensure the Reyistas a fair electoral fight.²⁸

²⁷Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 282-286, 293-308.

²⁸Pres. mun. Viesca to Governor's Secretary, Complaint of Emilio Castañeda and Francisco Luna to Judge of Viesca, 21, 25 August 1911; Exp. 11,163: Complaint of Reyista club of Viesca, 8 September 1911, AGEC: Revolución. See also Exp. 11,104: Political demonstration in favor of Carranza, 24 August 1911, and Pres. mun. Saltillo to Governor's Secretary, 15 September 1911, Ibid. There is some indication that popular protest in Sierra Mojada against

Although not as well-organized as before the Madero revolt, Reyismo was a force of some significance in Coahuila during the political campaigns of 1911. When he realized that Carranza was no longer a political ally, Reyes advanced the candidacy of Manuel Garza Aldape, prominent Laguna businessman, for the governorship of Coahuila. From his self-imposed exile in Texas, Reyes continued to show an interest in Coahuilan politics, and throughout the summer of 1911, Reyista groups in many areas of the state campaigned for Garza Aldape.²⁹

Calling for the nullification of the elections of Madero and José María Pino Suárez, and advancing his own revolutionary plan, Reyes entered Coahuila in revolt on December 7, 1911. At the border, he was joined by some six hundred men, but despite the initial show of support, Reyes failed to enlist additional followers and surrendered later that month. Reyes remained in a Mexico City prison for over a year. In February 1913 Reyes gained his freedom when a military coup against the Madero administration began. As he led the charge on the National Palace, Reyes was immediately

Carranza's imposition of local officials involved the work of Maderista groups to eliminate those identified with Reyismo. See Club Político Valentín Gómez Farías, Sierra Mojada to Carranza, 9 October 1911, Ibid.

²⁹Reyes to Ysidro Yruegas, Mexico, 16 August 1911; Reyes to Eduardo Lobatón, Mexico, 17 August 1911; Reyes to Francisco Luna, Mexico, 18 August 1911; Reyes to Dr. Ignacio Alcócer, Mexico, 31 August 1911, ABR, cop. 46, docs. 21221, 21231, 21238, 21490.

killed by loyal government troops.³⁰

Although ultimately unsuccessful, Reyes' revolt of December 1911, again called attention to the fading Reyista movement in Coahuila. The insurrection was aided by Coronel Fructuoso García, Reyes' former strongman in northern Coahuila and past municipal president of Ciudad Porfirio Díaz. From the border town of Las Vacas, García prepared for the revolt by smuggling arms and provisions across the border with the help of a customs officer.³¹ Officials also anxiously monitored the activities of Reyista clubs, particularly in Saltillo, the Laguna, and northern Coahuila.³²

The Reyista movement of 1911 and the subsequent rebellions that challenged President Madero and Governor Carranza in Coahuila were also shaped by the increasing sentiment against Madero. This animosity surfaced almost immediately after Madero's electoral victory. Indeed, it was an ill-defined anti-Maderismo that caused many Coahuilans to support the rebellions of Reyes and Pascual Orozco, rather than a commitment to the leaders or ideas of these two

³⁰The events of the Reyes' revolt are detailed in Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, p. 187. See also Bryan, "Reyes," pp. 319, 322-323. Interestingly, Reyes' revolutionary plan included the re-establishment of the Free Zone along Mexico's border, an idea probably calculated to win the support of the border population, especially in northern Coahuila.

³¹Governor's Secretary to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Saltillo, 14 October 1911, ARE-LE 675.

³²Manuel Piña to Justice Secretary, San Antonio, 17 December 1911, ARE-LE 850.

revolts.³³ Thus, Reyes' revolt found supporters in the unlikely pair of Amado Gutiérrez (Del Rio journalist, PLM adherent and former Maderista), and José María and Andrés Garza Galán, prominent caciques of the Porfirian era.³⁴

The most serious challenge to the Madero regime in northern Mexico was the revolt of Pascual Orozco, whose break with Madero was apparent by the end of 1911, and who issued a formal revolutionary plan in March of 1912. Even before the publication of Orozco's plan, rebels adopting the banner of Orozquismo rebelled in the Laguna region. Former Maderista leader Benjamín Argumedo penetrated the town of Matamoros, then retreated before the advance of Maderista troops led by Sixto Ugalde. Argumedo's forces also staged an unsuccessful attack on San Pedro.

Orozquismo found echo in central Coahuila as well. In May, José Inés Salazar led over one thousand men in the capture of Sierra Mojada and Cuatro Ciénegas. In Sierra Mojada, rebels gained the support of several miners' unions. Mine workers and insurgents joined together to loot the houses

³³Knight describes Orozquismo as "a general, yet localised and thus fragmentary rejection of the new regime," and he observes that many Reyistas (and later Vazquistas) were more correctly anti-Maderistas. See Mexican Revolution, I, 297, 339.

³⁴F.R. Villavicencio to Manuel Esteva, San Antonio, 9 August 1911, ARE-LE 673; AGN: Gobernación, caja 907, unclassified telegrams (1911-1912). Andrés Garza Galán helped with the smuggling of arms for the Reyes' revolt of 1911. See unsigned police report, Douglas, Arizona, 9 May 1912, ARE-LE 741(9).

of local officials who had been imposed by Carranza.³⁵ Failing in their attack on Monclova, Salazar and his men abandoned Coahuila. Federal troops, Maderista soldiers, and various volunteer groups organized by Carranza continued to battle small bands of Orozco rebels in northern and western Coahuila. After the September defeat in Chihuahua of Orozco himself, Coahuilan troops gave chase to the rebel forces of Marcelo Caraveo who had entered the state through the western sierras. By early October, Caraveo was defeated and his troops dispersed, many returning to Chihuahua or fleeing into Texas.³⁶

In his efforts to pacify Coahuila, Carranza also confronted the ambitious Garza Galán clique led by brothers José María, Juan, and Andrés, all of whom had actively opposed the Maderista revolution. After Madero's victory, Galanista groups were active in northern Coahuila and in Texas, where

³⁵Pres. mun. Sierra Mojada to Carranza; Teodoro Elizondo to Carranza, 27 May, 15, 18 June 1912, AGE: Revolución. Rebel leader Salazar also tried to recruit Maderista leader Juan B. Silva, who had helped petition against the imposed local officials in 1911. See Teodoro Elizondo to Carranza, 5 April 1912, Ibid.

³⁶Accounts of Orozquista activity in Coahuila may be found in ARE. See for example R.E. Múzquiz to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 6 September 1912, ARE-LE 759; Múzquiz to Carranza, 11 April 1912; R.S. Bravo to Múzquiz, Del Rio, 19 April and 10, 21 May 1912; Múzquiz to San Antonio Consul, Eagle Pass, 15 May 1912, ARE-LE 856. See also G. Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 6, 27 March 1912; Report of F. Trucy Aubert, n.p., 11 March 1912; Report of F. Trucy Aubert, Campamento "El Sacramento," 10 May 1912; A. Blanquet to Secretary of War, Sabinas, 9, 13 October 1912, AHDN: Revolución XI/481.5/29, Tomo I. Additional information on the Orozquistas is contained in Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución, pp. 206, 210, and INEHRM, Diccionario, pp. 400-402.

they were identified with the broader revolt of Emilio Vázquez Gómez. Andrés Garza Galán was a member of the International Club in San Antonio, identified as a foci of anti-Maderista activity. Along with his brothers, he was active in Coahuila's border region, fomenting rebellion.³⁷

In addition to centers of organization in San Antonio and the Texas-Coahuila border, Galanistas also had a base in the northern municipality of Guerrero. There, Gabriel Cervera, a local cacique whose fortunes had waxed and waned according to those of the Garza Galán faction, led a Galanista party. After the victory of the Maderistas in 1911, Cervera and others attempted to manipulate local elections in order to restore the power of the Galanista clique.³⁸

In the border region too, Galanismo and Vazquismo were sometimes identified with the continuing Magonista movement.³⁹ Although many members of the PLM both within Coahuila and in its border region aided the Madero revolution, Magonistas were quickly disappointed with the new regime and they continued to

³⁷Arturo Lozano to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 28 August 1911; José O. Flores to Manuel Esteva, San Antonio, 29 August 1911, ARE-LE 674; Informe, 9 May 1912, ARE-LE 741(9); Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 21, 23 September 1912, ARE-LE 759(8); unsigned report, El Paso, 2 January 1912 ARE-LE 857(3). See also Ellsworth to State Department, 20 February 1912, NA 812/2891.

³⁸San Antonio Consul to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 1 September 1911; A.B. Martínez to Esteva, Guerrero, 25 August 1911; J. Pérez Rodríguez to A.B. Martínez, Guerrero, 18 September 1911, ARE-LE 674.

³⁹See for example, L.A. Guajardo to Francisco Madero, Torreón, 5 April 1912, ARE-LE 744(1).

sustain a separate movement. Almost immediately after the victory of the 1910 revolution, Maderistas were skirmishing with Magonista rebels in the border area. Clinging to their base in the Burro Mountains of northern Coahuila, Magonistas staged periodic attacks on ranchos and haciendas. An active propaganda campaign gained many adherents among border communities. Magonistas often distributed part of the spoils of their raids to workers, while assuring them that their employers had no right to own more than they. Promising land to those who would join in a struggle of the poor against the rich, the Magonistas succeeded in swelling their ranks with Mexicans from both sides of the border.⁴⁰

Del Rio remained an active center of PLM activity throughout Madero's presidency. There too, Magonistas planned raids into Coahuila, and engaged in arms smuggling. Late in 1912, Primitivo Gutiérrez, Magonista and leader of the "Colorado" political faction of Del Rio, led an attack on the ranch of Enrique del Castillo, a prominent resident of Las Vacas, Coahuila.⁴¹ Like Galanismo and Vazquismo, the activities of the PLM often meshed with those of other rebel groups. Mexican consular agent Rafael Múzquiz noted that Magonista rebels would adhere to whichever party or group gave

⁴⁰Gobernación to Carranza, Mexico, 29 June 1911, AGECE: Revolución; Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 28 June 1911, NA 812/2191.

⁴¹R. S. Bravo and Rafael E. Múzquiz to Mexican Consul, Del Rio and Eagle Pass, 30 January 1913, ARE-LE 832.

them funds, and members of the Galanista clique provided several donations.⁴²

In attempting to prosecute the various rebel groups operating in northern Coahuila and the border area, Madero and Carranza faced not only an unpredictable system of alliances among these groups, but also the uncertainty that border officials were actually working in support of the Madero administration. Galanista plotting was of special concern for Madero, who suspected that it was gaining adherents among federal officials--former agents of the Díaz regime--who continued to operate in an official capacity along the border.⁴³ The pursuit of Magonista bands in the Las Vacas-Del Rio area was hampered by the rebel sympathies of Ildefonso Vázquez and Calixto Guerra, members of the local Maderista security forces, and ex-Magonistas.⁴⁴

In addition to the rebellions that plagued northern Coahuila and the border region, Madero and Carranza faced a special challenge in the Laguna. Here, the popular movement that had been instrumental to the Madero revolution had begun

⁴²R. E. Múzquiz to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 23 October 1912, ARE-LE 743(5).

⁴³Madero to Francisco León de la Barra, Tehuacán, 25 July 1911, Centro de Estudios de Historia de México, CONDUMEX, Archivo de Venuistiano Carranza, carp. 1, leg. 37. [Hereinafter cited as AVC]. See also F.R. Villavicencio to Esteva, San Antonio, 1, 2 August 1911; Esteva to Secretary of Foreign Relations, ARE-LE 672.

⁴⁴Gobernación to Carranza, Mexico, 16 April 1912; R.S. Bravo to Carranza, Del Rio, 1 August 1912, AGE: Revolución. Calixto Guerra was among the Las Vacas rebels of 1908. See also R. E. Múzquiz to R. Navarro, Eagle Pass, 5 June 1912, ARE-LE 856.

to fragment, while rebel discontent with the new regime was expressed in the defiance of Maderista troops, and ultimately, in new revolts and a wave of banditry.⁴⁵

By the summer of 1911, the still-armed Maderista forces of the Laguna had begun to express openly their dissatisfaction with Madero. Disciplining Maderista soldiers proved especially difficult in an area crowded with Rurales (members of Mexico's rural police force), Federals, and Maderistas, and in which confusion reigned over who was in charge. In June, Maderista leader Inés Sosa apprehended and imprisoned a former Porfirian official in San Pedro. When Emilio Madero, leader of Maderista forces, compelled Sosa to leave town, local residents blocked his departure, yelling their support for the rebellious soldier and expressing their own disgust with old Porfirian officials.⁴⁶

The conflict between Rurales, Federals, Maderistas, and local police forces exploded again in October, when Maderista leaders Sixto Ugalde and Benjamín Argumedo led soldiers in attacking the Torreón police station and assaulting Federal forces. The instigators of the attack were discharged, and several other participants deserted. Argumedo soon became a

⁴⁵Meyers argues that the emergence of independent popular leaders and the tendency of rebels to be committed to the fight only within their own zone, made rebel unity difficult and caused its rapid breakdown after the May 1911 capture of Torreón. See "Second Division," pp. 469, 472, 476-477.

⁴⁶Pres. mun. San Pedro to Carranza; Pres. mun. Torreón to Carranza, 27 June, 3 July 1911, AGECE: Revolución.

notorious bandit in the Laguna, attacking property, burning railroad bridges, and causing other depredations while federal and volunteer forces followed in hot pursuit.⁴⁷

In the aftermath of the Madero revolt, the Laguna experienced a wave of banditry, including numerous attacks on haciendas. While many hacendados began to arm their workers for protection, Maderista troops often refused to pursue bandits.⁴⁸ In response to the demands of Laguna landowners and businessmen, Madero sent additional Federal troops to Torreón and finally demobilized the rebel army. Unwittingly, Madero had given added encouragement to the popular unrest that would plague the Laguna throughout his administration and after his death.⁴⁹

Madero's refusal to deal with the Laguna's popular movement was characteristic of his approach to the entire state. As president, he received frequent warnings from

⁴⁷Pres. mun. Torreón to Carranza, 13 October 1911; Exp. 11,180: Events of 31 October in Torreón, 3 November 1911, AGE: Revolución. G. Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 12 November 1911, AHDN XI/481.5/28, Tomo II; Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 16, 27 March, 12 June, 25 August 1912; Gen. Brig. Jefe de Dto. to Secretary of War, Torreón, 22 May 1912, in Report of Gen. Aureliano Blanquet, Mexico, 31 May 1912, AHDN: Revolución, XI481.5/29, Tomo I.

⁴⁸Pres. mun. Torreón to Carranza, Joaquín Serrano to Carranza, Torreón, 9, 28 January 1912, AGE: Revolución; Treviño to Secretary of War, Monterrey, 23, 27 February, 5, 11 October 1912; Gen. J. Tellez to Secretary of War, Torreón, 9 March 1912, AHDN: Revolución, XI/481.5/29, Tomo I.

⁴⁹Meyers, "Second Division," pp. 480-481. Meyers notes that demobilization of Maderista troops often sent workers back to the same or worse conditions that had prompted them to rebel.

Coahuilans that he must bring about some reform or risk losing all support in his native state. Laguna resident Antonio Farías wrote a series of letters to Madero in 1912, warning him that only land reform would bring about peace, and urging him to make his revolution more than simply a political movement.⁵⁰ That the land issue was important to many Coahuilans was evident in the several petitions Madero received from different areas of the state. Maderista leader Cesáreo Castro informed Madero of a plan to create an agricultural colony for several families in central Coahuila, as a means to calm tensions and prove to Madero's enemies that the President was a committed reformer. Ex-patriate Mexicans in Texas petitioned for the acquisition of abandoned hacienda lands in northern Coahuila, and Madero received a similar petition from residents of Matamoros.⁵¹ Such requests frequently went unanswered, and Madero often showed his preference for elite landowners, both Mexican and foreign. In 1912, he ordered Carranza to protect the interests of Patricio Milmo, whose hacienda in central Coahuila had been appropriated by several men, divided into separate plots, and

⁵⁰Antonio F. Farías to Madero, San Pedro, 4 February, 14 April, 4 May, 29 July 1912, AGN: Ramo Francisco Madero, carp. 321, fojas 10290, 10292-10299.

⁵¹Cesáreo Castro to Madero, Cuatro Ciénegas, 1 February 1912; Encarnación Domínguez and others to Madero, Del Rio, 31 December 1911; Pedro Márquez to Madero, Matamoros, AGN: Madero, carp. 290-2, f. 9165-75; caja 64, exp. 2875, 2848.

prepared for planting.⁵²

Coahuilans also complained of the nepotism of the Madero administration. A San Pedro widow accused Madero of offering federal posts to friends and relatives. She also chastised him for refusing to take steps against several members of his family who had initiated legal proceedings to appropriate water from the Nazas River, to the detriment of other landowners.⁵³ Despite the urgings of his own supporters, and to the chagrin of the sizeable Reyista opposition, Madero condoned the electoral fraud that installed Eugenio Aguirre Benavides, a close friend of the Madero family, as municipal president of Torreón.⁵⁴ Madero also directly intervened to assure a relative of a legislative post, forcing the withdrawal of another candidate who enjoyed the support of workers and ranchers.⁵⁵

While much of the animosity toward Madero was a product of unfounded hopes and an ignorance of the truly moderate

⁵²Gobernación to Carranza, Mexico, 8 February 1912, AGN: Gobernación, unclassified telegrams, caja 907.

⁵³Helena Herrmann to Fomento, San Pedro, 1 July 1912, AGN: Madero, carp. 18-3, f. 593-598. Appeals for employment based on family ties to the Madero family were frequent. See for example, Carlos A. Fuentes Borrega to Madero, San Pedro, 28 May 1912, Ibid., carp. 942-3, f. 27088. Uncle Marcos Benavides was offered the position of chief consular agent in Los Angeles, Ibid., carp. 688, f. 19997-98.

⁵⁴José María Rodríguez to Madero and Andrés L. Farías to Madero, Torreón, 15, 21 December 1911, AGN: Madero, caja 62, f. 1475-1477, 1482.

⁵⁵José María Rodríguez to Madero, Torreón 30 June 1912, AGN: Madero, carp. 1221, f. 3980.

nature of Madero's Plan of San Luis, in his home state Madero succeeded in angering many and pleasing few. By late 1912, a fellow spiritist wrote the President from Saltillo, predicting a revolt by Madero's own supporters that would result in the President's execution.⁵⁶ In Coahuila, Madero hastened his own demise by alienating Carranza.

The alliance between Madero and Carranza was above all one of convenience and the personal differences between the two leaders were always significant. Although both men were part of Coahuila's privileged class, Carranza's fortune was more modest than that of Madero. The age difference between the two men was also significant, and the younger Madero, much to Carranza's chagrin, displayed many of the paternalistic qualities of a wealthy hacendado. The products of two traditionally rival political factions in Coahuila, Madero and Carranza provided only lukewarm support to one another's campaigns. Madero was half-hearted in his commitment to Carranza's 1909 bid for the governorship, and Carranza hedged on providing support for Madero's revolution of 1910-1911.⁵⁷

The differences between Carranza and Madero surfaced

⁵⁶C. Garza to Madero, Saltillo, 13 September 1912, AGN: Madero, carp. 270-1, f. 8350.

⁵⁷Richmond highlights several differences between the two men in Carranza, pp. 19, 42. Alfonso Junco provides insights into Carranza's relationship with Madero in his study and personal collection of documents from Carranza's contemporaries in Carranza y los orígenes de su rebelión (Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1955). Junco argues that Carranza turned to Madero only after Reyes refused to rebel against Díaz.

immediately with the negotiations that ended the 1910-1911 revolution. Carranza urged Madero to take a much stronger stand against Díaz, erasing all vestiges of the old regime, instead of compromising with its various elements. In turn, while Madero designated Carranza for the post of Coahuilan governor after the rebel victory, he remained distrustful of the latter's motivations.⁵⁸ Indeed, as governor Carranza displayed both a marked degree of independence from the central government and a tendency to defy Madero's own wishes.

The mutual animosity of the two leaders encouraged the development of a dual administration in Coahuila. Madero's friends and relatives, rather than Carranza, became the President's main source of information on events in the state, and Madero attempted to manipulate political and military events through them. This was especially true in the Laguna, where Madero's brother Emilio commanded Maderista troops and coordinated many activities, including arms acquisition. Emilio worked in conjunction with other Madero friends and relatives in the border region, and acted independently of Carranza. In an especially telling letter of late 1911, Emilio Madero wrote to Catarino Benavides, now the commander of a small band of men in northern Coahuila, ordering him to

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 23-27. Junco argues that Madero feared the great prestige enjoyed by Carranza in Coahuila and notes that the mutual animosity between the two men meant that when Carranza began his own revolution, Maderistas did not have easy access to it. As a result, many of Madero's friends and relatives would side with Pancho Villa against Carranza after 1913.

send the entire contents of an expected arms shipment to him and none to Carranza.⁵⁹

Madero's attempted manipulation of Coahuilan politics through his friends and relatives understandably angered Carranza. To the suggestion of Adrián Aguirre Benavides, Madero family lawyer and close friend, that a certain military leader was politically dangerous and should be moved, Carranza replied that Aguirre Benavides' warning stemmed from political inexperience and jealousy. Carranza insisted that as governor and actual resident of Coahuila, he was better able to judge the character of local leaders.⁶⁰ Carranza also bristled under orders from the center. Occupied with repairing revolutionary destruction and protecting the state from banditry and rebellion, Carranza was particularly indignant at orders to perform monthly audits of the state treasury. Scolded for not complying with this duty, Carranza retorted that he lacked the time for such things, and that the request was an insult to the dignity of his office.⁶¹

The issue that most affected the relationship between

⁵⁹Catarino Benavides to Emilio Madero, Allende, 22 September 1911; Emilio Madero to Catarino Benavides, Torreón, 28 September 1911; Marcos Benavides to Emilio Madero, Allende, 8 October 1911, AGN: Gobernación, unclassified correspondence to/from Emilio Madero, caja 1003.

⁶⁰Carranza to Madero, Saltillo, 25 November 1911, AGN: Ramo Revolución, caja 1, carp. 12, exp. 291.

⁶¹Ernesto Madero to Carranza, Mexico, 18 April 1912, AGECE: Revolución. Madero replied with the suggestion that another official, without the "scruples" of Carranza, should perform the task.

President Madero and Governor Carranza was the dispute over Coahuila's irregular forces. Carranza made repeated and unsuccessful requests that the federal government pay for these irregular troops while leaving him in complete command, and he bluntly refused Madero's frequent orders to disband them. By the beginning of 1912, the two leaders were at an impasse, and Carranza determined to take independent action. Partially dissolving Coahuila's irregular troops, he left ✓ Francisco Coss with a small contingency of soldiers paid for by the state, and made a pact with the federally-funded force of Pablo González. This pact ensured Carranza the personal support of González and his men.⁶² With these actions, Carranza began to build the independent military force necessary to protect Coahuila from the continuing rebellions that the Federals seemed helpless to prevent. The same force would provide a basis for the nascent Carrancista movement that began to emerge just as the Madero regime was showing signs of atrophy.

Carranza's staunchly independent stance in Coahuila was in many ways a product of his tense relationship with Madero. It was also largely governed by conditions within Coahuila, which contributed to the continuation of popular unrest. From Carranza's rise to the governorship in 1911 and beyond the

⁶²Junco, Carranza, pp. 29-39. Carranza dismissed most of Coahuila's irregular troops after refusing Madero's request that they be absorbed into the regular army. See Phillip C. Holland to State Department, Saltillo, 3 February 1913, NA 812/6051.

definitive victory of his Constitutionalist movement in the state in 1915, Coahuila's economy continued to feel the effects of the pre-revolutionary crisis, while experiencing the added economic stagnation and physical destruction brought by the revolution itself.

The Madero revolt of 1910-1911 occurred against the backdrop of a major economic crisis. Joblessness was a significant impetus to rebellion, and economic stagnation a key to the persistence of popular unrest beyond Madero's victory. A particularly explosive situation developed in the mining region of central Coahuila. Already beset by the increasing demands of unionized workers, and struggling to avoid strikes, mining companies were forced to curtail or completely halt production due to lack of demand, as well as revolutionary unrest. In the coal mines of Rio Escondido, mine owners were compelled to suspend, and then completely stop operations. These actions forced hundreds of miners out of work. When anti-Maderista activities escalated in 1912, disrupting railroad service and cutting Coahuilan mines off from their markets, another nine thousand workers faced unemployment. With justification, American consular official Luther Ellsworth remarked that " at the mines we are living on the crest of a volcano that is likely to burst forth at any time. At the least provocation, the miners will break forth

in rebellion."⁶³

Unrest among agricultural workers also flourished, and in many areas of the state haciendas and farms were completely abandoned. As rebel raids and banditry increased, many hacendados turned their lands over to caretakers and left for the greater safety of towns and cities, sometimes putting hundreds out of work and providing ready recruits for insurgent bands. In the Saltillo area, businesses stagnated and food was scarce. By late 1912, popular sentiment was overwhelmingly against Madero, and rumors flew that the entire army would soon turn against him.⁶⁴

In the Laguna, with its particularly large industrial and agricultural workforce, the Madero revolution brought many businesses to a virtual standstill. Mines in the region lacked the currency needed to pay workers, and in Torreón, families rushed to stock up on increasingly scarce supplies of food.⁶⁵ The crisis continued after Madero's victory. By late 1911, the Laguna was experiencing a wave of strikes by

⁶³Exp. 11,148: Agreements between Compañía Carbonífera Ajujita y Anexas and its workers, 1911; Fomento to Carranza, 18 March, 1912, AGE: Revolución. AGN: Departamento de Trabajo, 4 March 1912, caja 5 exp. 6. Report of Ellsworth, Piedras Negras, 4, 6 March 1912, NA 812/3112, 3150. NOTE: In December of 1911, Carranza changed the name of Ciudad Porfirio Díaz which reclaimed its former designation of Piedras Negras.

⁶⁴Holland to State Department, Saltillo, 3, 18 October 1912; 3, 24 January 1913, NA 812/5222, 5323, 5825, 5935.

⁶⁵J.D. Carrothers to State Department, Torreón, 28 February 1911; Charles M. Freeman to State Department, Durango, 6 March 1911, NA 812/890, 935.

agricultural and industrial workers. American consular agent Theodore Hamm estimated that a strike of industrial workers in Torreón included almost ten thousand men.⁶⁶ While most strikes ended peacefully, worker unrest continued into 1913.

As anti-Maderista rebellion escalated in 1912, a severe food shortage threatened to set off a new wave of banditry in the Laguna. In San Pedro, several residents asked Carranza to order hacendados to resume working their lands, or to distribute the fallow land to idle workers. To discourage banditry, Federal troops distributed free food and seeds to those without work. Carranza also sent some relief to Torreón.⁶⁷

The Madero revolution ended as it began in Coahuila--with the continuation of popular revolt and unrest. Madero refused to address local demands for change and his administration within the state faced numerous political challenges. Tensions between Madero and Carranza, as well as the

⁶⁶Pres. mun. San Pedro to Governor's Secretary, Pres. mun. Torreón to Carranza, 18, 28, November 1911, AGECE: Revolución; Ellsworth to State Department, Piedras Negras and Hamm to State Department, Durango, 16, 17, 27 November 1911, NA 812/2508, 2516, 2518, 2586; unsigned memo, Mexico, November 1911, ARE-LE 850. Most of these strikes were unsuccessful for the workers, and Carranza and Madero sent troops to stop them.

⁶⁷Phillip C. Hanna to State Department, Monterrey, 3 March 1912, NA 812/3085; Pres. mun. San Pedro to Governor's Secretary, L. A. Guajardo to Carranza, Hornos, and Gobernación to Carranza, Mexico, 6, 10, 14 March 1912, AGECE: Revolución; Gen. J. Tellez to Secretary of War, Torreón, 9 March 1912, AHDN: Revolución XI/481.5/29, Tomo I. Coahuilan textile and railway workers were also affected by the continuing economic crisis and revolutionary unrest.

exigencies of the continuing revolution ultimately encouraged the development of a dual administration in Coahuila.

As governor, Carranza did not succeed in quieting the popular rebellion. Nor did his policies respond to some of the deeper social and economic problems that were a product of the broader transformation of the state, and that intensified with the Porfiriato. Yet Carranza's popularity, and his attempt to respond to some of the state's specific needs, particularly those of the working class, won him valuable support, while his moderate political tack prevented his administration from alienating important sectors of the elite. In the end, Carranza's success lay in channeling popular unrest into the new movement of Carrancismo or Constitutionalism. Crucial to the success of this new movement was Carranza's establishment of a revolutionary army with a broad base of support.

CHAPTER 5

MOBILIZING DISCONTENT

The popular revolt and unrest that continued to plague Coahuila, and the escalation of anti-Maderismo in many areas of Mexico, only served to strengthen and endorse Carranza's already independent stance. A private meeting with Madero in early January 1913, at which Carranza requested the post of Minister of Government and urged Madero to make fundamental political changes, yielded no results. A disgruntled Carranza returned to Saltillo and called a meeting of the governors of Sonora, San Luis Potosí, and Aguascalientes. Under the pretext of a hunting trip, these governors or their representatives gathered in the town of Arteaga to discuss the future of Madero's faltering government, and to plan for the anticipated civil war that would likely follow its demise.¹

While lobbying the leaders of neighboring states, Carranza, with the endorsement of the Coahuilan legislature, assumed extraordinary powers and began to gather revenue for the anticipated conflict. He also maintained and strengthened

¹Junco, Carranza, p. 43; Cuéllar Valdés, Historia, p. 208; Richmond, Carranza, p. 43. Junco and Cuéllar Valdés include the state of Chihuahua in the governor's meeting. Although the governor's meeting has been used as evidence that Carranza was perhaps planning to rebel against Madero himself, Junco argues that it was simply a recognition of Madero's troubles and an attempt to unite forces so that Carranza and his northern cohorts would not fall along with the Madero regime. See Junco, Carranza, p. 95.

his hold over Coahuila's irregular forces, including those stationed in the Federal District and those under the command of Pablo González in Chihuahua. Just eleven days before the fall of the Madero regime, Carranza notified the President that Gregorio Osuna and Pablo González had requested discharges from the Federal Army. He asked that Madero allow them to return to Coahuila with the forces under their commands.² Carranza's independent course in Coahuila was quickly transformed into rebellion when Victoriano Huerta ousted the Madero regime on February 18, 1913. Carranza and the state congress immediately denounced Huerta, and several contingents of Coahuilan irregulars just as swiftly marched for Saltillo, effectively deserting the Federal Army.³ Carranza issued a public announcement of his opposition from the balcony of the government palace in Saltillo, and Huerta's Federals were sent to attack Coahuila.⁴

As Coahuila braced for the impending civil war, Carranza

²Carranza to Gobernación, Saltillo, 7 February 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

³Richmond, Carranza, pp. 43-44; Cuéllar Valdés, Historia, pp. 208-209, 212. Miguel N. Navarrete and Emiliano P. Nafarrete led Coahuilan troops from the Federal District to Coahuila, Pablo González led his men from Chihuahua, and other groups came to Saltillo from various areas within the state of Coahuila. Junco argues that Carranza's revolt against Huerta was primarily a product of the continuing dispute over Coahuila's irregular troops, rather than a protest against the unconstitutionality of Huerta's leadership. As during the Madero regime, Carranza had come to see these forces as the key to his own security. See Junco, Carranza, pp. 115, 131, 136, 140-141.

⁴Holland to State Department, Saltillo, 11 March 1913, NA 812/6968.

established the first headquarters of his rebel army in Arteaga, just east of Saltillo. While Carranza refused the requests of Mexican and U. S. officials that he end his rebellion, the Coahuilan legislature left Saltillo for the relative safety of the northern border. The congressmen settled in Piedras Negras and named Gabriel Calzada military commander of that town. In early March, the Carrancistas sustained their first combats with the Federals. A small force led by Roberto Rivas succeeded in briefly capturing the Laguna town of San Pedro, occupying the municipal president's office and extracting a forced loan.⁵ At the same time, a Carrancista defeat at Anhelo forced Carranza's retreat north to Monclova. The most spectacular of the early clashes between Federals and Constitutionlists occurred later that month, when Carrancistas, reportedly numbering over two thousand, staged an attack on Saltillo. After forty hours of combat resulting in over two hundred fatalities, some eight hundred Federal troops overpowered the rebels.⁶

After defeats at Anhelo and Saltillo, Carranza retreated north to Monclova. At the Hacienda de Guadalupe, Carranza's revolt was formalized with the Plan of Guadalupe. Issued on

⁵Postal Inspector to General Postal Inspector, San Pedro, 11 March 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo I.

⁶See Report of General Arnoldo Casso López, Saltillo, 24 March 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo I; unspecified newspaper report, Saltillo, 26 March 1913, NA 812/10937. A brief description of the Carrancista attack of Saltillo may also be found in INEHRM, Diccionario, pp. 432-433.

March 26 and quickly endorsed by Gabriel Calzada and the Coahuilan congress, and by military leaders throughout the state, the resolution denounced the Huerta government and named Carranza First Chief of the new Constitutionalist movement. The plan also designated Carranza as Mexico's interim president, and called on the governors of other states to join the rebellion against Huerta.⁷

By April of 1913, Carranza's movement was headquartered in Piedras Negras and the Constitutionalists controlled a large area in central to northern Coahuila. Huerta's attempts to negotiate with Carranza were futile. An envoy sent to the Constitutionalist camp was imprisoned, and the First Chief warned that all peace commissioners would be so treated.⁸ Despite Carranza's intransigence in the political arena and on the battlefield, Federal troops began to overwhelm the Carrancistas by the summer of 1913, forcing Carranza to move his base of operations to Sonora. Federal occupations of Monclova and Piedras Negras robbed the Constitutionalists of strategic railroad lines that provided valuable daily income, and by the end of 1913, Federal control of Coahuila was

⁷The text of the Plan de Guadalupe, as well as the names of its original signatories is contained in Villarelló Vélez, Historia de la revolución, pp. 241-244. Douglas Richmond notes that the Plan de Guadalupe was deliberately moderate, seeking to keep Carranza's supporters unified around the goal of Huerta's defeat. See Richmond, Carranza, pp. 44-45.

⁸Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 24 April 1913, NA 812/7247. Michael C. Meyer, Huerta: A Political Portrait (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), pp. 91-92.

virtually complete.⁹ Military predominance, however, did not translate into political mastery. The Huerta regime would continue to struggle against a vigorous Carrancista movement.

Immediately after Carranza's initial denunciation of the new regime, Huerta named Dr. Ignacio Alcocer as provisional governor of Coahuila. Alcocer was one of four Huertista governors who, along with Joaquín Maass, José Refugio Velasco, and Práxedes de la Peña, served until the Carrancistas again seized control of the capital in May of 1914.¹⁰ In addition to confronting a strong Carrancista opposition, Huerta's governors inherited an economy in shambles, a state still torn by Porfirian factionalism, and a countryside still alive with banditry.

Alcocer's first task was to crush the Carrancista's armed movement. Yet from the start the Huertista military strategy floundered. Huerta's attempts to increase the size of the Federal Army throughout Mexico forced his military governors to resort to the hated leva or draft. In Coahuila, Huertista officials tried to press bandits into the army, and sometimes resorted to imprisoning and then impressing hacienda

⁹Joaquín Maass to Secretary of War, Monclova, 11 July 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo II.

¹⁰Maass served from November 1913 until May of 1914, and was briefly replaced on two occasions by Refugio Velasco and Práxedes de la Peña.

workers.¹¹ The result, throughout Mexico, was a reluctant fighting force with little discipline and a notoriously corrupt officer corps.

In Coahuila, moreover, the Federals frequently lacked adequate troops to combat the Carrancistas.¹² Governor Alcocer constantly begged for Federal reinforcements to battle the rebels, and remarked that the lack of Federal troops in Coahuila was causing local uprisings.¹³ As the Carrancistas tried to capture Torreón in the summer of 1913, local officials, desperate for manpower, organized a force of soldiers made up of criminals from the local jail to aid in the defense of the town.¹⁴ Not suprisingly, Federal desertions were also common. During another pitched battle for Torreón, men deserted the Federal Army in large numbers while officers scrambled to fill the void by drafting people on the merest pretext.¹⁵ As Carrancista attacks escalated in Coahuila throughout the spring of 1913, Federal troops were

¹¹P. Ramos to Governor, Saltillo, 6 and 12 May 1913; Pres. mun. Torreón to Governor's Secretary, 1 May 1913; Pres. mun. Arteaga to Governor's Secretary, 2 May, 1913; Juan Peña to Governor, Saltillo, 24 February 1914; Cosme Gallardo, Amado and Francisco Martínez, and José Rojas to Governor, Saltillo, 25 February 1914, AGEC: Revolución.

¹²Meyer, Huerta, pp. 98-105; Richmond, Carranza, p. 46.

¹³Alcocer to Governor's Secretary, Saltillo, 12, 13 May 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo I.

¹⁴Report of Major Liviano Domínguez, Torreón, 21 August 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo III.

¹⁵Silliman to Secretary of State, Saltillo, 16 October 1913, NA 812/9555

frequently without adequate arms and supplies. On May 3, rebel troops captured Matamoros after the Federals defending the town ran out of ammunition.¹⁶

Financing the Huerta regime and the Federal Army in Coahuila was always problematic. Already damaged by the Maderista revolt, Coahuila's economy virtually ground to a halt during the Carrancista rebellion. Instability slowed production in agriculture, mining, and industry. The destruction of railway lines or the appropriation of coal, coke, and guayule by Constitutionalist rebels was enough to paralyze local foundaries and smelters and to halt rubber production.¹⁷ Ranching declined as rebel groups appropriated cattle in massive quantities, then sold them to the United States to obtain arms, or used them to feed troops.¹⁸ Carrancista commandeering of horses from Coahuilan haciendas was so extensive that a decree requiring hacendados to contribute horses to the Federal Army met with replies that few or none were left. On one hacienda, cowboys were forced

¹⁶General Arnoldo Casso López to Secretary of War, 22 April 1913; Coronel Ricardo Peña to Secretary of War, Reata, 22 April 1913; General Ignacio A. Bravo to Secretary of War, Torreón, 6 May 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo I.

¹⁷See Alcocer to Governor's Secretary, Saltillo, 19 April 1913; Pres. mun. Torreón to Governor, 17 May 1913; Continental Mexican Rubber Company to R. Dávila de la Peña, Torreón, 30 September 1913, AGECE: Revolución. See also Cuellar Valdés, Historia, p. 220.

¹⁸See for example Alcocer to Minister of Government, Saltillo, 28 April 1913; Alcocer to Governor's Secretary, Saltillo, 6 May 1913; Constantino de Tárnavo to Governor's Secretary, Monterrey, 14 May 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

to use mules to conduct vigilance work.¹⁹ Indeed, the contest between Constitutionalist and Federals was largely a battle to control Coahuila's increasingly scarce but valuable resources. Control sometimes meant the destruction of such resources. In July 1913, as Federals worked their way into central Coahuila's rich mining region, rebels began burning coal reserves in local mining towns.²⁰

With Carrancista rebels still threatening Saltillo, which was now closely guarded and its streets barricaded with barbed wire, American consul John R. Silliman reported that the surrounding country had been stripped of crops and animals by the rebels. Fields were abandoned and remained unharvested, and basic staples were scarce. In August 1913 Carrancistas attacked and destroyed the Bella Unión textile factory. Although not operating at the time of the attack, Bella Unión was one of the principal industrial plants in the Saltillo area.²¹

The local economic crisis was exacerbated by the rebel strategy of destroying railway lines and bridges, especially those linking Saltillo and the Laguna region to points farther south. This not only disrupted communication between Federal

¹⁹AGEC: Revolución, Exp. 11,618, "Referente al circular núm. 186. . .", 6 December 1913.

²⁰R. S. Bravo to A. M. Elias, Eagle Pass, 8 July 1913, ARE-LE 769(14).

²¹Silliman to Secretary of State, Saltillo, 30 June, 6 September 1913, NA 812/8074, 8884.

troops but also, and more significantly for Coahuilans, contributed to the shortages of basic goods such as coffee, sugar, rice, and petroleum, while driving up their price. Huerta's officials restricted the sale of these items outside of Saltillo, forcing residents of surrounding haciendas and ranchos to do without. Within the capital an anonymous flyer circulated blaming local merchants for inflated prices, and accusing them of being Carrancista sympathizers. To prevent further rebel attacks on the railroads, a harried General Maass threatened to transport the relatives of rebel leaders in pilot railroad cars.²²

Railroad lines that connected Coahuila's coal mining region were likewise a source of intense competition between Federals and Constitutionlists. In Piedras Negras, Rómulo Zertuche led a special corps of "dinamiteros" that was entrusted with blowing up railroad bridges from Sabinas to Monclova as Federal soldiers worked their way into northern Coahuila.²³

The situation in the Laguna region was likewise discouraging. By May of 1913 all railroad communication had been cut and businesses were at a standstill. Without fuel and other necessary materials, factories in Torreón shut down,

²²Silliman to Secretary of State, Saltillo, 22 November 1913, 12 January 1914, NA 812/10032, 10633. Federals threatened to seize three of Carranza's sisters for this purpose.

²³R. S. Bravo to A. M. Elias, Eagle Pass, 12 July, 4 August 1913, ARE-LE 763(21), 832.

leaving thousands without work. American official J.D. Carothers feared that, as during the Maderista revolt, these unemployed laborers would join the Carrancistas, and he noted that the lower classes tended to favor the rebels.²⁴ The interruption of railroad traffic from Torreón to other areas of Mexico had economic ramifications that extended beyond Coahuila. Since the Laguna was a major source of cotton for Mexico's textile factories, workers in Puebla and other states faced the prospect of unemployment. One Huerta official recommended that cotton be purchased from the United States to supply the textile factories until communications with Torreón were restored.²⁵

Carrancista banditry and general instability not only contributed to the sorry state of the Coahuilan economy, but also made tax collection by the local Huerta regime difficult if not impossible. Depredations of haciendas and ranchos drastically devalued some properties, and many were forced to ask exclusion from taxes.²⁶ In 1914, León de la Garza asked

²⁴J. D. Carothers to Secretary of State, Torreón, 7 May 1913, NA 812/7586.

²⁵Secretario de Fomento to Secretario de Trabajo, Mexico, 18 August 1913, AGN: Ramo Trabajo, caja 46, exp. 3. The owner of a textile factory in Ramos Arizpe, Coahuila, made a similar request and noted that three hundred of his workers were idle. See H. Boardman to Secretario de Trabajo, Ramos Arizpe, 11 October 1913, AGN: Trabajo, c. 41, exp. 14.

²⁶Federico Villarreal to Governor, Monclova, 6 September 1913; Pres. mun. Monclova to Governor's Secretary, 18 September 1913; José María Siller to Governor, Saltillo, 23 September 1913, AGE: Revolución.

Governor Maass for an end to taxes on the cattle once owned by his father in northern Coahuila. De la Garza's petition noted that all of the cattle had either been sold in the U.S. or consumed by Constitutionalist forces.²⁷ In central and northern Coahuila, a genuine revenue crisis developed when many property owners fled to the U. S., leaving their holdings without legal representation and making tax collection impossible.²⁸

While Carrancista banditry and general economic decline made revenue difficult to obtain, Coahuilans themselves were angered at the often unrealistic tax demands of Huerta's governors. Requests for exemptions were especially prevalent in northern Coahuila where the Carrancistas, who dominated the area for several months in 1913, had imposed their own taxes. After the revolutionaries departed, Huerta's officials tried to exact taxes retroactively, causing an outcry by locals.²⁹

San Pedro's residents also bristled under Huertista demands

²⁷León de la Garza to Governor, Monterrey, 1 April 1914, AGE: Revolución. Carrancista banditry also made the establishment of local police and security forces difficult, since property owners and businessmen victimized by such banditry could not contribute to their maintenance. See Pres. mun. Morelos to Governor's Secretary, 20 November 1913; Pres. mun. San Juan de Sabinas to Governor, 29 November 1913, AGE: Revolución.

²⁸L. A. Guajardo to Governor's Secretary, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 9 January 1914; Cayetano Villaseñor to Governor, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 13 January 1914, AGE: Revolución.

²⁹Felipe de la Garza to Governor, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 19 January 1914; Merchants of Piedras Negras to Governor, 15 January 1914; E. H. Schmidt to Governor, Piedras Negras, 23 March 1914, AGE: Revolución.

for money. For nearly six months this town was left without troops, as Federals went to the defense of the neighboring town of Torreón. Townsmen insisted that they were not responsible for contributing to the Huerta regime and wryly suggested that they should be paid for the time they remained abandoned and at the mercy of the "Carrancista horde."³⁰ For all Coahuilans, the ultimate indignity was the extraordinary war tax declared in April of 1914. This was to be paid by all taxpayers within eight days and was the equivalent of two years' worth of ordinary taxes.³¹

In addition to the increase in state taxes, on the national level Huerta ordered the emission of new paper currency. In Saltillo, however, a currency problem surfaced immediately when foreign-owned banks and town businesses refused to accept bills issued by banks in rebel territory. A local decree by the military commander that ordered banks to accept all bills was ignored, and local merchants used the opportunity to unload unwanted currency on the Huerta government by buying post office money orders.³² Local officials also resorted to forced loans and other measures to raise revenue. In the Laguna, the sale of cotton became a

³⁰Farmers, merchants, and industrialists of San Pedro to Governor, 12 March 1914, AGECE: Revolución.

³¹Unnumbered decree, Saltillo, 22 April 1914, AGECE: Decretos. See also Richmond, "Factional Political Strife," pp. 57-58. Richmond notes that even Huerta's governors protested the war tax.

³²Silliman to Secretary of State, Saltillo, 12 June 1914, NA 812/10633.

means to pay Federal troops. Huerta's officials also attempted to encourage gambling throughout the state, hoping that the proceeds would help finance the anti-Carrancista campaign.³³

If excessive taxation and the arbitrary use of the leva made Huerta's governors unpopular, the use of repressive political measures likewise angered most Coahuilans. With Huerta's coup against Madero, local military officials designated Juntas de Gobierno to take over the task of municipal governance in Coahuila. Governor Alcocer also began to designate new local officials.³⁴ The increased use of the jefatura política and the manipulation of local elections, became additional hallmarks of the local Huerta regime.

Under Alcocer, three jefaturas were established: one for the Viesca District, including the Laguna region, one for central Coahuila or the Monclova District, and one for the northern Rio Grande District.³⁵ While Carranza had also

³³Meyer, Huerta, pp. 182-184; José Refugio Velasco to Secretary of War, Torreón, 20 February 1914, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/31, Tomo I; Exp. 11,625, ". . . casas de juego en el estado," 14 January 1914, AGECE: Revolución. Although Huertista taxes were certainly unpopular, some hacendados and wealthier residents of Coahuila apparently favored such taxes if they would bring guarantees against Carrancista depredations. See Miguel Garza Aldape to Governor, Torreón, 7 September 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

³⁴Jefe Armas San Pedro to Governor's Secretary, 1 April 1913; Pres. mun. Matamoros to Governor, 8 April 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

³⁵Alcocer soon extended the Viesca Jefatura to include the district of Parras (including the municipalities of Parras and San Pedro).

revived the hated institution of the Jefatura Política during his governorship, the Huertista use of the office suggested, in some respects, the re-emergence of Porfirian patterns. Prior to the formal establishment of a jefatura for the Viesca District, Alcocer named Luis García de Letona jefe for Torreón. García de Letona had served in the Garza Galán administration, worked against the election of Miguel Cárdenas (whose political clique included the Carranza family), and was named municipal president of Torreón in 1909, as Díaz and Reyes intensified their efforts to gain control over Coahuila.³⁶ Alcocer's designate for Viesca was Miguel Garza Aldape, whose brother Manuel, held several posts in the Huerta government and had supported the re-election of Díaz in 1910.³⁷

Luis Alberto Guajardo, a former jefe during the Porfiriato, assumed the post in the Rio Grande District. Although Guajardo had established a Reyista club in Múzquiz, joined the Madero revolt, and been designated a jefe político during the Carranza administration, he ultimately supported the Huerta regime.³⁸ Finally, Alcocer named Melquiades

³⁶Luis García de Letona to Governor, Torreón, 1 March 1913, AGEC: Revolución; INERM, Diccionario, p. 339.

³⁷Alcocer to Miguel Garza Aldape, Saltillo, 7 July 1913, AGEC: Revolución; INEHRM, Diccionario, pp. 341-342. Miguel Garza Aldape had also been a member of a Reyista club in his native town of Múzquiz. He fled to the United States after Huerta's fall.

³⁸Exp. 11,430, "Nombramiento de Jefe Político . . .," 27 July 1913, AGEC: Revolución; INEHRM, Diccionario, pp. 355-356.

Ballesteros, a prominent cattleman, jefe político for the Monclova District.³⁹

Alcocer's jefes openly meddled in local politics, selecting appropriate municipal officials. In his district, Ballesteros simply assumed the post of municipal president in the important town of Monclova. Guajardo personally named new local officials for the Rio Grande District rather than bother with scheduled elections. He noted that all suitable candidates had been forced to emigrate because of revolutionary violence, so that an open vote might result in the selection of those not supporting Huerta.⁴⁰ Indeed, municipal and national contests held during the Huerta regime were an acknowledged farce. Coahuilans approached the national elections of October 1913 with complete apathy, and election day found Saltillo completely quiet, like a "deserted city."⁴¹

Although rigged elections and the rule of Jefes were nothing new, and although the Carrancista revolt focused

³⁹Un-numbered decree, Saltillo, 6 September 1913, AGEC: Revolución. The political antecedents of Ballesteros are unclear.

⁴⁰Ballesteros to Governor, Monclova, 24 September 1913; Guajardo to Governor's Secretary, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 10 January 1914, AGEC: Revolución. It appears that Guajardo may have also attempted to use his post to grab lands abandoned by those fleeing the revolution. See Exp. 11,464: "Luis Alberto Guajardo solicita la adjudicación de terrenos baldíos . . .," January 1914, AGEC: Revolución.

⁴¹Silliman to Secretary of State, Saltillo, 16, 28 October 1913, NA 812/9555, 9774. See also Meyer, Huerta, pp. 150-153, and Richmond, "Factional Political Strife," pp. 58-59.

attention away from political reform, at least some Coahuilans recognized Huertista policies as a backward step. When Governor Maass made his selection for jefe político of the Viesca District, several Torreón residents protested, arguing that the naming of a jefe would halt the progress that had been made in the political administration of the town since the Madero revolt.⁴² The return of old Porfirians and Porfirian practices under Huerta prompted one observer to remark that in Coahuila ". . . things are back to the same old state as in the time of the rule of Sr. Garza Galán, . . . all the old crowd is back."⁴³

The impositions of the Huerta regime also included police brutality and hyper-vigilance of the populace. As the Carrancista rebellion escalated, Coahuilans were arbitrarily apprehended and interrogated.⁴⁴ Federal soldiers could also be ruthless in their treatment of entire populations. The entire town of Candela, considered a main focus of Carrancismo, was virtually destroyed when one of Huerta's officers ordered the burning of one-hundred houses and caused

⁴²exp. 11,604: "Varios vecinos de Torreón solicitan no entre en función el Jefe Político . . .," 18 February 1914, AGEC: Revolución.

⁴³Samuel Guy Inman quoted in Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, p. 92.

⁴⁴Richmond, "Factional Political Strife," pp. 59-60; Jesús Ibarra Navarro to Franco Dávila de la Peña, n.p., 2 March 1913; residents of Saltillo to Governor, 29 March 1913; Pres. mun. Ramos Arizpe to Gendarme Municipal, 15 April 1913, AGEC: Revolución.

six hundred families to flee into the surrounding mountains.⁴⁵ In addition, Huerta's officials showed little concern for local needs, and appeared determined to erase the reforms of the Carranza administration. Governors Alcocer and Maass, for example, completely overturned Carranza's educational reforms, returning control of the state's public schools to the Governor, thereby further eroding the municipal autonomy that seemed to be at least partially championed by Carranza.⁴⁶

Despite the general unpopularity of the Huerta regime, the continuation of banditry and revolutionary violence encouraged some members of Coahuila's elite to cast their lot with the new president and contribute to the campaign against Carrancismo. Although Huerta and his officials frequently brow-beat the locals into providing money and manpower for security, some propertied residents voluntarily contributed to the regime. After the failed Constitutionalist assault on Saltillo in March, 1913, local merchants donated money to express their gratitude to the Federal Army for its defense of the town.⁴⁷ Hacendados in the Laguna region willingly answered the call to form a rural police corps, and even agreed to higher taxes if it meant guarantees against rebel

⁴⁵Citizens of Candela to Gobernación, Candela, 15 July 1914, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, c. 33, exp. 7.

⁴⁶Un-numbered decrees, Saltillo, 3 April, 9 February 1913, AGECE: Decretos.

⁴⁷Exp. 11,343: Merchants of Saltillo to Governor, 1 April 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

depredations.⁴⁸ In central Coahuila, owners of haciendas, ranchos, and factories likewise contributed voluntarily to the establishment of a rural police force. Fear of further rebel attacks sometimes made strange bedfellows: in the Monclova District Miguel Cárdenas, Jesús del Valle, and Práxedes de la Peña (each a former governor and representative of the three rival political factions in Coahuila during the Porfiriato) joined together to establish a junta patriótica for protection.⁴⁹

Many Coahuilan elites also cooperated in the establishment of Defensas Sociales. These urban volunteer groups first developed during the Madero revolt to provide defense against banditry. For some members, they also became a means of persecuting any suspected rebels or rebel sympathizers. Several such groups became auxiliary forces for the Federal Army, and pledged their support for Huerta. Yet with few exceptions, these defense forces had little effect.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Pres. mun. Torreón to Governor, 20 April 1913; Miguel Garza Aldape to Governor, Torreón, 7 September 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

⁴⁹Exp. 11,446: "Formación de un cuerpo rural . . .", 28 March 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

⁵⁰A few lists of Defensa Social members may be found in AGECE: Revolución. See for example Exp. 11,608: "La defensa y ataque de la ciudad de Monclova . . .", 16 March 1914. Monclova's Defensa Social was apparently of some import in helping Federals break a Carrancista siege of that town in 1914. See also INEHRM, Diccionario, p. 318; Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, pp. 83-84. Knight characterizes the Defensa Social, throughout Mexico, as "a secondary auxiliary force of very limited value." Ibid., p. 84.

Nor was elite support for the Huerta regime unqualified and persistent. U.S. consul John R. Silliman indicated that the endorsement of Miguel Cárdenas, a boyhood friend of Carranza, was half-hearted at best, and that Cárdenas, wary of further revolutionary violence, was simply choosing the lesser of two evils.⁵¹ By 1914, with support for Huertismo in general decline, Cárdenas was questioning the wisdom of his choice, and was soon suspected by Huerta's agents of being a Carrancista sympathizer.⁵²

While Huerta failed to garner the definitive support of Cárdenas and other members of Coahuila's traditional political factions, he also confronted the plotting of the Garza Galán clique. Active members of the anti-Maderista movement in Texas and the border region, the Garza Galán brothers had rejected affiliation with either Huerta or Carranza. As early as February 1913, Andrés and Juan Garza Galán were rumored to be organizing a coup that would take control of Nuevo Laredo and proclaim army veteran and Porfirista general Gerónimo Treviño president of Mexico. The Galanista plot reportedly included several old Porfirians, including General Francisco

⁵¹Silliman to Secretary of State, Saltillo, 8 August 1913, NA, 812/8459. Cárdenas had attempted to help Carranza and Huerta reach a negotiated settlement.

⁵²Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, pp. 136-137; A. M. Elias to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 28 March 1914, ARE-LE 792(2). Knight demonstrates that many Mexican elites were searching for a third alternative, between Huerta's militarism and Carranza's revolutionary movement.

Naranjo, and even Pascual Orozco Sr.⁵³

The Treviñista movement briefly bore fruit on February 15 when Gerónimo Villarreal seized control of Nuevo Laredo, deposed customs officials, announced a discount on importation fees, and declared González Treviño president of Mexico. By August, Huerta's officials had discovered a similar plot aimed at establishing the presidency of either Carranza or General Treviño. They suggested that this was a grab for power by the faltering Carrancista movement, as well as a product of General Treviño's anger at being detained twice by Huerta's men on suspicion of being a Constitutionalist sympathizer.⁵⁴

In Coahuila, Lorenzo González Treviño was linked to the plot. The properties of his cattle company, which had reportedly been used to help the Maderista movement, were now identified as gathering places for arms and munitions.⁵⁵

Although Huerta's regime was destined to fail in Coahuila and to give added impetus to the growth of Constitutionalism, a string of Federal military victories in 1913 forced the

⁵³Lozano to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Laredo, 15, 16 February 1913, ARE-LE 782(10); R. S. Bravo to Consular Inspector, Eagle Pass, 25 July 1913; ARE-LE 859(1). Miguel Garza Aldape, named jefe político for the Viesca District, was identified with the plot before his designation to that post. See Múzquiz to Del Rio Consul, Eagle Pass, 20, 24 June 1913, ARE-LE 846.

⁵⁴Mexican Embassy to Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Washington, 24 February 1913, ARE-LE 785(24); Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, pp. 19, 47. Knight suggests that Treviño's traditional rivalry with Bernardo Reyes was the real motivation behind the detentions, since the Huerta government included many Reyistas.

⁵⁵A. M. Elias to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Laredo, 2 August 1913, ARE-LE 788(15).

First Chief to carry his rival government to Sonora. There, Carranza coordinated the revolt against Huerta and Carrancismo took shape as a national phenomenon. Alan Knight has characterized Carrancismo as a "self-criticism" of Maderismo that nonetheless retained the generally moderate tone of the latter movement. Its primary goal was the final destruction of the old regime left largely intact by the Madero revolt.⁵⁶ Friedrich Katz likewise underscores Carranza's lack of social revolutionary goals. He argues that Carranza actually undermined his support in his native state by focusing only on Huerta's defeat and avoiding a strong commitment to reform.⁵⁷ In his biography of the First Chief, however, Douglas Richmond highlights Carranza's populism, and argues that Carrancismo had a class consciousness that was translated into important social reforms in Coahuila and elsewhere.⁵⁸

Although Constitutionalism did reject radical social reform in favor of the moderate liberalism of its Maderista cousin, within Coahuila Carranza's movement did have a distinctly populist tone. Successful in garnering and maintaining the support of the state's popular classes, Carranza was able to prevent his movement from going the way of Maderismo. Particularly among the working class Carranza

⁵⁶Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, p. 104.

⁵⁷Katz, Secret War, pp. 129-134.

⁵⁸Richmond, Carranza, pp. 48-51.

succeeded in building both a political and military foundation that would help defeat Huertismo and effect the destruction of the old regime. At the same time, however, Carranza's success in recruiting Coahuila's popular classes was not the product of any pledge to significant social change. Rather, it was a product of the state's ongoing economic and political crisis--itself an expression of the broader transformations and dislocations that had provided the earlier momentum to Maderismo.

As governor, Carranza had already learned the importance of Coahuila's workers, responding to their needs with specific legislation and reforms. His efforts were rewarded even before the Huerta coup, as workers began to enlist in and establish the local forces that would soon be incorporated into a Carrancista army. The state's mining region was a significant source of support, and as revolutionary violence forced the closure of many mines, workers enlisted in Coahuila's irregular forces.⁵⁹ Juan Hernández García, president of the Unión de Mineros Mexicanos (UMM) in Coahuila's coal-mining region, organized some two thousand miners and campesinos to help Governor Carranza in his fight against Orozquismo. These unionists would later form part of the Constitutionalist forces, and by 1914 Hernández García had

⁵⁹Francisco Flores Santos to Carranza, n.p., 6, 11 March 1912; Employees of Cloete Mines to Carranza, 20 April 1912, AGE: Revolución.

assumed the rank of coronel.⁶⁰

In the Laguna economic stagnation provided the backdrop to the establishment of additional troops that would become part of a broader fighting force after Huerta's coup.⁶¹ And with Huerta in power, the continuing economic crisis simply provided more recruits for Carrancismo. In the months following Huerta's ascension to power and with Carranza and his followers still in control of central and northern Coahuila, jobless workers flocked to the Constitutionalist ranks. In Piedras Negras, many worked in the railroad shops, making dynamite and manufacturing cannons. Unemployed railroad workers were ready recruits and those still employed were often rumored to be aiding the Carrancista cause. Ricardo Castillo, a long-time railroad employee who claimed to be a victim of the Garza Galán regime, wrote to Carranza from his exile in New Mexico, offering his services. Carranza replied with the request that Castillo join the Constitutionalist forces in Chihuahua.⁶² Idle hacienda

⁶⁰Juan Hernández García to Carranza, Rosita, 28 February 1912, AGE: Revolución; García to Secretary of War, Relación de servicios prestados a la revolución durante seis años, Mexico, 24 October 1917; Pres. mun. Sabinas to Gen. Jesús J. Madrigal, Sabinas, 30 April 1930, in "Hernández García, Juan," AHDN-CP, Exp. XI/111/4-3053.

⁶¹See for example Mayor of Matamoros to Governor's Secretary, 21 January 1913; Address of Mayor of Torreón, 1 January 1913, AGE: Revolución.

⁶²Treasury Secretary to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Mexico, 12 May 1913 and R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 19 May 1913, ARE-LE 750; Mexican Consul to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 28 July 1913, ARE-LE 751; Ricardo

workers also volunteered or were recruited by the Constitutionalists. Even after Huerta's soldiers had gained military control over most of Coahuila, Carrancistas continued to successfully recruit the employees of Lorenzo González Treviño's vast properties in the center and north. Federals scrambled to recruit the same workers, or to find other work for those unemployed.⁶³

Carrancista recruitment was especially successful in Coahuila's mining communities, where the First Chief continued his careful cultivation of worker support. Carranza maintained close contact with his military leaders in the mining region, ordering them to do everything they could to help unemployed miners and their families. Constitutionalist commander Ildefonso Castro played a significant role among the members of the miners' union, finding them food, lobbying mining companies to resume work, and briefing idle workers on the Carrancista movement and its commitment to the working class.⁶⁴ Carranza himself ventured into the fray between

Castillo to Carranza, Montoya, New Mexico, 18 May 1913, AVC, carp. 2, leg. 202.

⁶³Del Rio Consul to A.M. Elias, 1 July 1913, ARE-LE 749(10); Consular Inspector to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 11 March 1914, ARE-LE 787(8); Del Rio Consul to Inspector General, 28 March 1914, ARE-LE 716(2). Haciendas owned by González Treviño had reportedly been full of Maderista sympathizers during the 1910-1911 revolt.

⁶⁴Ildefonso M. Castro to Carranza, Múzquiz, 25 May 1913, AVC carp. 2, leg. 263; Ibid., 6 June 1913, AVC, carp. 3, leg. 388; Carranza to Castro, Piedras Negras, 30 May, AVC, carp. 3, leg. 309; Ibid., 12 June 1913, AVC, carp. 4, leg. 439.

workers and mining companies. In one incident, he ordered Fernando Benito, the Spanish manager of the Sabinas Coal Company, to advance unemployed workers a month's salary and to pay for their passage out of the mining community.⁶⁵

Carranza's commitment to the state's miners also garnered him more spontaneous support as the Federals advanced northward. Huerta's Federals soon discovered that the closing of additional mines meant not only the loss of valuable resources, but also the certainty that the newly-unemployed would, as a matter of course, take up arms for the Constitutionalist movement.⁶⁶ In Coahuila's mining region, Carranza channeled worker support into military strength.

Carranza's aggressive and sometimes ruthless persecution of his enemies and especially of representatives of the Porfirian system also inspired the confidence of many Coahuilans, just as it lent credence to the view that Constitutionalism was dedicated to the destruction of the old order. Carranza personally ordered the imprisonment or execution of those suspected of disloyalty. Several deserters from the Constitutionalist forces, including the brother of Huertista jefe politico Luis Alberto Guajardo, were pursued

⁶⁵A. M. Elias to Secretary of Foreign Relations, n. p., 19 June 1913, ARE-LE 763(7).

⁶⁶See for example Secretary of Foreign Relations to Secretary of War, Mexico, 12 June 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo II; R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 12 June 1913, ARE-LE 782(9).

and shot.⁶⁷ In the town of Nadadores, eleven Porfirian caciques were apprehended, and Carranza ordered them judged according to a nineteenth-century decree that would permit their execution. Constitutionalist troops transported the prisoners to Múzquiz where they were kept under horrible conditions. Nothing could prepare the men, however, for the next phase of their journey. Strapped to railroad cars that carried dynamite and powder and threatened to explode at the slightest bump, the prisoners were transferred to Sabinas. There Pablo González, perhaps out of sympathy for the frightened and exhausted captives, set them free.⁶⁸

That Coahuila's popular classes tended to place their confidence in Carranza, may be seen in the numerous petitions sent by individual Coahuilans to the First Chief, even as the Constitutionalist troops began to waver before the advancing Federals. A small-scale merchant in the mining community of Palau asked Carranza's help for the workers there who could not afford meat, continued to be paid in coupons valid only at the company store, and were lured by the games of chance that

⁶⁷R. S. Bravo to Consular Inspector, San Antonio, 28 July 1913, ARE-LE 763(20). For other examples see Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 24 July 1913, ARE-LE 846(1); Council of War to Carranza, Piedras Negras, 4 June 1913, AVC, carp. 3, leg. 356.

⁶⁸R. S. Bravo to A. M. Elias, Eagle Pass, 30 July, 3 October, 1913, ARE-LE 751, 842(9). One of Carranza's first acts as leader of the Constitutionalist movement was to re-instate an 1862 decree that allowed for the execution of prisoners guilty of rebellion. See Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, p. 106.

became more appealing as work at the mines dwindled.⁶⁹ Railroad workers left unemployed with the Constitutionalist withdrawal from Coahuila, requested work with Carranza's forces in Chihuahua.⁷⁰ A more humble request issued from María E. Castañeda, who received the eleven pesos needed for her school in the mining town of Agujita.⁷¹

Even without the active recruitment of Carranza and his leaders, many Coahuilans established their own armed groups that pledged their support for the rebel movement. Carranza received notice of the formation of several such groups, and channeled many of the new troops into already-existing forces.⁷² With Huerta's Federals temporarily triumphant in Coahuila, Carranza also received statements of loyalty and offers of support from state officials who had served during his governorship and fled the state rather than submit to the new regime.⁷³

⁶⁹Faustino S. Villarreal to Carranza, Palau, 13 June 1913, AVC, carp. 4, leg. 456.

⁷⁰José Domínguez to Carranza, Matamoros, 18 December 1913, AVC, carp. 5, leg. 658.

⁷¹Carranza to Pres. mun. Sabinas, Piedras Negras, AVC, carp. 3, leg. 313.

⁷²Centro Constitutionalista "Francisco I. Madero" to Carranza, La Agujita, 15 May 1913, AVC, carp. 2, leg. 169; Men of Múzquiz to Carranza, 26 May 1913, AVC, carp. 2, leg. 276; Carranza to Juan Madrid, Piedras Negras, 11 June 1913, AVC, carp. 4, leg. 432; Carranza to Gonzálo A. Sosa, Piedras Negras, 12 June 1913, AVC, carp. 4, leg. 444.

⁷³Juan Martínez to Carranza, Eagle Pass, 29 December 1913, AVC, carp. 5, leg. 708; Juan S. Hernández to Carranza (?), Palau, 18 July 1914, AVC, carp. 11, leg. 1098.

Douglas Richmond notes that both officers and enlisted men of Carranza's army came from diverse backgrounds.⁷⁴ Indeed, the Coahuilan irregular forces established during Carranza's governorship and augmented to combat Huertismo, included members of many social classes. In addition to the miners that joined Carranza in large numbers, among the rebel troops could be found local judges, teachers, cattlemen, merchants, farmers, tailors, hacienda and railroad workers, and cowboys.⁷⁵ Although many had Maderista antecedents, having joined rebel ranks in 1910 and 1911, several (such as UMM president Juan Hernández García) were mobilized for the first time only on Governor Carranza's initiative. A few, ✓ such as Cesáreo Castro Villarreal, Francisco Coss Ramos, Lucio Blanco, and Eulalio Gutiérrez Ortiz, had Magonista antecedents. Finally, Constitutionalist ranks included at least a few career military men, including Juan Vela Leal and Luis G. Garfías, who had served in the Porfirian army.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Richmond, Carranza, pp. 54-55.

⁷⁵Constitutionalist ranks included members of the four social groups identified by Friedrich Katz as the ready recruits that helped in the professionalization of the revolutionary army in northern Mexico: migrants, unemployed miners and industrial workers, cowboys, and outlaws. See Katz, Secret War, pp. 126-127.

⁷⁶This profile is the product of a sampling of 32 names gleaned from muster rolls contained in AGECE: Revolución, and from lists of military leaders contained throughout Villarelló Vélez, Historia de la revolución. See for example "Fuerzas Auxiliares de Coahuila . . . Escuadrón que manda el Major Cesáreo Castro," Viesca, 2 November 1912; "Fuerzas Auxiliares del Cuerpo de Carabineros de Coahuila," Saltillo, 4 November 1912; "Carabineros de Coahuila al mando del Jefe Gregorio Osuna," Toluca, 5 November 1912, AGECE: Revolución. Information on occupation and political antecedents

While Carranza succeeded in organizing a viable fighting force within his native state, here, as elsewhere Constitutionalist forces faced the problems of supplying troops and of keeping officer rivalry in check. Huerta's officials sometimes noted the demoralization of Carrancista soldiers, who hedged on fighting, and the desertions because of lack of food and basic necessities. Tensions between rebel officers Pablo González and Jesús Carranza were apparently also a source of concern. The latter actually ordered González apprehended in October of 1913 because of a recent military defeat, and in light of rumors that González was attempting to desert.⁷⁷ Nor could Carranza and his officers always draw independent rebel groups into the fold of the

for each man was extracted from individual service records in AHDN-CP, and from INEHRM, Diccionario. See for example Francisco A. Higuera Jiménez, Relativo a los antecedentes Revolucionarios del C. Gen. de Div. Cesáreo Castro Villarreal, Mexico, 7 October 1939; Hoja de servicios del C. Cesáreo Castro Villarreal, Mexico, 15 December 1939, in "Castro Villarreal, Cesáreo," AHDN-CP, Exp. X/111.2/35, Tomo II. Luis Hernández to Secretary of War, Tamazula, Jalisco, 7 August 1933; Extracto de antecedentes militares del extinto ex-General de Brigada Lucio Blanco, Mexico, 8 January 1955, in "Blanco, Lucio," AHDN-CP, Exp. XI/111/2-1154, Tomo I and IV. Corl. F. Ayala, Estudio del Expediente del Corl. de Caballería Juan Vela, Mexico, 27 December 1922; Benjamín Huesca Morales, Estudio relativo al ... Leal, Mexico, 20 April 1927; Hoja de Servicios del Corl. de Cab. Juan Vela, Mexico, 4 November 1922, in "Vela Leal, Juan," AHDN-CP, Exp. C-502 D/111/4-7147, Tomo II and IV.

⁷⁷R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 14 March 1913, ARE-LE 765(1); A. M. Elias to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 17 July 1913, ARE-LE 788(7); Consular Inspector to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 1 October 1913, ARE-LE 778(14). Alan Knight argues that Carranza's authority over the various state forces in Mexico was limited because of bickering among military caudillos. The common goal of defeating Huerta, however, temporarily smoothed over such conflicts. See Mexican Revolution, Vo. 2, pp. 106-109.

rebel army. The Laguna region, the site of so much banditry during the Madero revolt, continued to be an unruly area. Carranza's nephew Sebastián reported the existence of numerous small bands that wandered the area, robbing and plundering under the banner of the revolution, while refusing to be incorporated into the rebel army.⁷⁸

Despite such obstacles by 1914 Constitutionalist forces began to gain the upper hand in Coahuila. This was aided by several factors. In February, the administration of Woodrow Wilson lifted the U.S. arms embargo in favor of Carranza. Huerta's already tenuous authority was further challenged with the U.S. occupation of Veracruz in April. Finally, Constitutionalist troops in the Laguna began to work with the large and growing forces of Chihuahua's rebel leader Pancho Villa.

Villa's campaign to capture the strategically important Laguna region began in March. The assault on the coveted railway center of Torreón began at the end of the month and continued until Villa entered the town in triumph on April 3. Federal generals Velasco and Maass were pursued by Villistas and Carrancistas as they retreated to the nearby town of San Pedro. There, a disagreement over command between the two Federal officers furthered weakened the Huertista resistance. American consular agent Theodore C. Hamm reported from Durango

⁷⁸Sebastián Carranza to Carranza, Hacienda San Carlos, 4 April 1913, AVC, carp. 1, leg. 98.

that Velasco split the ranks, retreating to Saltillo and leaving Maass and his men to provide a "half-hearted resistance" to Villa's assault. Maass received little help from the Federal forces led by Benjamín Argumedo, who were described by another Federal as "disorganized" and "drunk." With the victory of rebel forces imminent, San Pedro residents opened fire on the Federals, who began to desert the ranks, and finally retreated. The line of retreat, reported Hamm, "was heavily strewn with abandoned guns, ammunition, and clothing and everything which might serve to identify a man with the federal army."⁷⁹

Villa's occupation of Torreón and the Laguna precipitated the persecution of the Laguna region's significant Spanish population. Already in 1913 Carrancista rebels had openly declared their displeasure with these foreign residents. The execution of several Spaniards followed Villa's first capture of Torreón in 1913, and encouraged others to leave the area.⁸⁰ In 1914, after Villa had expelled the Spanish population of

⁷⁹Mexican Embassy to Consular Inspector, Washington, 26 March 1914; Diebold to Secretary of Foreign Relations, El Paso, 8 April 1914, ARE-LE 795(1); Theodore Hamm to Secretary of State, Durango, 19 April 1914, NA 812/11703; Secretary of Foreign Relations to Secretary of War, Mexico, 15 April 1914 and General Carlos García Hidalgo to Secretary of War, Saltillo, 21 April 1914, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/31, Tomo I. See also Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución, pp. 251-252; Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, pp. 144-145.

⁸⁰Silliman to Secretary of State, Saltillo, 25 October 1913, NA 812/9391; Secretary of War to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Mexico, 21 October 1913, ARE-LE 791(1).

his own state of Chihuahua, Torreón's remaining Spaniards braced for his assault on the town. Representatives of several foreign governments tried to convince Villa that rumors about the Spaniards' support of Huerta's Federals were false. In response to foreign pressure, Villa finally agreed to respect the foreign residents of Torreón, but he urged them to take shelter in a few designated buildings. Although the frightened Spaniards followed his instructions, with the rebel capture of the town Villa harangued them for morally and materially aiding the Federals. He suggested that the Spaniards should be executed, but instead, decreed their expulsion from Mexico.⁸¹

Almost immediately, train cars carried the harassed Spaniards and their families to Ciudad Juárez. Then, despite Carranza's orders to the contrary, Villa began seizing Spanish stores and other properties in Torreón and the surrounding area.⁸² Villa's independent stance with regard to the Laguna's foreign population, and his defiance of Carranza, hinted at a rift between the two leaders that, by the summer, would widen dangerously.

With the Laguna in the hands of Villa and the Constitutionalists, Pablo González and Francisco Murguía began

⁸¹George C. Carothers to Secretary of State, El Paso, 3, 23 February, and 6 April 1914, NA 812/10820, 10953, 1419.

⁸²Diebold to Secretary of Foreign Relations, El Paso, 10 April 1914; Diebold to Secretary of War, El Paso, 11 April 1914, ARE-LE 793(2). Villa did pledge to respect the property of other foreigners, especially Americans.

a campaign that, by the end of May, would seize control of central and northern Coahuila. On April 29, the Carrancistas occupied Piedras Negras, ending a prolonged fight for that strategic border town and precipitating additional desertions from the Federal ranks. One assault on Piedras Negras resulted in the Carrancista capture of enemy soldiers, several of whom joined the rebels on the promise that they would be elevated two ranks within the Constitutionalist army.⁸³ When Constitutionalist forces regained formal military control over the town of Piedras Negras in the spring of 1914, the U.S. invasion and occupation of Veracruz had added another element to the already-complex border situation. U.S. and Texas officials placed additional troops along the border to prevent retaliatory action from the other side, and Texas governor Oscar B. Colquitt suggested the seizure of several border towns, including Piedras Negras.⁸⁴ Rumors of a possible U.S. invasion prompted some Coahuilans to begin seizing livestock belonging to Americans in northern Coahuila.⁸⁵

For U.S. consul William P. Blocker, however, the greater concern was that Federals and Carranza's troops would unite forces in response to American actions in Veracruz and along the border. Indeed, Blocker reported that as the rebel troops

⁸³A. M. Elias to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 4 May 1914, ARE-LE 747(16).

⁸⁴Coerver and Hall, Texas and the Mexican Revolution, p. 77.

⁸⁵Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 24 April 1914, NA 812/11681.

of General Murguía approached Piedras Negras, they were met by General Guajardo, who urged them to join Huerta's ranks and help resist a U.S. invasion. A suspicious Murguía declined the invitation and proceeded to occupy the border town. Blocker claimed that most of Guajardo's Federals then chose to join the Constitutionalists.⁸⁶ In May, the rebels completed their campaign with the capture of Monclova and Saltillo. The next month, Carranza returned to his native state, establishing Constitutionalist headquarters in the capital.

Coahuila's Constitutionalist rebellion of 1913-1914 was a product of the same conditions that had produced Maderismo, namely economic crisis and dislocation, and political repression. Just as the earlier revolt added to the state's economic quandary, so did the unfulfilled expectations generated by Madero's movement contribute to the climate of unrest. In the Huerta regime, moreover, Coahuilans confronted a renascent Porfirismo that rewarded and reassured some traditional elites while alienating the popular classes. For most, the new Mexican government brought increased taxes and repressive political measures.

Although many wealthier residents cast their lot with Huerta, Carranza's rebellion did not simply split the state along class lines. Constitutionalists garnered the support of several propertied Coahuilans, while Porfirian elites such as

⁸⁶Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 21, 22, 23, 29 April 1914, NA 812/1158, 11624, 11648, 11808; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 30 April 1914, NA 812/11779.

the Garza Galáns took an independent stance. Support for Huerta, moreover, was often absent support. While claiming a pro-Huerta orientation, many hacendados and businessmen simply fled the state to escape the inevitable depredations that accompanied the continuing revolution.

Even before his rebellion against Huerta, Carranza had begun to build his own military force. As governor his policy of deliberate but careful reform won him the support of the state's popular classes. Carranza's rebellion also gave added definition to Carrancismo while demonstrating its success among the popular classes. At the same time, continued unrest and economic crisis meant that for the First Chief, the challenge of the situation lay not in formulating a program of social revolution that would attract support, but in drawing the local population into a viable fighting force. Already the beneficiary of his own populist policies, Carranza largely accomplished the latter task. In the end, Carrancismo triumphed in Coahuila because its leader succeeded in mobilizing discontent.

Winning recruits was not the only key to rebel victory, however. The ability to bankroll the movement was also important. Crucial to the financing of Constitutionalism was control of the vast Coahuila-Texas border.

CHAPTER 6

CATTLE, CONTRABAND, AND CUSTOMS:

FINANCING THE CONSTITUTIONALIST MOVEMENT

As the Federal troops of General Maass advanced toward the Coahuila-Texas border in the summer of 1913, Constitutionalist leaders Pablo González, Jesús Carranza, and Gabriel Calzada gathered in Piedras Negras to discuss the problem of paying and providing for their own soldiers.¹ Although Venustiano Carranza's rebellion continued to attract recruits throughout Coahuila, it often struggled to retain them for lack of revenue and resources. Huerta's officials reported the demoralization of ill-equipped rebels, and observed that some troops suspected their principal officers of appropriating scarce funds for their own use. In the mining town of Sabinas all but two soldiers deserted the ranks when Constitutionalist authorities announced that a financial crisis would limit payment of wages to fifty centavos every other day. On alternate days the men would be given a ration of flour, meat, and corn.²

To finance the campaign against Huerta, Carranza had

¹R. S. Bravo to Elías, Eagle Pass, 4 August 1913, ARE-LE 832.

²A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 17 April 1913; R. S. Bravo to A. M. Elías, Eagle Pass, 15 September 1913, ARE-LE 778(14).

already begun to issue paper money. A decree of April 1913 ordered the "forced" circulation of five million pesos-worth of currency to help support the Constitutionalist army. Carranza's generals also issued their own paper money so that several currencies competed, side-by-side, with that of Huerta. Public confidence in these monies was understandably lacking and depreciation and inflation were perpetual problems.³

Like Huerta's officers, rebel leaders also resorted to forced loans. Just after the declaration of rebellion, Carranza demanded and received a forced loan from Saltillo banks and merchants. Another decree authorized such loans and Constitutionalist leaders in several areas of Coahuila began to act upon it.⁴ In some cases Carranza's officers left receipts for extracted money and merchandise, but more often than not, they simply seized funds and other items, so that their activities were more akin to banditry.⁵ Some rebels

³Decree of Venustiano Carranza, Piedras Negras, 26 April 1913, ARE-LE 750. Alvaro Obregón, Pancho Villa, and Pablo González all issued paper money. Richmond discusses Carranza's attempts to deal with the financial crisis of the revolution in Carranza, pp. 86-88. See also Ramón Eduardo Ruíz, The Great Rebellion: Mexico 1905-1924 (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980), p. 275.

⁴Holland to State Department, Saltillo, 11 March 1913, NA 812/6968. For examples of forced loans see Exp. 11,330: "Préstamos forzosos de Venustiano Carranza . . .," 3 March 1913; Municipal Treasurer to Governor's Secretary, Viesca, 2 April 1913; Exp. 11,620: "Averiguación que se instruye contra los que resulten responsables . . .," 29 May 1913, AGEC: Revolución.

⁵See for example Rodrigo Peña to Gobernación, Guerrero, 1 October 1913, AGN: Gobernación, sección 1a, caja 11, exp. 1; R. S. Bravo to A. M. Elías, Eagle Pass, 17 July 1913, ARE-LE 785(18).

attacked post offices, appropriating money and stamps.⁶ Finally, the Constitutionlists targeted some mining communities for forced loans and pillaged their company stores.⁷

The appropriation of the state's natural resources, most notably cotton and guayule, was another means used to bankroll the rebellion. In 1914, Pancho Villa and other rebel leaders attempted to sell stolen cotton from Torreón. The profits were to be deposited in an El Paso bank in order to guarantee the circulation at high value of Constitutionalist currency. The plan apparently failed and it generated protest among El Paso's community of Spaniards recently banished from the Laguna region.⁸ In central Coahuila, a German company processed guayule confiscated by rebels and shipped it for sale to Hamburg.⁹

Although efforts to finance Carranza's movement affected the entire state of Coahuila, it was in the northern Rio Grande District and the border region that those efforts

⁶R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 24 March 1913, ARE-LE 764(2); Ibid., 4 June 1913, ARE-LE 750.

⁷A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 22 August 1913, ARE-LE 765(1); Juez Auxiliar to Governor, Mina La Palma, 18 November 1913, AGECE: Revolución.

⁸M. E. Diebold to Secretary of Foreign Relations, El Paso, 13 April 1914, ARE-LE 784(2); Ibid., 6 May 1914, ARE-LE 797(23).

⁹Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 16 April, 6 May 1913, NA 812/7193, 7447. Constitutionlists also seized a guayule factory owned by the Madero family and located in Cuatro Ciénegas.

were most developed and of most consequence. Indeed, events in Coahuila from the eve of Francisco Madero's revolt of 1910 through the triumph of Carrancismo provide an excellent illustration of the importance of the international border to the Mexican Revolution in the northern states.

Never a true dividing line, the border between Coahuila and Texas more often served as a point of connection: it was a meeting place for rebel factions, a safety valve for local residents, and an economic opportunity for all concerned. Coahuila's international border was especially important to the financing of the revolution. Border towns, most notably Piedras Negras, supplied the customs revenues coveted by rival factions. Control of territory in the border region could also provide rebel groups with the resources (principally cattle) needed to establish a contraband trade, providing arms and revenue while bolstering the individual fortunes of an opportunistic few.

Although Madero's call for revolt against the Díaz regime in November 1910 received little immediate response in northern Coahuila, the movement that gained momentum by 1911 ultimately benefitted from the situation in the border zone. Some Mexican officials claimed that "at least nine-tenths" of the revolutionary forces were made up of Mexicans crossing into Coahuila from Texas. Open demonstrations of support for Madero occurred in Texas border towns, sometimes with the goal

of collecting money and arms for the revolt.¹⁰

Even before the rebellion authorities complained that border area merchants freely sold arms and munitions to "all comers." A major smuggling point was the Indian Ranch, a property in Texas that stretched along the international line for some fifty miles and that was owned by a personal friend of Madero.¹¹ While Madero the rebel benefitted from the border situation, Madero the president faced many of the same problems as his predecessor in trying to pacify the region. For Madero and Governor Carranza, the porous nature of the border presented frequent problems. It encouraged the organization of opposition groups and helped support occasional uprisings. The abortive revolt of Bernardo Reyes, Galanista plotting, and the continuing activities of the PLM all sprang from the border zone and demonstrated the difficulties of monitoring that area.

Huerta's coup against Madero ushered in a new era of revolutionary activity and factionalist competition in the Texas-Coahuila border area. The international frontier served as a supply line for various factions, while the border region, with its resources and customs houses, tempted

¹⁰Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 27 January 1911, NA 812/689; Carlos Pereyra to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Washington, D.C., 4 February 1911, ARE-LE 629; M. Cuesta to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 22 June 1910 and 6 May 1911, ARE-LE 689(15).

¹¹Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 28 November, 5 December 1910, NA 812/523, 547.

soldiers, local officials, and would-be entrepreneurs with the promise of revenue.

Coahuila's northern border, especially the town and customs house of Piedras Negras, was coveted by all revolutionary and counter-revolutionary groups. To control Piedras Negras was to control the major railway lines linking Coahuila to Texas and the rest of Mexico, and providing access to fuel from Coahuila's rich coal-mining region. The customs house itself was a major source of revenue, and by placing high taxes on imports and exports, rebel leaders like Carranza could pay and supply their troops. From 1913 to 1915, Piedras Negras changed hands five times among Carranza's Constitutionalists, the Federals of Victoriano Huerta, and the forces of Pancho Villa. The course of the revolution in Coahuila was often determined by who controlled this strategic border town. From 1913 to 1915, it was the Constitutionalists who most often held sway, and in September 1915 they captured Piedras Negras for the last time, establishing definitive control over the border area.

With Carranza's revolt against Huerta and the temporary withdrawal of most federal troops to Monterrey, northern Coahuila was left in control of forces loyal to the new Constitutionalist movement. On February 24 Jesús Carranza led four hundred men in the occupation of Piedras Negras. All federal employees in the town reportedly fled across the international border, and Carranza designated new local

authorities.¹² Constitutionalist troops immediately occupied the customs house, posting the sign "Palace of the Government" above its doors. In April, Carranza himself followed the Coahuilan legislature to Piedras Negras, where he established temporary headquarters.¹³

Huerta's authority in the Coahuilan border region was never established, and with Constitutionalist control of Piedras Negras and Las Vacas, the loyalty of federal border officials was immediately called into question. Customs employees and customs guards crossed into Eagle Pass and Del Rio with the rebel occupation of both towns. Several were then recruited to the rebel cause. Meanwhile, the Huerta government scrambled to prevent more defections by relocating fiscal agents away from the volatile Texas-Coahuila border. U.S. officials responded favorably to a petition from Huerta's representatives that these agents be allowed to relocate to the safer environs of Laredo.¹⁴

Faced with the challenge of raising and equipping a large army to battle Huerta's forces, Constitutionalist leaders

¹²R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 4 March 1913, ARE-LE 767(1).

¹³Ildefonso Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución mexicana en Coahuila, 2nd ed. (Saltillo, Coahuila: Biblioteca de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1983), p. 244; Ellsworth to Secretary of State, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 27 February and 5 April 1913, NA 812/6400, 7029.

¹⁴R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 7 April 1913; J.A. Fernández to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 1 May 1913, ARE-LE 765(1), 758(1).

took immediate advantage of their control of Piedras Negras and the border zone. Many residents of northern Coahuila experienced forced loans, special taxes, and rebel appropriations of goods.¹⁵ Mexican Consul Ricardo S. Bravo claimed that all property owners and men of means had left Coahuila rather than "contribute to an enterprise that everyone disapproves of and that all consider crazy."¹⁶ Federal agent J.A. Fernández reported that Carranza was depositing large amounts of money in Eagle Pass banks. He suggested that complaints of forced loans and other depredations be documented, so that the Mexican government could attempt legal confiscation of that money.¹⁷

The Piedras Negras customs house and the international bridge connecting that town with its Texas sister city of Eagle Pass, provided special opportunities for revenue.

Sebastián Carranza led Coahuilan troops in raising money by selling merchandise contained in the customs house and destined for the interior of Mexico. Rebel fundraising efforts also affected the Mexican National Railroad. When the railroad company refused to pay import fees already extracted

¹⁵See for example R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, El Paso, 24 March 1913; Secretary of War to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Mexico, 3 April 1913, ARE-LE 767(1).

¹⁶R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 4 March 1913, ARE-LE 767(1). ". . . contribuir con elementos para una empresa que todos desapruaban y que la toman como una locura . . ."

¹⁷J. A. Fernández to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 10 April 1913, ARE-LE 758(1).

before Carranza's revolt, the new Constitutionalist customs chief began to sell sugar, coffee and other items owned by the company. Gabriel Calzada, the newly-designated chief commander of Piedras Negras, extracted "heavy ransoms" on hides and other exports to the United States.¹⁸ Calzada also presided over the extraction of fees from those wishing to cross the international bridge. It cost thirty-five centavos to cross the bridge, and another fifty centavos to get Calzada's permission to do so.¹⁹ In some cases, residents of Piedras Negras were forced to stay in Eagle Pass, unable to pay the duty needed to return to their country.²⁰

Calzada's actions as chief commander of Piedras Negras sometimes reached despotic proportions. When Felicitas de Trueba, wife of a local Spanish merchant, crossed into the town and then attempted to return to Texas, Calzada refused to let her pass. The woman's complaints simply resulted in her detention until her husband bought her freedom.²¹ Like

¹⁸Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 5, 24, 25, 30 March 1913, NA 812/6503, 6917, 6918, 6919, 6937; Treasury Secretary to Secretary of War, Mexico, 7, 14 March 1913, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/30, Tomo I.

¹⁹R. S. Bravo to Inspector of Consuls, 5 August 1913, ARE-LE 832.

²⁰A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 19 September 1913, ARE-LE 765(1).

²¹A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 30 July 1913, ARE-LE 751. Calzada's actions toward Trueba may have been the result of anti-Spanish sentiment that apparently existed among some of Carranza's officers. Upon assuming control of Piedras Negras, Jesús Carranza reportedly singled out Spaniards for forced loans. See R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations,

several other rebel officials, Calzada quickly crossed the fine line between revolutionary financing and personal profit. After he had been only a month at his post Carranza replaced Calzada, whom he suspected of embezzlement, with former federal customs official Raymundo Navarro, a recent recruit to Constitutionalism.²²

Carranza's control of the border area extended across the international bridge and into Texas. At the end of April 1913, Constitutionlists established a "rebel consulate" on the main street in Eagle Pass. The consulate, which openly flew the Mexican flag, served as the office of Carranza's Commercial Agent for Eagle Pass, Luis Mesa Gutiérrez, who oversaw the collection of money for legalizing commercial documents.²³ Huerta's complaints of neutrality violations in Eagle Pass brought no results, as Carranza sympathizers were in the majority and included Eagle Pass mayor E. H. Schmidt. U. S. Consul Luther T. Ellsworth noted that his attempts to abolish the rebel consulate were futile, and that the people

Eagle Pass, 4 March 1913, ARE-LE 767(1).

²²R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 4 and 7 April 1913, ARE-LE 765(1). Calzada was moved to a safer post away from the border.

²³By June 1913, with most border customs houses in the hands of Constitutionlists, Carranza gave these agents consular powers, so that they controlled commercial documentation at the border. See L. Gutiérrez to Carranza, Eagle Pass, 9 June 1913, AVC, carp. 3, leg. 425.

of Eagle Pass laughed at his efforts to do so.²⁴ Ricardo Bravo was convinced that even the Texas Rangers patrolling the border were in sympathy with the Constitutionalists.²⁵

In Del Rio too, Carranza established a consular agency. He named José Martínez Garza to review and inform about any commercial activity between Del Rio and Las Vacas, and to examine all documents relating to the introduction of goods into Coahuila. Martínez Garza served in other capacities, recruiting Del Rio residents for the Constitutionalist army and, after the Federals had re-captured Las Vacas, providing information to rebel leaders on their movements.²⁶ For Huerta, the Las Vacas-Del Rio area was as difficult to secure as the Piedras Negras zone. In both local sentiment was so overwhelmingly Carrancista that neutrality violations were rarely prosecuted. The rebels continued to recruit openly in Texas, using Del Rio as a gathering point for new soldiers. Even defeated Federal troops who had crossed the border

²⁴Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 16 May 1913, RDS-IA 812/7541; R.S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, April 1913, ARE-LE 732(11). Bravo claimed that the sympathy of Eagle Pass residents was motivated wholly by economic concerns.

²⁵R.S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 31 March 1913, ARE-LE 765(1).

²⁶Francisco B. Barrón to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 4 June 1913 and 16 December 1913; José Martínez Garza to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 30 December 1913, ARE-LE 747(11,12,14). In early 1914, Martínez Garza and several aides involved in recruiting forces for the Constitutionalists were arrested in Texas for violation of neutrality laws. See Castillón to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 6 January 1914, ARE-LE 774(4).

provided ready recruits to Constitutionalism when faced with the prospect of returning to the unpopular and poorly-paid ranks of Huerta's army.²⁷

During the summer of 1913, the Federal troops of General Maass regained control of central Coahuila and slowly worked their way to the border. News of their approach prompted Carrancista rebels and local residents of northern Coahuila to flee across the border to the relative safety of Texas. Consul Bravo estimated that some ten thousand people from Piedras Negras and surrounding towns fled into Eagle Pass. Carranza's officers tried to halt the flow by raising the price of crossing the international bridge, but were forced to reconsider when confronted with the desperate threats of irate refugees. Two days before the Federal capture of Piedras Negras, large numbers of people continued to arrive in Eagle Pass. Mexican consular inspector Arturo M. Elías reported that "thousands" were camped in the plazas and streets of the Texas border town, braving a persistent rainfall.²⁸

²⁷A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 16 July 1913, ARE-LE 868(3); E. A. Benavides to José Quevedo, Eagle Pass, 3 January 1914, ARE-LE 760(2); A. M. Elías to Visitador Consulados, San Antonio, 28 February 1914, ARE-LE 781(3); Report of Eagle Pass Consul, February 1914, ARE, Exp. 28-9-125.

²⁸R. S. Bravo to Consular Inspector, Eagle Pass, 12 August 1913, ARE-LE 832; A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 13 September 1913; F. Barrón to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 1 October 1913, ARE-LE 765(1); Bravo to Elías, Eagle Pass, 30 September 1913, ARE-LE 842(9); Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 5 October 1913, ARE-LE 758(1). Gabriel Calzada unsuccessfully tried to cross the border to avoid all conflict. Jesús Carranza ordered him watched as a result.

Constitutionalist troops, meanwhile, worked quickly to mine railroad bridges and tracks and to mine the international bridge.²⁹

Only a few shops remained opened in Piedras Negras when Generals Maass and Guajardo peacefully captured the town on October 7. The reception of the Federals by those residents still in the town was noticeably cold. Guajardo once again assumed the post of jefe político and he helped designate other officials to fill local posts. Despite the semblance of order and despite Maass' assurances that they would not be drafted into the army, most inhabitants of Piedras Negras remained in Eagle Pass.³⁰

Huerta's control of Piedras Negras was tenuous from the start. Threatened with rebel counter-attacks and surrounded by pro-Carranza sympathizers on both sides of the border, the Federals were, moreover, poorly clothed and equipped. Slow payment of Federal soldiers added to the danger of desertion.³¹ The capture of Las Vacas now became crucial

²⁹A. M. Elías to Eagle Pass Consul, San Antonio, 2 October 1913, ARE-LE 770(1).

³⁰A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 10 October 1913, ARE-LE 761(40); Blocker to Secretary of State, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 11 October 1913, NA 812/9230.

³¹Fernando Serrano to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 20 November 1913, ARE-LE 747(16); Blocker to Secretary of State, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 7 November 1913, NA 812/9682. Abuses of authority and harassment of local residents by Federal officers did little to increase the popularity of the Huerta regime. See for example Visitador Consulados Diebold to Secretary of Foreign Relations, n.p., 18 February 1914, ARE-LE 784(2).

since it was the last important border outpost of the rebels. From their base in the sister city of Del Rio Carranza's rebels recruited men and passed arms into Mexico, often with the help of PLM leaders such as Calixto Guerra. They easily obtained arms and supplies from the merchants of Del Rio and Eagle Pass and one of Huerta's agents acknowledged that any attempt by the Federals to get arms from the same merchants would surely fail, since all were open supporters of the Constitutionalists.³²

The Federal approach on Las Vacas generated another exodus of Constitutionalist troops and local residents, this time to the relative safety of Del Rio. By the end of November, after three brief encounters with the rebel troops of Roberto Rivas, government forces captured the town. Before themselves fleeing across the international line, Rivas' men burned all public buildings as well as the properties of Huertista sympathizers. Jefe político Guajardo and the Del Rio Mexican consul named new officials for the captured town, and the area from Piedras Negras to Las Vacas was declared "free of bandits."³³

The initial optimism of Huerta's officers at gaining

³²Fernando Serrano to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 20 November 1913, ARE-LE 747(16).

³³J. D. Bravo to Consular Inspector, San Antonio; Fernando Serrano to Consular Inspector, San Antonio, 28 November and 1 December 1913, ARE-LE 715(1); Consular Inspector to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 28, 29 November 1913, ARE-LE 716(2); Castillo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, 30 November 1913, ARE-LE 792(9).

control of the border zone was short-lived. Carranza's special agents continued to operate in south Texas, recruiting, securing arms and supplies, and helping to coordinate the financing of the Constitutionalist movement. Early 1914 saw Guillermo M. Seguíñ acting as Carranza's commercial agent in Eagle Pass. Seguíñ provided a variety of services, including recruitment and arms smuggling, and he received funds for his expenses from Carranza's accounts in the First National Bank of Eagle Pass. In March, Seguíñ was arrested for violation of neutrality laws. U.S. Commissioner F. A. Bonnet, an ardent supporter of the rebels, quickly exonerated Seguíñ.³⁴

Constitutionalists continued to harry Federal troops with persistent military pressure along the border. Las Vacas was the main focus of conflict and by March of 1914 eight hundred rebel troops at the command of Sebastián and Jesús Carranza were threatening the town. A see-saw battle for Las Vacas began, with the rebels gaining control of the town on several occasions. Federal troops could never claim a complete victory--insurgents freely crossed into Texas at the first sign of danger, and from bases in Del Rio and Langtry, Texas,

³⁴G. Carello to Guillermo Seguíñ, Nogales, 19 January 1914, ARE-LE 760(2); G. M. Seguíñ to E. Llorente, Eagle Pass, 21 March 1914, ARE-LE 789(7); Consular Inspector to Secretary of Foreign Relations, El Paso, 2 April 1914, ARE-LE 787(8).

prepared for the next attack.³⁵ Even without control of the crucial towns of Piedras Negras and Las Vacas, the Carrancista's de facto mastery of the border area continued, bolstered by the continuing support of border residents. Central to Constitutionalist dominance of the Texas-Coahuila border was an active arms trade.

During the Madero revolt, U.S. neutrality laws were interpreted and enforced in an inconsistent manner, so that Madero and his supporters were able to buy arms in Texas and send them to Mexico.³⁶ Even before November of 1910, Mexican officials reported numerous cases of rebels gathering arms in Texas, and noted that Texas merchants were doing a brisk business in munitions, which were probably smuggled to insurgents in Mexico. Boquillas, Texas, with its sister city in Coahuila of the same name, was an especially active smuggling point, as was the Indian Ranch.³⁷ Madero apparently also utilized the services of his grandfather's old trading

³⁵Mexican Consul to Visitador General de Consulados, Del Rio, 17, 21, 24 March 1914, ARE-LE 781(3); Visitador General Diebold to Secretary of Foreign Relations, El Paso, 26, 27 March 1914, ARE-LE 787(8).

³⁶Don M. Coerver and Linda B. Hall, Texas and the Mexican Revolution: A Study in State and National Border Policy 1910-1920 (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1984), p. 19.

³⁷Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 15 October and 28 November 1910, NA 812/409, 523. Telegram of Francisco León de la Barra, Mexico, 18 November 1910; Jesús Valle to Porfirio Díaz, Saltillo, 19 November 1910; Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 19 November 1910, ARE-LE 611(1).

partners in Texas to obtain and transport arms.³⁸

While as president, Madero struggled with the problem of contraband, Governor Carranza and his followers began to work the border to their advantage. In 1912, Madero received complaints of an intriguing contraband arrangement in the Eagle Pass-Piedras Negras area. A hardware store owner identified only as Cobo hired men to cross the international bridge with munitions concealed in specially-constructed underclothes. It was unclear to whom the munitions were destined, and an investigation suggested that local officials and supporters of Governor Carranza had little inclination to stop the contraband.³⁹ In light of the always tense relationship between Madero and Carranza, Carranza's lack of faith in Madero's ability to lead the country, and the insistence of both leaders upon following separate paths in the organization and support of pacification efforts in Coahuila, it seems likely that Carranza was involved in his own unauthorized arms trade.⁴⁰

³⁸See for example Andrés Garza Galán to Rosendo Piñeda, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 16 November 1910, ARE-LE 611(2).

³⁹Samuel R. Salazar to Francisco Madero, Monclova, 18 June 1912, AGN: Madero, carp. 218-3, fojas 6356-6361.

⁴⁰Although as Governor Carranza did obtain arms from the U.S. with the permission of the Madero government, and although a U.S. arms embargo imposed on 14 March 1912 did not apply to the Madero regime, importation of munitions was often hampered by diplomatic wrangles and the reluctance of some U.S. authorities to grant the permission needed. See Carranza to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Saltillo, 3 April 1912, 6 January 1913; Ernesto Madero to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Mexico, 13 May 1912, ARE-LE 848(2).

One of the local officials who hedged on pursuing contraband was Rafael E. Múzquiz, founder of the antireelectionist club of Piedras Negras and a consular official for Madero and Carranza. By 1912, Múzquiz had emerged as a key arms agent for Carranza's state government. He would continue to perform this function after Huerta's coup and Carranza soon entrusted him with the creation of a rebel consular service.⁴¹

In the aftermath of the Huerta coup, Carranza's followers struggled against the U.S. arms embargo that now applied to all factions. Múzquiz exchanged his official stripes for those of a master contrabandista and routinely smuggled munitions, often disguised as cases of beer, through Piedras Negras.⁴² Other members of the Constitutionalist revolution also smuggled arms into Coahuila. Hardware stores in Texas border towns, particularly Eagle Pass, were the usual sources of munitions, which were disguised in sacks of coffee and flour, barrels of beer and lard, and even in women's dresses.

⁴¹See R. E. Múzquiz to Carranza, 28 and 29 February 1913, AGEC: Revolución; Ellsworth to State Department, 18 and 21 March 1912, NA 812/3341, 3370. A biographical sketch of Múzquiz may be found in INEHRM, Diccionario, pp. 395-396. His diplomatic service record may be found in "Rafael E. Múzquiz: Su Expediente Personal," 1a parte, 8 February 1956, ARE, Exp. 10-15-10. Múzquiz served as Eagle Pass consul from June 1912 through February 1913. In November 1913 he was given the task of establishing a rebel consular service. See Múzquiz to R. Navarro, Eagle Pass, 5 May 1912; Múzquiz to Mexican Consul, Eagle Pass, 27 August 1912; Múzquiz to Director General de Consulados, Eagle Pass, 31 August 1912, ARE-LE 832, 856.

⁴²R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 2 March 1913, ARE-LE 765(1); R. E. Múzquiz to Carranza, El Paso, 31 December 1913, AVC, carp. 5, leg. 717.

In San Antonio, Constitutionalist had reportedly rented a church building and were employing Mexicans to pack arms and disguise them as perishable items that would easily pass customs inspection.⁴³ At least some of Carranza's agents were also engaged in creating the diversions that allowed contraband to pass. A Las Vacas bullfight staged to raise money for the rebel cause attracted people from both sides of the border and generated the well-founded suspicions of Huerta's officials that the event was a cover for contraband activity.⁴⁴ The insurgents also made the most of the Mexican exile population of Eagle Pass. There, female refugees from the revolutionary violence were employed in a makeshift clothing factory, sewing uniforms for Constitutionalist troops.⁴⁵

⁴³Secretary of War to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Mexico, 25 March 1913, ARE-LE 767(1); R. S. Bravo to Customs Official, Eagle Pass, 24 and 25 June 1913, ARE-LE 856(5); A. M. Elias to Bravo, San Antonio, 30 June 1913, ARE-LE 856(5); Barrón to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 13 June 1913, ARE-LE 748; Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 29 and 31 May 1913, RDS-IA 812/7644, 7645; William Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 2 September 1913, NA 812/8755.

⁴⁴A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 12 June 1913, ARE-LE 749(10).

⁴⁵Guillermo M. Seguí to Carranza, Eagle Pass, 3 February 1914, ARE-LE 780(2). Texas border towns were a traditional refuge for economic and political exiles of the Porfiriato, and during the Revolution, people passed as easily as guns across the usually dry river bed separating Piedras Negras from Eagle Pass. Rumors of an impending rebel attack could generate a mass exodus to Texas of town residents and local Mexican officials. See Francisco Villasana to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 10 April 1911, ARE-LE 651; Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 18 May 1911, NA 812/1892. Such migrations continued after Madero's victory: with rumors of some 1500 Orozquistas approaching

Among the agents and sympathizers aiding in the acquisition and transport of arms was Ernesto Meade Fierro, a journalist from Parras who had joined the Madero revolt and, as a state congressman in 1913, seconded Carranza's rebellion. In the border region, Meade was editor of the pro-Carranza newspaper El Demócrata and he engaged in the clandestine transportation of munitions from San Antonio to Piedras Negras. Briefly imprisoned for arms smuggling and neutrality violations in July of 1913, Meade caused a stir when, accompanied by Constitutionalist commercial agent Luis Mesa Gutiérrez, he addressed a procession of hundreds of Mexicans in front of the American consulate in Piedras Negras. The rebel journalist eulogized the United States and argued that Carranza's revolution sought to win for Mexicans the same liberties enjoyed by their neighbors on the other side of the border. Meade's smuggling activities resulted in at least one additional arrest on U.S. soil, but he continued to serve the First Chief in various capacities.⁴⁶

Finally, the Constitutionlists utilized the services of

Las Vacas in 1912, the town was virtually deserted, as over 300 people fled into Del Rio. See R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Del Rio, 23 September 1912, ARE, Exp. 16-8-90: "Emigración de familias mexicanas de Villa Acuña a Del Rio por temor a los orozquistas, 1912."

⁴⁶Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 25 July 1913, NA 812/8181; J. A. Fernández to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 1 May 1913, ARE-LE 763(6); A. M. Elias to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 10 May 1913, ARE-LE 762(3). A brief biography of Meade may be found in INEHRM, Diccionario, pp. 384-385.

some veteran contrabandistas. Salomé Arce, a long-time resident of the border region and former participant in the rebellions of Catarino Garza during the 1890s, lent his knowledge of the terrain and the smuggling trade to Carranza for a handsome price.⁴⁷

Friedrich Katz has argued that northern Mexico succeeded in supporting professional armies because the cattle and cotton of local hacendados could be taxed or seized and sold (legally or illegally) to the United States.⁴⁸ For the Constitutionalists in Coahuila, the availability of these and other items, and the proximity and porosity of the border, proved crucial to the purchase of arms and supplies needed to support a viable fighting force. Huerta scrambled unsuccessfully to secure the Coahuila-Texas border against the smuggling of stolen cattle, wool, and ixtle. Guayule was an especially popular item that was cut and sometimes stockpiled by rebel officers who arranged its sale to companies in Texas.⁴⁹

⁴⁷See A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 21 April 1913, ARE-LE 761(27). Arce also served as a contraband agent for Madero's revolt of 1910-1911.

⁴⁸Friedrich Katz, The Secret War in Mexico (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 127.

⁴⁹Various reports of the extraction of cattle, guayule, wool, and other items by Constitutionalists for sale in Texas may be found in ARE. See for example A. M. Elías to Mexican Consul, San Antonio, 31 July 1913, and R.S. Bravo to Elías, Eagle Pass, 4, 5 August 1913, ARE-LE 832; Fernando Serrano to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 13 November 1913, ARE-LE 778(14). Pancho Villa was especially active in the trans-border arms trade, and used revenue from cattle and other products expropriated from areas

Most often, however, the Constitutionalists relied on revenues generated from the sale of stolen cattle obtained in northern and central Coahuila. The Carrancistas had numerous agents along the border involved in helping to pass cattle into Texas for sale. The Huerta government even blamed the Madero family for selling cattle in Texas to help finance the revolution.⁵⁰

Constitutionalist smuggling efforts received significant support from an agricultural company located in northern Coahuila. Owned by nineteenth-century army veteran General Lorenzo González Treviño, the Compañía Agrícola y Ganadera del Rio de San Diego had property and offices in Las Vacas and Jiménez, Coahuila, as well as Del Rio. The company's Hacienda San Carlos, located in the Las Vacas area, served not only as a recruitment center, with many hacienda workers joining the Constitutionalists, but also as a finance center. Here, stolen cattle were gathered to be smuggled into the U.S. Some cattle were immediately slaughtered and the hides sold to buy munitions.

The Hacienda San Carlos had been a center of Maderista activity during the 1910-1911 revolt as well, serving as a

under his control. See Linda B. Hall and Don M. Coerver, Revolution on the Border. The United States and Mexico, 1910-1920 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), pp. 151-152.

⁵⁰A. M. Elías to Eagle Pass Consul, San Antonio 3 July 1913, ARE-LE 769(1); Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 4 April 1913, ARE-LE 762(4). It is more likely that the Maderos were selling their own cattle and depositing the money in Texas banks for safekeeping during the revolution.

headquarters for rebel leaders. Marcos Hernández, the hacienda's administrator and a relative of the Madero family, played a role in coordinating revolutionary activities. He also supported the Constitutionalist movement, and helped organize demonstrations against the Huerta regime. Huerta's agents also implicated Lorenzo González Treviño himself in revolutionary activities, claiming that he donated his own money to the rebellion and allowed his agricultural company to be used for smuggling and other activities. González Treviño (who by marriage was an uncle of the late Francisco Madero) regularly crossed the border between Del Rio and Las Vacas, often staying in a Del Rio house owned by Marcos Hernández. The Hacienda San Carlos was also a gathering point for Constitutionalist leaders and sympathizers from Texas, especially from Del Rio. The Huerta regime claimed that the company was crucial to the success of Carrancismo in northern Coahuila and the border region, as all revolutionaries of Las Vacas and Del Rio were somehow connected to the company.⁵¹

⁵¹E. M. Gómez Maillefert to Consul General, Del Rio, 23 October 1913; "Consulado de Mexico en Eagle Pass, Texas. Pruebas presentadas en contra del Señor don Lorenzo González Treviño," 9 October 1913; A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 16 April 1913 and 9 December 1913, ARE-LE 758(1). Interestingly, González Treviño and Marcos Hernández, along with other company employees, were also implicated by the Huerta regime in the Treviñista movement of 1913. Their relationship to this movement, however, is not clear. See R. S. Bravo to Consular Inspector, Eagle Pass, 25 July 1913, ARE-LE 859(1); A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Laredo, 2 August 1913, ARE-LE 788(15). González Treviño's dealings with the Constitutionlists apparently persisted and included more formal business dealings such as a contract to make infantry uniforms for Carranza's troops. See Lorenzo González Treviño to Carranza, Parras, 2 September 1914,

Coahuila's cattle industry provided other opportunities for revenue. Unrest and rebel depredations threatened to destroy many a Porfirian fortune, so that cattlemen attempted to sell their herds, converting their investment into currency and depositing the money for safekeeping in Texas banks.⁵² As ranchers drove their herds to the border, Constitutionalist officials extracted ever-higher export fees. Complaints and attempts to evade the export tax were frequent, and Rafael Múzquiz coordinated efforts to impede the passage of Coahuilan cattle to Texas through Laredo, where no tax was charged.⁵³

Even when Carranza's rebels were not in control of Coahuila's important border towns, they could still count on strong connections in the border region to obtain revenue and munitions through the cattle trade. In early 1914, Federals controlled the port of entry at Las Vacas and were themselves

AVC, carp. 14, leg. 1419.

⁵²Lorenzo González Treviño was among those who transported a large portion of his cattle to Texas. Perhaps in anticipation of Carranza's revolt, he began doing so in January of 1913. See A. Treviño to Carranza, Boquillas, 5 January 1913, AVC, carp. 1, leg. 65.

⁵³Unsigned letter (A. Treviño?) to Carranza, Boquillas, 5 January 1913, AVC, carp. 1, leg. 65; A. Treviño to Carranza, Boquillas, 20 March 1913, AVC, carp. 1, leg. 89; R.E. Múzquiz to Carranza, Campamento Colombia, 16 May 1913, AVC, carp. 2, leg. 184; A. Treviño to Carranza, Marathon, 23 May 1913, AVC, carp. 2, leg. 250; Miguel Cárdenas to Carranza, San Antonio, AVC, carp. 2, leg. 257; Ibid., carp. 13, leg. 1386. As early as May 1911, the Mexican National Bank in Ciudad Porfirio Díaz began sending its funds to Eagle Pass for safekeeping. In addition, many Mexicans moved their things to Eagle Pass daily, anticipating attack by revolutionaries. See Ellsworth to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 16 May 1911, NA 812/1864.

collecting an export tax on cattle crossing into Texas.⁵⁴ Not to be outdone, Carranza's men camped on the other side of the border, where they met the cattle coming across and extracted another fee. When cattlemen hedged on paying a double duty, the Constitutionalists threatened them with confiscation of their properties in Coahuila.⁵⁵

In Del Rio, Dr. Fred Ross, George Miers, and a local merchant family named McLymont provided valuable assistance to the revolt. In addition to helping with Carrancista propaganda, these men sold munitions to the Constitutionalists in exchange for stolen cattle. They constructed a special bridge to pass cattle over the Rio Bravo, and even crossed into Mexico to import cattle that the Constitutionalists themselves could not get across the border. That such traffic was significant became apparent early in 1914 when Ross was briefly apprehended in the Las Vacas area and Federal troops led by Major Génaro Rodríguez confiscated 3,800 head of cattle.⁵⁶

With the prevalence of contraband trade and smuggling in the Texas-Coahuila border, and the volatile political

⁵⁴In January of 1914, Huertista governor Práxedes de la Peña decreed a tax on all cattle destined for export in an attempt to protect Coahuila's already-scarce supply. See Un-numbered decree, Saltillo, 15 January 1914, AGE: Decretos.

⁵⁵Assistant Attorney General to Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., 30 January 1914, NA 812/10751.

⁵⁶A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 7 January 1914; Consul Eagle Pass to Gen. Arturo A. Alvarez, Eagle Pass, 8 January 1914, ARE-LE 792(16), 758(7).

situation, it was perhaps inevitable that some enterprising revolutionaries would seek personal profit. In many cases, personal opportunism was a means of survival, particularly in the early stage of the Constitutionalist movement, when payment of salaries to troops was never certain. Huerta's officials often commented on the disorganized and demoralized state of insurgent troops in the border area, and they lamented the general state of unrest that this caused. The situation must have seemed a throwback to Coahuila's days as a wild and lawless Indian frontier to Ricardo Bravo who noted that along the border "there is no discipline and no respect, everyone is a commander, and since there is no money to pay salaries, every [soldier] dedicates himself to the robbery of cattle and sacking of local businesses, spending the acquired proceeds on drunken brawls and other scandals."⁵⁷

The extent to which the border provided an economic opportunity for individual Constitutionalist officials became especially apparent in 1914, with Carranza's troops in control of Piedras Negras. Although the partial lifting of the U.S. embargo had made arms smuggling unnecessary for the Constitutionlists, cattle thieving and contraband increased at an alarming rate. Huerta's officials uncovered a well-

⁵⁷"... no hay disciplina ni respeto a nadie, todos son Jefes y como además no hay dinero para hacer el pago de su haberes, toda esa gente se dedico al robo de ganado, saqueo a las casas comerciales, de cuyo producto se aprovecha y gastan en borracheros y escándolos." Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Eagle Pass, 6 May 1913, ARE-LE 750. See also A. M. Elias to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 31 May 1913, ARE-LE 750.

entrenched cattle ring led by the ubiquitous Rafael Múzquiz, now serving as Carranza's local treasury official.⁵⁸ With the help of friends and family members, Múzquiz established a group of men charged with recovering stolen cattle, mules, and horses. Known as the "Cuerpo de Reateros," this group periodically appeared at the border, where Múzquiz' relatives received their booty, which then "disappeared" across the international line. Only a few of the recovered animals passed legally through customs at Piedras Negras and Las Vacas.

The 39th Regiment stationed along the Rio Bravo and entrusted with patrolling the banks of the river for illicit activity actively supported Múzquiz' cattle ring. Composed primarily of local Coahuilans, many of whom were related to one another, the regiment routinely neglected its official duty, and just as routinely participated in the smuggling. Indeed, Major Ramón Múzquiz (a nephew of Rafael) had his own business selling cattle in Eagle Pass, apparently with the support of the local Texas sheriff.⁵⁹ Cattle thieving and contraband trading by Constitutionalists in Coahuila's border

⁵⁸From December 1913 to February 1914, Múzquiz served as a financial agent of the Carranza regime. See INERM, Diccionario, p. 396.

⁵⁹A lengthy account of the cattle ring may be found in an unsigned report (probably authored by Piedras Negras customs official Antonio Villarreal Cerda) on events along Coahuila's border from 14 May to 11 July 1914, AVC, carp. 10, Leg. 1034. Rafael Múzquiz also attempted to sell some of the cattle to the people of Piedras Negras, but at prices that were impossibly high for the poor and working classes.

region became so prevalent that one border official warned that if the situation continued, cattle would quickly become extinct, and the entire border population would be forced into vegetarianism.⁶⁰

The threat of vegetarianism was more imagined than real, but the continued prevalence of contraband and cattle smuggling was indicative of the extent to which Carranza's followers had become entrenched along the Coahuilan border. That the area would continue to provide an economic opportunity for rebel troops and officers was clear to American Consul William Blocker. In early 1915 he reported over eight hundred soldiers in Piedras Negras "riding about the city contentedly as if the border was the ideal place for happiness and a sure chance of getting away with their proceeds from the revolution."⁶¹ In 1916 Blocker related the arrival of General Francisco Murguía to the border town, then under the command of Coronel Fernando Peraldi, Carranza's nephew. Accompanied by General Alfredo Ricaut, Murguía intended a display of force that would put him in control of

⁶⁰"... por que de seguir aquí, en muy pocas meses más, todas las poblaciones tendrán que cambiar de alimentación y ser vegetarianos por que se acabaran los ganados." Ibid. Pablo González also recognized the dangers inherent in the mass exodus of cattle from the border states. In May 1914 he issued a decree forbidding the export of all cattle through the customs houses and other ports in Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas. See Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 14 October 1914, NA 812/13541.

⁶¹Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 23 January 1915, NA 812/14298.

Piedras Negras, and facilitate his personal business in exporting products appropriated from the areas under his command. The Constitutionalist general, reported Blocker, had engaged in a "rich graft in hides and skins" while stationed in Durango. Residents of Piedras Negras remarked that one could always tell where Murguía was "by just noticing the carts [that] go up main street loaded with hides and skins, known as Murguía's share of the revolution."⁶²

The stories of Múzquiz and Murguía are not unique in the history of the Mexican Revolution. Indeed, such opportunism would be replicated in many areas of Mexico.⁶³ Nor was profiteering a new phenomenon in Coahuila's border region, which since the late nineteenth century, had provided a safe haven for rebels and contraband traders. Yet for the Constitutionalist movement, this extensive international frontier had broader significance.

Although both Huerta and Carranza struggled to support their campaigns through forced loans, the appropriation and sale of local goods, and the printing of currency, Coahuila's northern border presented the First Chief with other opportunities for supporting his movement. President Huerta,

⁶²Blocker to State Department, 27, 30 September 1916, NA 812/19323, 19425.

⁶³Friedrich Katz argues that the Carranza movement gave rise to a "new bourgeoisie" that turned the revolution into personal profit. Ramón Ruíz also highlights the opportunistic tendencies of some of the revolution's military leaders. See Katz, Secret War, pp. 253-255; Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, pp. 215-216, 239-251, 260.

meanwhile, quickly learned the necessity, and the difficulties, of controlling this volatile area. Thus the border remained the object of heated competition throughout the Constitutionalist rebellion.

The town and customs house of Piedras Negras were at the center of much of this competition, but Las Vacas and other border towns were also of strategic and economic importance. With a base of support that extended into Texas border towns such as Eagle Pass and Del Rio, the Constitutionalists succeeded in preserving their mastery over the border zone. Even when Huerta could claim military control over Piedras Negras and Las Vacas, Carranza continued to use the international frontier to secure arms and supplies, recruit soldiers, and finance his rebellion. In the final analysis, the border was crucial to the support of Carranza's movement in Coahuila. Like Madero before them, the Constitutionalists inherited a porous and volatile international frontier. They took full advantage of it.

CHAPTER 7

VILLISMO IN COAHUILA

Carranza's victory in Coahuila was soon followed by the resignation of Huerta and the triumphant entry of Constitutionalist forces into Mexico City. By the August 1914 Treaty of Teoloyucán, Carranza obtained an unconditional surrender that included the disbanding of the old Federal army. Many Mexican Federals stationed in the border area had already taken refuge in the United States. Constitutionalist along Coahuila's frontier were remarkably successful in recruiting these soldiers. An office established in Piedras Negras attracted large numbers of men, and many Federal refugees repatriated by the United States were persuaded to join Carranza's army.¹

Exiled Huerta supporters were also numerous, however, and by the end of 1914 they were plotting against the Constitutionalist. In December ex-Federal officers Blas Opinal and Ramón Chimuela led a group of twenty-five men into Mexico, crossing from Texas in the vicinity of Eagle Pass. Anticipating the help of Carranza's soldiers stationed in

¹Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 26 September 1914, NA 812/13360. Blocker estimated that of over three thousand Federal refugees in the Texas-Coahuila border region, over one-half were persuaded to join Carranza. Richmond notes, however, that as a matter of policy, Carranza did not allow ex-Federals to join his army. See Carranza, p. 157.

Piedras Negras, many of whom had received money to join the conspiracy, Opinal and Chimuela instead walked into a trap set by officers Rafael Rodríguez and Cesáreo Castro. Opinal and Chimuela, along with several members of the Piedras Negras garrison implicated in the scheme, were immediately executed. Their bodies were displayed in the city hall as a warning to other conspirators.²

The plot of Opinal and Chimuela was indicative of the still-volatile situation in Coahuila's border region. By the summer of 1915 the Plan of San Diego had found adherents in the area as well. This scheme, which called for the unification of south Texas and Mexico, was primarily the work of the Mexican-American population of south Texas and reflected that group's response to Anglo discrimination. At least initially, the Plan gained unlikely adherents in former Huerta soldiers as well as exiled Huerta supporters. Huerta himself returned from his European exile to lead a plot against the Constitutionalists in the summer of 1915. He was quickly arrested by U.S. officials, however, and the movement ended. The Plan of San Diego remained alive through July of 1916, generating raids along the Texas-Mexico border. It garnered the discreet support of Carranza, who held out his ability to control the raiding as a means of winning the recognition of the U.S. government. Active recruiting for the

²Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 19 December 1914; Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 21 December 1914, NA 812/14045, 14135.

Plan occurred in the Eagle Pass-Piedras Negras area, and at least one municipal official of Piedras Negras participated in publicizing the Plan and gathering support for it.³

Within Coahuila, however, the main challenge to the Constitutionals came not from ex-Federals and Huertista exiles, but from Pancho Villa, who would quickly prove that his loyalty to the First Chief was dubious at best. The alliance between the two leaders that had succeeded in defeating the Huerta regime, quickly unraveled. The result was another round of violence that would last over a year. Villismo appeared in Coahuila primarily as an agency of further destruction. At the same time, however, Villa's governors did attempt to gain a more solid political footing within the state, while Villa himself won the support of at least a few Coahuilans who welcomed the Chihuahuan leader in anticipation of significant agrarian reform.

Tensions between Carranza and Villa appeared even before the decisive capture of Torreón in April of 1914. Villa only grudgingly accepted the leadership of the First Chief, and he frequently disobeyed him. For his part, Carranza was wary of Villa's growing popularity and determined to minimize the

³Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 26, 28 August 1915; Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 28 August 1915, NA 812/15941, 15947, 16011. For accounts of the Plan de San Diego see Richmond, Carranza, pp. 201-202; Coerver and Hall, Texas and the Mexican Revolution, pp. 85-108; Charles H. Harris and Louis R. Sadler, "The Plan of San Diego and the Mexican-United States War Crisis of 1916: A Reexamination," Hispanic American Historical Review 58 (August 1978): 381-408. Harris and Sadler highlight Carranza's opportunism in approaching the Plan of San Diego.

importance of the Chihuahuan and his formidable Division of the North, by being the first to occupy Mexico City. Villa's public support of the U.S. invasion of Veracruz and his alliance with the Madero family in Coahuila, also rankled Carranza.⁴

George C. Carothers, an American mining engineer in northern Mexico, reported on the worsening relations between Villa and Carranza in June. In an effort to paralyze the Division of the North, Carranza blocked shipments of coal and munitions to Villa. Carothers, who favored Villa and believed him more amenable to Americans, even contended that Carranza was afraid of Villa.⁵

In early July, just before Huerta tendered his resignation as president of Mexico, Constitutionalist general Pablo González made a final effort to mend the breach at a conference with representatives of Villa's Division of the North. The resulting Pact of Torreón secured Villa's continued recognition of Carranza's leadership, while

⁴Quirk, Mexican Revolution, pp. 26-34; Richmond, Carranza, pp. 59-60. Richmond describes Villa as an "untrustworthy ally" who appealed to the masses but not to "the middle class reformers who surrounded Carranza." Villa's determination to follow an independent course became especially clear in mid-June when he designated himself governor of Chihuahua, began to arrest Carrancistas, and declared martial law between Chihuahua and Torreón. See A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 17 June 1914, ARE-LE 789(16).

⁵Carothers to State Department, El Paso, 25, 28 April 1914; Carothers to State Department, Gómez Palacio, 10 June 1914, NA 812/11704, 11755, 12219. Richmond included Carothers as a member of Villa's inner circle. See Carranza, p. 59.

promising elections, a revolutionary convention, and the continued supply of Villa's forces with coal and munitions. Carranza never recognized the Pact, however, and by the end of September, Villa had withdrawn his support of the First Chief and was in open rebellion. The Convention of Aguascalientes, held one month later, only served to reinforce the break between the two leaders. Rather than accept the dubious authority of the Convention government and acknowledge Villa's military leadership, Carranza withdrew to Veracruz in November. There he coordinated another military campaign that would eventually claim a national victory for Constitutionalism.⁶

Within Coahuila, the break between the two leaders left the state divided into two zones, with Villistas controlling the Laguna region and the southeast, while Constitutionalists dominated in the east, center, and north. The two factions wrestled for control of the state until September 1915 when Villa abandoned Coahuila. Control of the state's coal reserves was the main object, as they were crucial to any military effort.⁷ Carranza's initial control of central and northern Coahuila provided him with an important strategic advantage, particularly since it included the municipality of

⁶Robert E. Quirk, The Mexican Revolution 1914-1915: The Convention of Aguascalientes (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960), pp. 37, 41-43. Quirk provides a detailed history of the Convention government, which lasted until January 1916.

⁷Cuéllar Valdés, Historia, p. 221.

Múzquiz, which supplied most of the coal used by the Constitutionalists. Control of the railroads in central and northern Coahuila provided additional leverage for Carranza's forces since freight destined for Villa's troops in Torreón and Chihuahua could be blocked. As an added precaution, Constitutionalist authorities placed railroad engineers between Saltillo and Piedras Negras under military rule.⁸

Despite such strategic advantages the national events of 1914 threatened to precipitate a split within Coahuila's Constitutionalist ranks. After Villa's formal withdrawal of recognition of the First Chief, American official William Blocker reported that Coahuilans were divided in their sympathies for the two leaders. While Carranza continued to enjoy support in Piedras Negras and the border region, Villa's popularity was growing in central Coahuila. There, noted Blocker, cowboys and hacienda workers "idolize General Villa."⁹ Even in the border area Rafael Múzquiz warned Carranza of a possible "coup" by Villa sympathizers in Las Vacas, Eagle Pass, and Laredo. In these areas the Villistas were reportedly expanding their forces with promises of rank

⁸Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 19 August 1914; Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 26 September 1914; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 31 December 1914, NA 812/12941, 13360, 14117.

⁹Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 26 September 1914, NA 812/13298, 13360.

and lands.¹⁰ Customs official Higinio de la Fuente also reported wavering support for Carrancismo in Piedras Negras.¹¹

Indeed, many soldiers were simply biding their time, awaiting the outcome of the Convention to decide their own futures.¹² Villa's troops in the Laguna, moreover, were not immune to dissension. Villa's public support of the U.S. invasion of Veracruz was a particular sticking point. In June, Mexican diplomatic official Arturo M. Elias related numerous Villista desertions occurring from Torreón to Ciudad Juárez. The defections were precipitated by the discovery of compromising papers that indicated Villa's willingness to sell Mexican territory to the United States. In the Laguna alone, one thousand troops had reportedly left the ranks and were preparing to fight against Villa.¹³

The situation was no clearer at the end of 1914 when Carranza formally broke with the Convention and established his own government in the port city of Veracruz, which had only recently been abandoned by U.S. troops. In Coahuila, Carranza's designated successor, Jesús Acuña, continued to

¹⁰R. E. Múzquiz to Carranza, Piedras Negras, 6 October 1914, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/31, Tomo I.

¹¹R. S. Bravo to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 10 June 1914, ARE-LE 792(9).

¹²See for example Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 14 October 1914; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 4 November 1914, NA 812/13541, 13680.

¹³A. M. Elías to Secretary of Foreign Relations, San Antonio, 15 June 1914, ARE-LE 795(4).

perform the duties of governor, giving special attention to the state's educational system. Yet Acuña was also aware of the importance of the rupture between Carranza and the Convention. He lamented the relaxation in military discipline among the Constitutionalist forces of Coahuila and Nuevo León, suggesting that soldiers easily switched from one faction to the other.¹⁴

At the beginning of 1915, an enemy advance forced Acuña to flee to Piedras Negras as General Raúl Madero occupied Saltillo and established Villa's control over all of southern Coahuila. The capture of Saltillo gave the Division of the North control of most of the railroad equipment used between the state capital and Piedras Negras. Train service between the two towns quickly halted, and the Villistas began a drive that, by March would leave them in control of most of Coahuila. Constitutionalist forces scrambled to tear up the railroad and reinforce their own troops as Villa's men descended upon the coal region.¹⁵

Meeting little resistance, Rosalio Hernández took possession of Monclova on January 25. With only five hundred Constitutionalist troops patrolling the area from Monclova to Piedras Negras, the capture of the border town was imminent.

¹⁴Jesús Acuña to Carranza, Saltillo, 10 December 1914, AVC, carp. 22, leg. 2198.

¹⁵Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 16 January 1915; Blocker to State Department, Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, 13 January 1915; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 21 January 1915, NA 812/14214, 14251, 14255.

Convention agents already operated in the area, working to designate their own local officials and to recruit Constitutionalist. Residents and Piedras Negras officials began to move their belongings to the American side of the frontier. Constitutionalist general Luis Gutiérrez, believing that his men feared Villa's troops and would desert rather than resist their advance, urged Governor Acuña to allow a complete evacuation of Piedras Negras and a retreat to Nuevo Laredo. On March 8, Gutiérrez and his men left the plaza in a pouring rain. Acuña, customs officials, and other residents soon fled to Eagle Pass.¹⁶

Rosalio Hernandez' occupation of Piedras Negras occurred without incident and was quickly followed by the capture of Las Vacas. With definitive control over the coal region and completion of repairs on the railroad line south, Villa's forces began daily shipments of precious coal to other areas controlled by the Division of the North.¹⁷ The battle for Coahuila, however, continued. Operating in several areas south of Piedras Negras, and with control of Nuevo Laredo, the Constitutionalist harassed Villa's troops, attempting to cut the lines of communication and deprive the Division of the

¹⁶Report of Guillermo Seguin, Eagle Pass, 16 January 1915, AGN: Gobernación, caja 1049, leg. 873, exp. 2; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 29, 30 January and 5, 9 March 1915, NA 812/14334, 14318, 14505, 14539. See also Serapio Aguirre to Carranza, Piedras Negras, 8 March 1915, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/32, Tomo I.

¹⁷Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 16, 22 March 1915, NA 812/14656, 14662, 14666, 14706.

North of supplies. In these efforts, the Carrancistas drew upon their still-significant connections along the international frontier. From a base in the Burro Mountains, they received supplies from the Las Vacas-Del Rio area. By May Villista fortunes began to reverse. Villa's men struggled to obtain enough ammunition, and their rivals succeeded in cutting railroad and telegraph communication with the interior.¹⁸

After a brief occupation of Saltillo during the summer of 1915, General Alvaro Obregón led the Constitutionalists in the definitive capture of that city. A steady advance into northern Coahuila soon re-captured Piedras Negras, where popular sentiment was still reported to be overwhelmingly pro-Carranza. An offer of amnesty issued by the First Chief encouraged many Mexicans to return to that border town from Eagle Pass. Constitutionalist control over Las Vacas was quickly re-established as well, aided by the defection of a number of Villa's troops. The eventual capture of Torreón, Monclova, and the railway center of Paredón sealed the fate of the Villistas. William Blocker reported that the coal fields were now virtually useless to Villa's army, since Paredón and Torreón "are the keys to all points out of Coahuila and shipments of coal must necessarily pass through one of the two

¹⁸Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass and Piedras Negras, 11, 15, 17 March, 4, 18, 25, 29 May 1915, NA 812/14562, 14599, 14620, 14990, 15058, 15033, 15090, 15110.

towns."¹⁹

Carranza returned to Saltillo in October. The decision of the United States to recognize Carranza's government provided his movement with a crucial advantage, and by the end of 1915 the Constitutionalists controlled most of Mexico and the government of the Convention had disintegrated.²⁰

The struggle between Constitutionalists and Conventionist forces contributed to the further deterioration of Coahuila's economy. As during the rebellion against Huerta, the circulation and devaluation of rival currencies was a central problem. Coahuila's workers shouldered most of the burden through the inevitable inflation in prices of basic goods. Miners in the community of Agujita threatened to rebel when they were paid in Villista bills, which were worth only half the value of the less-prevalent Constitutionalist money. Merchants responded to the situation with a 50 percent rise in prices for those using Villa's currency. Local officials tried to punish such behavior and warned that the workers might withdraw their support if more Constitutionalist money was not made available. The situation in Agujita became so serious, that many were reportedly reduced to living off of

¹⁹Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 12 September 1915; Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 13 September 1915, NA 812/16122, 16218.

²⁰Katz, Secret War, pp. 269-270, 286.

pecans growing along the margins of the Sabinas River.²¹ Speculation and counterfeiting were rampant. As Villa gained the upper hand in the spring of 1915 the Eagle Pass Lumber company and the M. Cirilo Company of Monterrey exchanged false bills for Villista currency.²²

Villa's generals complicated the situation by prohibiting the circulation of Carrancista money in areas under their control.²³ The Convention government took additional measures to discourage the dumping of cheap Villista fiat money on the managers of coal mines, and to raise the value of Villista bills. In the Laguna meanwhile, Villa ordered the execution of seven persons charged with circulating counterfeit money.²⁴

The currency crisis, the depredations committed by revolutionary factions, and the frequent interruption in communication and transportation, also created a food shortage in Coahuila. Rather than accept the unreliable currencies circulating in the interior of the state, and despite decrees

²¹R. E. Múzquiz to Carranza, Piedras Negras, 7 October 1914, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/31, Tomo I; J. Martínez to Governor, Sabinas, 15, 26 September 1915, Exp. 11,870: "Escritos y oficios diversos 1915 a 1916," AGECE: Revolución.

²²Jesús Acuña to Carranza, Piedras Negras, 5 March 1915, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/32, Tomo I.

²³Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 1, 6, 10 April 1915, NA 812/14763, 14872.

²⁴Decreto número 6, Departamento de Hacienda y Fomento, Aguascalientes, 4 May 1915, AGECE: Revolución; Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 11 August 1915; H. C. Coen to State Department, Durango, 22 July 1915. Coen reported that two Spaniards, three Arabs, and two Mexicans were executed on Villa's orders.

forbidding the practice, some merchants and speculators began to export food supplies to Texas. Even Villa's officials in Piedras Negras eagerly exported corn, cattle, and beans in exchange for American gold. Despite efforts of the Red Cross to get corn to the interior of the state, unreliable transportation and unexplained losses of corn shipments (perhaps appropriated by Villa's men in Piedras Negras) sparked rumors that the people of Monclova and Saltillo had been reduced to eating cactus pears and donkey flesh. "The situation," lamented Blocker, "is deplorable. It has ceased to be one of patriotism and has turned to graft, robbery, and murder."²⁵

Famine seemed imminent in the Laguna as Carranza's troops began to gain the upper hand in the spring of 1915. Corn supplies in the towns of Durango and Torreón were dangerously low, as most had been sent to feed Villa's army. Desperate women raided the local storehouses for their daily corn, and with no seed to plant and a lack of rain, agricultural workers organized into small bands for the purpose of plundering. In Torreón, people began sacking the truck farms of Chinese residents.²⁶

Coahuila's persistent economic crisis was the prominent concern of the four governors who represented the Villista

²⁵Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 10, 28 July 1915, NA 812/15499, 15612.

²⁶H. C. Coen to State Department, Durango, 24, 31 May, 13, 22 July 1915, NA 812/15117, 15140, 15507, 15586.

regime from January to September 1915: Felipe Angeles, Santiago Ramírez, Raúl Madero, and Orestes Pereyra. Despite the measures taken by Villa and the Convention government, Villa's governors failed to solve the currency problem within the state. Some businesses insisted on payment in precious metals. The local water company of Piedras Negras demanded payment in silver, exacted exorbitant prices, and cut off water supplies when payments were not made. The municipal president was compelled to suppress the town's water service for lack of funds.²⁷ Many merchants also resisted Santiago Ramírez' attempts to prohibit the circulation of Carrancista bills, and the lack of Villista money in many areas exacerbated the situation, encouraging many merchants to simply close their doors.²⁸

Payment of Coahuila's miners was especially problematic. Villa addressed the special needs of Mexico's miners by attempting to guarantee the worth of Villista money in areas under his control. To further protect miners from highly-priced goods, he prohibited the existence of all company stores.²⁹ Villa also ordered the re-initiation of work in

²⁷Exp. 11,727: ". . . la supresión de la compra de agua que hace el municipio de Piedras Negras . . .," 4 January 1915, AGE: Revolución.

²⁸Exp. 11,706: "Con el Decreto núm. 9 que declara nulas e insubsistentes las billetes de emisión carrancista," 1 April 1915; Exp. 11,643: ". . . ordenes de multa por infracciones al Decreto núm. 9 . . .," 24 June 1915, AGE: Revolución.

²⁹Decreto núm. 6, Departamento de Hacienda y Fomento, Aguascalientes, 4 May 1915, AGE: Revolución.

Mexico's mines and supported the right of others to claim inactive mines. At least a few such claims were filed in Coahuila.³⁰ Despite such efforts, however, Coahuila's mining industry continued to stagnate and mining companies tended either to refuse Villista money, or to accept it at an outrageously low rate.³¹

The efforts of Villa and his Coahuilan representatives to alleviate the currency crisis had little effect. Speculation and counterfeiting continued, while local merchants and businessmen, faced with economic ruin, ignored Villista decrees.³²

While Villa could do little about the currency crisis in northern Mexico, his Coahuilan representatives were virtually helpless before the food shortages that continued to plague the state. The scarcity of corn, beans, and other staples in Saltillo and Torreón compelled Santiago Ramírez to decree favorable terms and price guarantees for those merchants

³⁰See for example Exp. 11,639: ". . . denuncia de un fundo minero . . . Viesca," 13 May 1915, AGE: Revolución.

³¹Miners and merchants of Palau to Juex Auxiliar, 25 October 1915 in Exp. 11,870: "Escritos y Oficios sobre asuntos diversos 1915 a 1916," AGE: Revolución.

³²Villa also ordered the establishment in Torreón of an office to review bills and ensure their authenticity. Those involved in counterfeiting or those circulating falsified bills were to be "militarily" punished. Another decree, issued at Monterrey, suspended debts, interest, and mortgage payments to banks in light of the damage to agriculture and commerce caused by the continuing revolution. See Exp. 11,735: ". . . ha ordenado el establecimiento de una oficina en Torreón," 6-24 March 1915; and Decreto núm. 4: "Ley de suspensión de plazos para el pago de intereses y créditos a los Bancos," Monterrey, 19 March 1915, AGE: Revolución.

introducing and selling such items in these two municipalities.³³ The food shortage was especially acute in southern Coahuila, which suffered the most when railroad transportation was interrupted. Viesca's municipal president was compelled to buy corn for his municipality in neighboring Zacatecas, and Santiago Ramírez allowed residents from Parras to extract wheat from confiscated properties in the neighboring municipality of General Cepeda. In another attempt to address the worsening agricultural crisis in the Laguna, the Convention government sought people to work the region's ranches, offering any who would come a modest wage and passage to Gómez Palacio, Durango. Shortages of food affected other areas as well. Monclova's residents depended on the import of corn and corn seed from the United States.³⁴

Thus, most Coahuilans experienced the struggle between Carranza and Villa through further violence and a worsening economy. Villismo, moreover, was a short-lived and ill-defined phenomenon within the state. Friedrich Katz notes that almost all peasant leaders and movements in northern Mexico supported Villa, and suggests that Villa's insistence

³³Exp. 11,720: ". . . con la circular núm. 2, fijando lo que deben ganarse . . . ," Saltillo, 17 April 1915.

³⁴Exp. 11,719: ". . . Presidente Municipal de Viesca pidiendo pasar a Zacatecas para comprar maíz . . . ," 8 May 1915; Santiago Ramírez to Gen. Macrino J. Martínez, Saltillo, 27 June 1915; Exp., 11, 703: ". . . relativo al enganche de 500 trabajadores para los ranchos de la Comarca Lagunera," 1 May 1915; Ramírez to Pres. mun. Monclova, Saltillo, 27 June 1915, AGE: Revolución. Richmond summarizes the problems faced by Villa's governors in "Factional Political Strife."

on significant agrarian reform was the reason for such support. At the same time, however, the movement was remarkably heterogeneous. For many, Villa's provincialism was more appealing than Carranza's drive to nationalize his movement. Thus, argues Katz, "federalists, regionalists, and localists . . . tended to support Villa and not Carranza."³⁵

Among the more notable of the Coahuilan elites to side with Villa were half-brothers Ernesto and Raúl Madero. Understandably, given the always strained relationship between Francisco Madero and Carranza, a connection between members of the late president's immediate family (most of whom had fled into exile after Francisco's death) and Carranza's movement had never been established.³⁶ Any expectation that the Maderos would side with the Constitutionalist movement was quickly dispelled in the months after Carranza's rebellion against Huerta.³⁷ Indeed, as Alan Knight has observed, supporters of the Maderista movement and government received a less than enthusiastic reception from the Carrancistas in Coahuila and Sonora. Many Madero supporters thus gravitated

³⁵Katz, Secret War, pp. 261-265.

³⁶After Francisco Madero's death, his widow, parents, and sisters, as well as brother Ernesto and his family, fled to Havana. Brothers Emilio, Alfonso, and Raúl fled immediately to the United States. See Ross, Madero, p. 329.

³⁷See for example R. S. Bravo to A. M. Elías, Eagle Pass, 19 June 1913, ARE-LE 858(5).

toward Villa, a "devout Maderista."³⁸

The extent to which Coahuilan Maderistas sided with Villa is difficult to gauge. An examination of the Constitutionalist army in Coahuila after the Villa-Carranza split, however, may be instructive. There were no significant desertions of soldiers with Maderista antecedents.³⁹ Indeed, Carranza seems to have been remarkably successful in maintaining the support of these soldiers, many of whom were part of the state's irregular forces prior to Madero's fall. Where they occurred, defections to Villa's army were most likely isolated to the Laguna region, which remained under almost continuous control of the Division of the North from April of 1914 to September of 1915.

Cowboys and agrarian workers in some areas of Coahuila may indeed have idolized Villa, and Laguna peasant leaders such as Calixto Contreras supported him in the expectation of significant agrarian reform. Villa's tenure in Coahuila, however, brought no real transformation of the state. Although as governor of Chihuahua Villa had decreed the confiscation of the lands of the wealthiest and most powerful

³⁸Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, pp. 113-114. See also Katz, Secret War, p. 148, and Richmond Carranza, p. 59.

³⁹Of the sampling of thirty-two members of Coahuila's irregular forces prior to Carranza's rebellion, presented in Chapter 4, twenty had Maderista antecedents. Of these, only four defected to Villa's ranks. They included Sixto Ugalde, Catarino Benavides (Francisco Madero's uncle), Lucio Blanco (who only briefly sided with the Convention), and Eulalio Gutiérrez Ortiz (who became the first president of the Convention government).

hacendados of that state, land reform in neighboring Coahuila received little attention from his representatives.⁴⁰ Only belatedly did Villa's governnors establish an administrative structure for confiscated lands. A committee to supervise property confiscation in Saltillo, for example, was designated as late as April 1915. Villa's own agrarian reform law, appearing only in May 1915, was never implemented in Mexico.⁴¹

In the Laguna region of Coahuila and Durango, however, significant expropriations did occur during the period of Villista control. Lands were administered by the Oficina Militar de Algodón Decomisado and the Comisión de Agricultura de la Laguna, but it is not clear where revenue from the lands ultimately went.⁴² Many estates were rented directly to poor sharecroppers and confiscated lands were often held by or in the name of revolutionary generals.⁴³ Still, as Katz argues,

⁴⁰See Friedrich Katz, "Pancho Villa, Peasant Movements and Agrarian Reform in Northern Mexico," in Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution, ed. David A. Brading (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 64. Revenue from the confiscation of Chihuahuan lands was to be used to pay Villa's army and support widows and orphans of revolutionary soldiers. Had the decree taken full effect, notes Katz, it would have provided Chihuahua's military colonists, then serving as Villista soldiers, with their own lands.

⁴¹Exp. 11,752: "Junta Interventora," Saltillo, 7 April 1915, AGECE: Revolución. Richmond, "Factional Political Strife," pp. 63-64; Katz, Secret War, pp. 282-284. Katz observes that Villa's agrarian reform law reflected the needs of northern peasants and sought the division of large estates into smaller but still privately-owned plots.

⁴²Katz, Secret War, p. 65.

⁴³Katz, "Pancho Villa," pp. 65-67, 69.

"except for large-scale confiscations and expulsions of former owners . . . as well as some improvements in terms granted to small tenants and sharecroppers, there were no revolutionary changes in the countryside during Villa's administration of northern Mexico."⁴⁴

Despite the general inaction on the land issue, some of Villa's representatives hinted at their desire to effect agrarian reform in Coahuila. Governor Santiago Ramírez and Major Cirilo Mendiola, commander of the rich mining community of Sierra Mojada, began to investigate the political antecedents of Sierra Mojada's rancheros, who held the best agricultural land but had not "formally" purchased it.⁴⁵ In addition, some Coahuilans petitioned for the use of lands and waters owned by Huerta supporters and other "enemies," or abandoned because of the revolution. Las Vacas residents asked Villa's governor for the use of an abandoned plot in return for repairing it and bringing it under cultivation. In Piedras Negras, the popular classes requested the use of lands and waters of Huerta sympathizers who had left Mexico. It is

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 67-70. In Secret War, nevertheless, Katz argues that Villa's policies helped create a "new" middle class of revolutionary leaders who received expropriated land and of agents who traded agricultural products to the United States for munitions, pp. 147-148.

⁴⁵Exp. 11,721: ". . . El Mayor Jefe de Armas de Sierra Mojada que debe hacer respeto de los ranchos. . .," 5 April 1915, AGE: Revolución.

not clear if these petitions were favorably answered.⁴⁶ Some Villa supporters also expressed interest in the properties of Carrancistas. Francisco Cárdenas, municipal president of Piedras Negras and reportedly a Villista, noted that many Carrancistas in northern Coahuila had also left, with several taking refuge in Eagle Pass. These property owners, reported Cárdenas, preferred to lose everything rather than rent out their lands. Rafael Múzquiz remained in the area, representing and attempting to protect the interests of these owners.⁴⁷

Alan Knight has observed that in northern Mexico, with its pastoral economy, land division was not appropriate. Agrarian conflicts were important, but not central to the revolution in the northern states, and did not tend to take the form of a struggle between peasants and hacendados.⁴⁸

⁴⁶The destruction of barbed wire and the more spontaneous grab for land and resources that occurred during the nineteenth century and again during Madero's revolt, was still an option for some Coahuilans. In San Buenaventura local residents, with the apparent authorization of the municipal president, destroyed the barbed wire surrounding the hacienda of Pedro Cuéllar and carried away some of its products. See Exp. 11,722: ". . . la solicitud del Señor Pedro Cuéllar . . .," 19 February 1915, AGE: Revolución.

⁴⁷Exp. 11,723: "La consulta que hace a este gobierno el Presidente Municipal de Villa Acuña . . .," 6 January 1915; Exp. 11,724: ". . . una consulta que hace el Presidente Municipal de Piedras Negras . . .," 6 January 1915, AGE: Revolución. Carranza's revolt against Huerta had already encouraged an exodus of many propertied Coahuilans from Mexico. The flight continued when the split between Villa and Carranza threatened another round of fighting.

⁴⁸Knight, Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2, p. 121. Knight also observes that since the production of large estates in northern Mexico supported Villa's army, land division made little sense.

Villa's relatively brief tenure in Coahuila and his always tenuous hold over that state prevented any significant agrarian reform. Although pressures for land and resources did exist, they were motivated primarily by immediate economic needs and did not represent the demands of Coahuila's popular classes for full-scale land redistribution. Indeed, as in Chihuahua, there was no large peasant population that had been despoiled of its lands.⁴⁹

During Villa's brief period of control over Saltillo, the Laguna, and other areas of Coahuila, he did attempt to place his political stamp on the state and to create a semblance of formal government. Governor Santiago Ramírez presided over the first Villista elections in February 1915, in which Saltillo and San Pedro chose new municipal presidents.⁵⁰ Elections, however, were the exception rather than the rule. As Villa's forces extended their control over other areas of Coahuila, municipal presidents were simply designated by

⁴⁹Katz focuses on the case of Chihuahua in "Pancho Villa," suggesting that the lack of pressure for land reform was not only a result of that state's relatively small peasant population, but also a reflection of Chihuahua's large population of miners and cowboys, who had a limited interest in acquiring land. Furthermore, many Chihuahuans were away from the state in 1914-1915, fighting in the army. See p. 75. The Coahuilan case appears to have been similar.

⁵⁰Exp. 11,712: ". . . con el Decreto núm. 17 . . .," Saltillo, n.d.; Exp. 11,709: ". . . elecciones verificadas el día 28 de febrero . . . San Pedro," 28 February 1915 to 15 May 1915; Exp. 11,708: ". . . elecciones de Presidente Municipal de Saltillo," 28 February to 5 March 1915, AGE: Revolución. It is not clear whether Ramírez held elections for all of the municipalities under Villista control.

Villa's governors.⁵¹ Villa had difficulty finding local officials who would serve and support him. In Múzquiz, Captain Josafat Ramón urged Santiago Ramírez to designate an outsider and a military man for the post of municipal president, since there were few locals who would prove loyal. Perhaps convinced that they lacked the support of the local populace, the presidents of three northern municipalities abandoned their posts in fear.⁵² In an interesting attempt to prevent graft among local officials that flourished in the midst of economic trouble, Governor Orestes Pereyra raised the salaries of all public employees.⁵³

Despite the inability of Villa's governors to implement significant reforms or to solidify their political hold over the state, Villismo continued beyond 1915 in the form of sporadic attacks and raids.⁵⁴ The Laguna continued to be the

⁵¹Orestes Pereyra, for example, simply designated the municipal presidents of several areas, including Saltillo, Torreón, and Piedras Negras. See Exp. 6: "Presided Municipalities," 6 January 1915, AGE: Revolución.

⁵²Capt. Josafat Ramón to Governor, Múzquiz, 7 May 1915; Pres. Mun. Piedras Negras to Governor's Secretary, 12 April 1915, AGE: Revolución. Richmond notes that Carranza's own officials remained in power in several areas of the state. See "Factional Political Strife," pp. 61-62.

⁵³Exp. 11,682: ". . . Decreto núm. 13, aumentando los sueldos . . .," 29 June 1915, AGE: Revolución.

⁵⁴Various accounts of Villista activity and of the efforts of the Constitutionalists to halt such activity by granting amnesty to these rebels, may be found in AHDN: Revolución. See for example, Espinosa Mireles to Carranza, Saltillo, 6, 10, 11 April 1916; General Jacinto B. Treviño to Carranza, n.p., 15 April 1916; Treviño to Obregón, n.p., 20 April 1916; Espinosa Mireles to Carranza, Saltillo, 8, 10 May and 1 June 1916; Corl. P. Martínez

most problematic region. Local support for Villa still existed and Villa's soldiers remained active. By 1916, however, the Laguna's population was eager for peace. Additional conflicts between the forces of Villa and Carranza would only worsen the already dire situation and cause loyalties to both revolutionary leaders to waver.⁵⁵

In October, a skirmish between Constitutionalists and Villa's soldiers once again resulted in the destruction of railroads and left Torreón isolated. Already in the midst of a typhoid epidemic, the town's residents were also subjected to high taxes, which were rumored to be lining the pockets of Carranza's officers.⁵⁶ Late in the year, another Villista advance into Coahuila's coal region began. Although Carranza's troops succeeded in defending the area, Villa's men soon moved toward the Laguna. Rumors of Villista atrocities in Western Chihuahua and certain areas of the Laguna caused yet another exodus of Laguna residents to the Coahuila-Texas border zone. William Blocker reported that Villa's followers were murdering Arabs, Spaniards, and Japanese, and that enemy

Pérez to Treviño, Chihuahua, 24 July 1916; Gen. Arnulfo González to Obregón, Torreón, 1, 2 November 1916, AHDN: Revolución, Exp. XI/481.5/33, Tomo I. In 1919, Villa made a surprise assault on Múzquiz and in 1920 his last attempt to capture Torreón was rebuffed by the Constitutionalists.

⁵⁵See Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 22 January 1916; H. C. Coen to State Department, Durango, 2 March 1916, NA 812/17132, 17422. Blocker noted that Zapatista soldiers were also active in the region.

⁵⁶Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 24 October 1916, NA 812/19678.

soldiers released from captivity were arriving in Piedras Negras "shorn of their ears."⁵⁷

Fears of an impending attack on Torreón were well-founded. On December 21, Villa's troops occupied the town, looted stores, extracted forced loans, and massacred Chinese, Arabs, and some eighty Carrancista sympathizers. Constitutionalist General Maclovio Herrera was among those executed, and his body was hung out for display at the railroad station. Villa declared protection for all residents but the Americans and Chinese.⁵⁸

The Villista occupation of Torreón was brief and by January 1917 the Constitutionalists had re-gained control of the town. American consular official William Blocker reported only slight damage from the latest rebel attack, but a foreign resident insisted that "[t]he city is now a real dirty hole . . . [with] the bodies of soldiers and horses laying in the streets for four or five days."⁵⁹ British Vice Consul Patrick O'Hea, himself a Laguna businessman, confirmed this view, noting that the latest occupation had wasted Torreón, paralyzing all business, and causing any merchants remaining in the town to sell out their stocks and leave. The latest

⁵⁷Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 13, 17, 18 November 1916, NA 812/19852, 19853, 19894, 19907.

⁵⁸Consul General to Secretary of State, San Antonio, 12 January 1917, NA 812/20271.

⁵⁹Ibid; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 1 January 1917, NA 812/20188.

violence also contributed to the lack of sanitation in Torreón: ". . . the air reeks of decomposing flesh in shallow graves, there are no medicines and scarce any doctors . . ." Villa's soldiers only added to the food shortage, by loading trains with the town's already-scarce food stores and transporting them back to Chihuahua. "The Villistas," insisted O'Hea, "are predatory raiders, destroyers only. . . . Villa professes nothing . . . but a frenzied patriotism. His career is that of a dog in rabies, . . . a Malay running amock."⁶⁰

The return of Carranza's troops, in the opinion of O'Hea, did little to help the situation. Themselves starving and unpaid, Constitutionalists began looting Torreón stores, encouraging local residents to flee into the surrounding hills. To this Englishman, the Carrancistas were no better than the bandits who had just left: "These hordes of locusts, these soldiers and their women, haggard, savage, starving, and reeking of filth and disease, are consuming and wasting everything. They complain they are not paid. . . . Whether their officers have pocketed their pay or not, . . . the result is the same."⁶¹

Villista activities in Coahuila during 1916 took place in the context of Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico, and the

⁶⁰Report of Patrick O'Hea, quoted in Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 17 January 1917, NA 812/20414.

⁶¹Ibid.

subsequent expedition of General John J. Pershing, which sought to capture the Chihuahuan rebel. The Pershing expedition, moreover, encouraged Carranza to revive the Plan of San Diego. These developments had repercussions along the Coahuila-Texas border. In May, raiders struck at Glen Springs and Boquillas, Texas, then retreated into the mountains of northern Coahuila. Expectations of another U.S. invasion brought panic and an exodus of residents from Piedras Negras. Placards appeared in that town urging Mexicans to take up arms and defend the nation. Blocker, meanwhile, claimed that local authorities, including Carranza's provisional governor Gustavo Espinosa Mireles, were encouraging anti-American activities, such as the confiscation of horses and cattle from American ranches. Anti-American sentiment was reportedly strong in Saltillo as well.⁶²

Border raids ended in July when the U.S. and Mexico agreed to settle their differences in a diplomatic forum. The Plan of San Diego subsequently sputtered out.⁶³ Espinosa Mireles travelled to northern Coahuila to assure the border community of his determination to keep the peace and protect American interests. Villista raids would continue until 1920,

⁶²Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass and Piedras Negras, 8, 9 May and 23 June 1916, NA 812/18090, 18101, 18591; Silliman to State Department, Saltillo, 8 June 1916, NA 812/18357.

⁶³See Harris and Sadler, "The Plan of San Diego," p. 392; Coerver and Hall, Texas and the Mexican Revolution, pp. 95-106.

but they were easily rebuffed by Constitutionalist forces.⁶⁴

Villismo left a dubious mark on Coahuila. Villa's incursion took place in the context of a state already tiring of violence and suffering from economic stagnation. Although Villa did garner the support of some local elites and members of the popular classes, he did not succeed in making significant inroads into the ranks of Carrancismo. His governors failed to place their political stamp on the state, and any expectation that Villismo would bring with it significant social or economic reform was unfounded. The struggle between Carranza and Villa, therefore, was limited to the battlefield and was most notable for its immediate results: the continuation of revolutionary unrest and the further deterioration of Coahuila's economy.

⁶⁴Silliman to State Department, Saltillo, 30 June, 6 July, 1916, NA 812/18623, 18662; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 15 July 1916, NA 812/18735. In 1919, Villa made a surprise attack on Múzquiz and in 1920 his last attempt to capture Torreón failed.

CHAPTER 8

RECONSTRUCTION AND REFORM: THE TRIUMPH OF CONSTITUTIONALISM

The arrival of the victorious Constitutionalist troops in Piedras Negras in September 1915 brought an initial surge of optimism among residents in the border region. As the fighting ended and the railroads were repaired, business activity resumed in most areas of Coahuila. U.S. recognition of Carranza's government was a significant impetus to Coahuila's economic revival, and Americans and foreigners began to return to their homes and shops in Mexico's interior. As a major railroad center the Eagle Pass-Piedras Negras area was flooded with Mexican refugees trying to return to their homes after the worst of the fighting. Many had waited out the revolution in the southwestern United States as railroad or agricultural workers. The seasonal round that took some Coahuilans to Texas to pick cotton--a traditional outlet for many of the state's laborers that had been closed by the economic crisis preceding Madero's revolt--apparently resumed as well.¹

In Piedras Negras itself, conditions also improved. The customs house became increasingly busy, and merchants who had

¹Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 25 September, 6, 12, 24 November 1915, NA 812/16328, 16763, 16806, 16879.

faced rebel depredations and who had grappled with an ever-present currency crisis, once again began to stock their shelves. The resumption of regular railroad traffic also aided the mining region of central Coahuila, which again began regular shipments of minerals to the border for export to the U.S. Economic revival, moreover, coincided with the resumption of civilian government. This development, noted one American official, helped end the "grafting that has always run hand in hand with military control."²

The final Constitutionalist occupation of Piedras Negras also brought with it the hope of permanent change. Shortly after driving out the Villistas, Carranza's officials posted several decrees issued by the First Chief from Veracruz. Among them was a promise to make the "Municipio Libre" or independent municipality, the basis of the political system of the Mexican states. In Piedras Negras, the posted decree was accompanied by a dramatic picture of Lady Liberty breaking the chains of caciquismo.³

Carranza's victory over Villa in 1915 did signal the end of the bloodiest fighting in Coahuila. High expectations for reform, however, quickly gave way to the difficult job of reconstructing the war-torn state. In the end, the immediate need to pacify and reconstruct the state, coupled with

²Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 12, 17 November, 16 December 1915, NA 812/16806, 16841, 16980.

³A copy of the decree may be found in Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 25 September 1915, NA 812/16328.

Carranza's own moderate approach to reform, ensured that the governorship of Espinosa Mireles would bring no sweeping changes, particularly in the economic structure. At the same time, however, Carranza and Espinosa Mireles recognized the need for viable reforms, especially in the political system.

Border intrigue, as well as continued Villista activity, kept northern Coahuila in an uncertain state throughout 1916. Félix Díaz, nephew of Mexico's former dictator, found adherents in some Coahuilan exiles when he declared a revolt against Carranza in February of 1916. Felicista supporters included Manuel Garza Aldape, former member of the Huerta cabinet, Luis Alberto Guajardo, former Huertista Jefe Político, and Porfirian cacique Andrés Garza Galán. By March the Coahuila-Texas frontier was alive with the plotting of Felicistas, Villistas, and Huertistas.⁴

The scheming of various factions along Coahuila's northern border soon coalesced in an anti-Carranza plot that gained a few adherents in the Laguna as well. Originating in El Paso and led by Emiliano G. Saravia, the Legalista movement spoke against the "dictatorship" of Carranza and lamented his pretensions to power. Legalista adherents included old Porfirians, supporters of the now-deceased Huerta, and ex-

⁴Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras and Eagle Pass, 6, 30 March, 3, 4, 7, 11, April 1916, NA 812/17381, 17726, 17746, 17731, 17816. Blocker assumed a connection between the Glen Springs and Boquillas raiders and supporters of Félix Díaz. See Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 8 May 1916, NA 812/18142.

Villistas. The conspirators organized and equipped small bands of men along the international frontier and planned a seizure of Piedras Negras and Las Vacas. In Coahuila, the Legalista plot attempted to play upon the worsening currency crisis by placing large amounts of silver in circulation in Mexican border towns. Legalistas also lured new recruits by offering payment of wages in silver.

Reports of Legalista activities indicated that the group had established a base at the Hacienda San Carlos of Lorenzo González Treviño. Most hacienda workers, who had earlier joined the Constitutionalist movement, continued to support Carranza. The silver offered by the Legalistas, however, proved too tempting for several men who continued to be paid in Constitutionalist bills that were often of little value. The Legalistas did not succeed in hatching their plot among Coahuilans, but Carranza's officials realized that the seriousness of the economic situation could cause defections from their ranks.⁵

The Legalista movement underscored the fact that Carranza's definitive occupation of the border area did not mean an immediate end to the dislocations caused by the past revolution. Although the end of violence allowed some

⁵Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 27, 28 October 1916, NA 812/19709, 17676, 17671; Andrés García to Secretary of Foreign Relations, El Paso, 14 September 1916; Espinosa Mireles to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Saltillo, 7 December 1916, ARE-LE 799(17). See also the 2 September 1916 copy of "El Legalista," the newspaper published in El Paso, in ARE-LE 799(17).

Coahuilans to find work on both sides of the border with greater ease, unemployment remained a problem in the northern region. Several residents were reduced to hauling small sacks of pecans, corn, ixtle, and other goods to the international frontier, where they were purchased by American merchants.⁶ Pilferers and petty thieves abounded in Piedras Negras and became so bold "that no one even dare[d] to place newly washed clothes out to dry for fear of their being stolen by a peon."⁷

The continuing currency crisis was again at the heart of many of the troubles. Once favored over Villa's bills, Carrancista money was now continuously devalued, and in Piedras Negras several merchants insisted on payment in gold. Money exchanges closed in anticipation of more devaluation.⁸ Carranza's issuance of a new currency did little to alleviate the situation. Local authorities set prices, but businessmen were still forced to buy their goods in the United States, where banks accepted their new Mexican money at less than face value. While some shopkeepers adopted American money as their standard, others simply refused to stock their shelves. Piedras Negras railroad workers soon struck on the currency

⁶Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 24 October 1916, NA 812/19678. Blocker reported an increase in construction and other jobs on the Texas side as a result of the arrival of more U.S. troops in Eagle Pass.

⁷Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 31 January 1916, NA 812/17223.

⁸Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 22 February 1916, NA 812/17327.

issue, and by the end of May, the strike had spread to include the entire National Railroad.⁹ Another railroad strike in November was settled only when Governor Espinosa Mireles agreed to pay a percentage of the workers' salaries in silver.¹⁰

Constitutionalist soldiers throughout Coahuila were also victims of the currency crisis. Desertions in Saltillo and Torreón were frequent, and many became bandits.¹¹ After fighting against Villa in Chihuahua, a band of some six hundred Constitutionalists arrived along the Coahuilan border in a state of near-starvation. Famished, and paid in worthless money, they killed cattle, raided fields, and soon scattered into the interior of the state.¹²

Workers in central Coahuila's mining region suffered as well. Here too, many merchants were compelled to charge high prices for basic goods. Local hacendados insisted on payment in gold when they sold their goods to the mining communities. Miners shouldered the burden of high prices and frequent strikes occurred. A strike in Rosita brought the direct

⁹Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 12, 17 May 1916; Blocker to State Department, Piedras Negras, 27 May 1916, NA 812/18146, 18183, 18282; Exp. 11,993: "Escrito de los comerciantes de Piedras Negras," 25 November 1915, AGE: Revolución.

¹⁰Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 27 November 1916, NA 812/19964.

¹¹Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 11 October 1916, NA 812/19544.

¹²Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 14 October 1916, NA 812/19529.

intervention of Carranza who addressed worker demands by ordering a raise in their wages. He was helpless, however, to send desperately-needed corn to the workers, because of the lack of reliable transportation.¹³ A similar problem plagued miners in Múzquiz and the Constitutionalist Army had to issue a "salvoconducto," or safe-conduct pass in order to guarantee the transport of corn to the area.¹⁴

The stabilization of the mining industry and attention to the needs of the miners were top priorities of Carranza and the Espinosa Mireles administration. Immediately upon assuming office, Espinosa Mireles sent an inspector to Coahuila's coal region. The inspector reported that few of the state's coal mines were operational, lacking the materials needed, while workers went unpaid. Still, support for Carranza continued to be strong among Coahuila's miners.¹⁵

In a similar way, peace and stability only grudgingly returned to the capital. Continuing food shortages and a long drought helped create a situation in which a mob of poor women

¹³Pres. mun. Sabinas to Governor, 1 March 1916, Exp. 221: "Oficios Diversos . . . San Juan de Sabinas," AGECE: Revolución. Exp. 12,390: "Presidente Municipal . . . San Juan de Sabinas," 19 October 1915, AGECE: Revolución. A similar strike for better wages occurred in the community of La Paloma. See Exp. 12,166: "Oficios diversos . . . Ramos Arizpe," 14 September 1915, AGECE: Revolución.

¹⁴Exp. 12,163: "Comunicaciones diversos girados entre este gobierno y la Presidencia municipal de Múzquiz," 27 October 1915, AGECE: Revolución. Corn shipments were apparently the object of numerous robberies.

¹⁵J. Martínez to Governor, Sabinas, 15, 26 September 1915, Exp. 11,870: "Escritos y oficios sobre asuntos diversos 1915 a 1916," AGECE: Revolución.

stoned and sacked several stores. Espinosa Mireles personally dispersed the women, and arranged for the government distribution of corn.¹⁶ Gradually, however, crops were planted and with the aid of regular shipments from the border local stores were again well-supplied.¹⁷

The Laguna region, which was the main area of continued Villista activity throughout 1916, proved the most difficult to pacify and rebuild. Food riots occurred in Torreón and the continuing flood of refugees from the Laguna brought to the border reports of "deplorable" conditions and banditry. The currency crisis exacerbated the food shortages by encouraging merchants to send their goods to the U.S. for a better price. Shopkeepers in San Pedro began selling staple goods at inflated prices, and some hacendados issued provisional coupons as payment for their workers. The military commander of Torreón authorized the issuance of new currency to pay the salaries of agricultural workers and to cover the expenses of re-starting the stagnant economy.¹⁸ Laguna residents, reported Durango consul H.C. Coen, were tired of war and

¹⁶Silliman to State Department, Saltillo, 19 April, 12 June 1916, NA 812/17932, 18398.

¹⁷Silliman to State Department, Eagle Pass, 29 July, 2 August 1916, NA 812/18821, 18843.

¹⁸Manuel Cepeda to Secretario de Gobierno, Saltillo, 12 November 1915, in Exp. 12,182: "Documentos diversos . . . entre este Gobierno y la Tesorería General del Estado . . . 1915 a 1916"; Exp. 12,291: "Presidencia Municipal de San Pedro," 7 October 1915; Pedro Franco Ugarte to Governor, Torreón, 5 October 1915, Exp. 209: ". . . diversos asuntos . . . Torreón . . . octubre de 1915," AGECE: Revolución.

opposed to both Villa and the Constitutionalists.¹⁹ Here too, however, recovery was in the offing. "In the Laguna," reported American official Phillip C. Hanna, "king cotton is saving the situation, for with abundant water all of the ranches are busy and there is employment for everybody."²⁰

Recovery then, was sporadic and setbacks frequent. The task of effecting a more permanent restoration fell to Espinosa Mireles. President Carranza, however, continued to pay close attention to his native state. He participated directly in both the political and economic reconstruction of Coahuila.

Carranza's efforts to regularize the monetary system in Mexico with the issue of new guaranteed bills had no immediate effect in Coahuila. Espinosa Mireles decreed jail time for any who speculated in the new currency, and ordered Coahuilan merchants to reduce their prices in proportion to the value of the new money.²¹ A final solution to Mexico's financial troubles, however, required several more years of regulation and reform.²²

¹⁹Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 20 March 1916; H.C. Coen to State Department, Durango, 31 March 1916; Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 30 September, 24 October 1916, NA 812/17544, 17756, 19425, 19678;

²⁰Hanna to State Department, San Antonio, 4 August 1916, NA 812/18853.

²¹Circular of 10 May 1916 in Exp. 125: "Papel Moneda," AGECE: Revolución.

²²See Richmond, Carranza, pp. 87-92.

Espinosa Mireles addressed the shortage of food and other items in Coahuila by discouraging their export. He prohibited the unauthorized exit of ixtle, hides, cotton, metals, and other materials, which could be exchanged for better prices outside of Coahuila. To stop the illegal extraction of these items, the governor named fiscal agents to conduct vigilance along the railroad lines from Saltillo to the state's borders with Nuevo León, Chihuahua, San Luis Potosí, and Zacatecas.²³ Espinosa Mireles also decreed against any extraction of grains and other basic food items. Merchants authorized to export hides, metals, and ixtle were required to use part of their profits to buy grains and to introduce them into Coahuila's towns at a reasonable price.²⁴ Several municipal officials issued their own regulations prohibiting the export of food items. In central Coahuila, the municipal president of Progreso declared a fine for any attempting to export wheat or corn from the area.²⁵

Cattle rustling also continued to be a problem. Espinosa Mireles declared the theft of cattle to be a capital crime and

²³Decreto núm. 4, Saltillo, 2 October 1915, in Exp. 12,338: "Tesorería General del Estado . . . correspondencia," and Exp. 12,308: "Agentes Fiscales," 27 September 1915, AGECE: Revolución.

²⁴Circular núm. 1760, Saltillo, 3 April 1916, in Exp. 12,166: "Oficios diversos . . . Ramos Arizpe," AGECE: Revolución.

²⁵Pres. mun. Progreso to Governor, 30 December 1915, in Exp. 12,165: "Diversos asuntos . . . Progreso," AGECE: Revolución. See also Pres. mun. Sabinas to Governor, 1 March 1916, in Exp. 221: "Oficios Diversos . . . San Juan de Sabinas"; Pres. mun. Allende to Governor, 28 February 1916, in Exp. 12,151: "Comunicaciones y oficios . . . Presidencia Municipal de Allende," AGECE: Revolución.

authorized municipal presidents to proceed in summary fashion against cattle thieves.²⁶ In another attempt to solve the problem of cattle rustling while addressing the needs of local residents, the governor authorized the municipal president of Sabinas to collect all animals of unknown brands found in the pasture of a local cattle company and distribute them among the region's neediest farmers.²⁷

The problems of banditry and vagrancy presented another challenge. Both in the Laguna and along the Coahuila-Texas border, robbery and pillaging were common, as members of the lower classes took matters into their own hands. In Matamoros, municipal president Mariano Chavero took his own steps against banditry and vagrancy, which he equated, perhaps with a great deal of justification, with Villismo. All landowners were required to submit a list of their tenants and workers, and any change of residence by these people had to be authorized. Chavero also mandated the vigilance of outsiders, and ordered that all ex-Villistas carry a special pass.²⁸

²⁶Decreto núm. 6, Saltillo, 16 November 1915, Exp. 12,161: "Nombramiento de Presidente Municipal en matamoros . . . y oficios cambiados . . ." AGE: Revolución.

²⁷Espinosa Mireles to Pres. mun. Sabinas, Saltillo, 29 February 1916, Exp. 221: "Oficios Diversos girados entre este Gobierno y la Presidencia de San Juan de Sabinas," AGE: Revolución. This order was suspended because of legal problems.

²⁸Exp. 12,292: "Recaudación de Rentas, San Pedro," 18 October 1915; F. Peraldi to Governor, Piedras Negras, 6 May 1916, Exp. 12,318: "Jefatura de Armas, Piedras Negras Coahuila"; Pres. mun. Matamoros to Governor, 27 September 1915, Exp. 12,161: "Nombramiento de Presidente Municipal en Matamoros . . . y oficios cambiados . . .," AGE: Revolución. Another decree in Matamoros

Espinosa Mireles' attempts to alleviate the immediate crisis and dislocations that followed on the heels of revolution often had broader implications. Indeed, some of his measures were direct challenges to a traditional economic system characterized by monopoly and entrenched privilege. Through a special commission established in Torreón to address the severe grain shortage, Espinosa Mireles permitted Laguna farmers to export their cotton seed in exchange for corn. This freed the region's farmers from their long-standing obligation to sell the seed to the *Compañía Jabonera de la Laguna*, which had a monopoly on the cotton seed industry.²⁹

Plagues and early frosts in 1915 and 1916 caused a 70 per cent decline in the cotton crop, making that resource more coveted.³⁰ Carranza acknowledged the seriousness of the situation by decreeing the confiscation of cotton stores where arrangements could not be made by the government to purchase them. The expropriation of foreign-owned cotton, however, generated the heated protests of Spaniards and the diplomatic representatives of France and Germany and finally forced

required that all weapons be handed over to local authorities, under threat of capital punishment.

²⁹Report of Special Commission, Torreón, 30 March 1916, Exp. 12,173: "Oficios . . . cambiados entre este Gobierno y la Presidencia Municipal de Torreón . . . octubre de 1915 hasta . . . junio de 1916," AGECE: Revolución.

³⁰Report of Special Commission, Torreón, 7 December 1915, Exp. 12,315: "Comisión Algodonera de la Laguna," AGECE: Revolución.

Carranza to reverse his decree.³¹

Speculation in the Laguna's precious cotton encouraged frequent robberies of that item, prompting the governor to order the punishment of thieves and to demand steps to ensure the legal precedence of all cotton.³² The cotton crop of Carlos González (whose lands had been confiscated and rented out during Villa's occupation of the Laguna) awaited harvest and was the object of frequent robberies. So that the harvest would occur and the cotton not be wasted, Espinosa Mireles declared the crop government property.³³

Indeed, Espinosa Mireles displayed a willingness to take extraordinary measures to re-start the economy. In 1916 he decreed a tripling of taxes on all lands not being worked and authorized municipal presidents to distribute abandoned lands to others so that they could be cultivated. Owners could not reclaim such lands until the harvest was gathered.³⁴

The appropriation of lands and other resources for

³¹Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 10 January 1916; Williams to State Department, Torreón, 15, 27 January 1916, NA 812/17077, 17107, 17166.

³²Pedro Francisco Ugarte to Governor, Torreón, 7 August 1916, Exp. 208: "Escritos y oficios sobre diversos asuntos," AGE: Revolución.

³³Under Villa, González' cotton plots were rented out by the Bank of Chihuahua. With Carranza's victory, the lands themselves were returned but their products subject to government appropriation. Information on the lands of González may be found in a series of memoranda dated simply "Saltillo, November and December 1915," in Exp. 12,283: "Archivo General," AGE: Revolución.

³⁴Decreto núm. 19, Saltillo, 11 March 1916, AGE: Revolución.

economic and political purposes had begun with Carranza's rebellion against Huerta in 1913. The Carrancista occupation of Piedras Negras was accompanied by confiscations of the properties of declared enemies, on the order of congressman and military commander Gabriel Calzada. During the subsequent occupation by Huerta's soldiers, these properties were returned, only to be confiscated again when the Constitutionalists re-captured the plaza.³⁵ After Huerta's defeat, Carranza allowed the use of confiscated lands by others so that the years' harvest could be gathered.³⁶ Constitutionalist officers also allowed the liberal use of lands in areas under their control. In Abasolo, General Fortunato Zuazua simply decreed that local residents could plant crops wherever they wished.³⁷

As late as 1917, Coahuila's state government was authorizing municipal officials to temporarily distribute idle lands and waters among those who would use them to sustain a

³⁵See for example, petition of Indalecio Vara for return of a house in Piedras Negras, 8 September 1917, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 184, exp. 97; unsigned petition for return of house of Trueba Hermanos in Piedras Negras, 18 December 1916, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 191, exp. 99; Exp. 141: " . . . causas que motivaron la intervención de las propiedades de varios personas . . .," 28 February 1915, AGECE: Revolución. Richmond gives as an early example of agrarian reform by Constitutionalist officers Lucio Blanco, who distributed land from a hacienda near Matamoros. See Carranza, p. 49.

³⁶See for example Pres. mun. Nava to Ventura González, 21 September 1914, AGECE: Revolución.

³⁷Salvador Chacón to Governor, Abasolo, 18 October 1915, Exp. 11,929: "Presidencia municipal de Abasolo Viejo," AGECE: Revolución.

harvest.³⁸ Yet such concessions and government expropriations never amounted to true agrarian reform. Instead, Carranza used confiscations as a temporary political measure to punish his enemies, and Espinosa Mireles allowed the appropriation of resources to meet only the immediate demands of a wavering economy.

That Carranza intended no significant change in land tenure within his native state became apparent immediately after the 1915 expulsion of Villa's forces. The first decree of Espinosa Mireles ordered the return of all properties previously confiscated by Constitutionalists and Villistas. At the same time, the governor authorized the continued appropriation of properties owned by those who had rebelled against the Constitutionalist government.³⁹

In Coahuila, as in other areas of Carranza's Mexico, the lands and businesses of Huerta and Villa sympathizers were targeted for confiscation. Shortly after assuming office, governor Espinosa Mireles ordered the confiscation of Luis Alberto Guajardo's hacienda in Múzquiz. Several other members of the Guajardo family, all of whom had supported Huerta and subsequently fled Mexico, had their substantial holdings in Múzquiz appropriated by the Constitutionalists. Indeed, property confiscations were especially prevalent in that

³⁸Decreto núm. 4, Saltillo, 26 November 1917, AGECE: Decretos. Lands and waters were to revert to their original owners after the gathering of one harvest.

³⁹Decreto núm. 1, Saltillo, 14 September 1915, AGECE: Decretos.

central Coahuilan municipality, which was the center of the Garza Galán clique during the Porfiriato, and whose hacendados tended to support Huerta. Thus the lands of brothers Andrés and Juan Garza Galán were intervened, as were the properties of Manuel Garza Aldape.⁴⁰

In the Laguna, a special commission administered the properties of Carranza's enemies, while making sure that the lands were planted and harvested. The Torreón properties of Huerta supporter Luis García de Letona, already confiscated during the Villista occupation of the Laguna, continued to be administered by the Constitutionalists despite their owner's insistence that he had been an enemy of Huerta.⁴¹ The split between Carranza and Villa in 1914 complicated the situation in the Laguna. Carranza and Espinosa Mireles received numerous petitions from owners whose properties had been confiscated immediately after Villa's 1914 occupation of Torreón. Hoping to shield themselves from the appropriations of the Constitutionalists, these owners claimed to be victims of Villismo, rather than traitors to the Constitutionalists. Local officials, however, were apparently careful to

⁴⁰Espinosa Mireles to Recaudador de Rentas, Saltillo, 20 September 1915, Exp. 12,271: "Recaudación de Rentas, Múzquiz"; Fernando Peraldi to Governor's Secretary, Monclova, 10 December 1915, Exp. 12,244, AGECE: Revolución.

⁴¹For reports of the commission's activities see Exp. 12,316: "Comisión Interventora de la Laguna," 20 November 1915, AGECE: Revolución. An account of the Letona case may be found in Exp. 12,240: ". . . solicitud para que se le devuelvan las propiedades . . . en Torreón, 19 November 1915, AGECE: Revolución.

distinguish between Villista confiscations that occurred before and after the split with Carranza.⁴²

Several Coahuilans who had fled Mexico during the bloody fighting were also singled out, perhaps by mistake, even if their political loyalties were ill-defined. Constitutionalist seized an hacienda and two urban plots located in Sabinas and Piedras Negras that were once owned by the late Coronel Nicanor Valdés. Although the properties were entrusted to Valdés' widow, Juana, even before Madero's revolt began, they were appropriated when Juana fled to the United States. After the Constitutionalist victory, Carrancista Major Plutarco Valdés, Juana's son, obtained the return of these properties, insisting that his mother had remained aloof from politics during the revolution.⁴³

Not suprisingly, given the fact that brothers Emilio,

⁴²See for example President of Junta Intervetora de la Comarca Lagunera to Gobernación, Torreón, 4 April 1916, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 6 exp. 21; and petition of Miguel Bernardini, Torreón, 26 June 1917, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 187, exp. 57. In another interesting petition, Torreón merchant Guillermo Valencia disputed the confiscation of his store on the grounds of Villista sympathies by arguing that the Villistas pressed him into their ranks. See complaint of Guillermo Valencia, Torreón, 20 October 1915, Exp. 209 " . . . diversos asuntos . . . Torreón," AGECE: Revolución.

⁴³A list of some of the confiscated properties and the reasons for their intervention may be found in Dirección de Bienes Intervenidos, Mexico, 31 March 1919, "Relación de las Propiedades Intervenidas que existen actualmente bajo el control de la Administración de Bienes Intervenidos en el Estado de Coahuila," AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 184, exp. 38, fs. 19-21. See also petition of Plutarco Valdés, Piedras Negras, 23 October 1916, Exp. 141: ". . . causas que motivaron la intervención de las propiedades de varios personas," AGECE: Revolución.

Raúl, and Alfonso had chosen to support Villa, the extensive properties and businesses of the Madero family were targeted for confiscation. In northern Coahuila, for example, the hacienda Palmira was confiscated and the municipal president given permission to sell its products. Properties and businesses in Parras, center of the Madero fortune, were likewise appropriated, as were family lands in the Laguna.⁴⁴ The hacienda La Merced, a major focus of Maderista activity in 1910-1911, was also appropriated. Interestingly however, it continued to be administered by Cayetano Trejo, the former president of a local Antireelectionist club.⁴⁵ Although Constitutionalist confiscations virtually ruined the Madero family's hard-earned fortune, Carranza began to return these intervened properties by 1917.⁴⁶

Municipal officials within Coahuila appear to have had some influence in effecting the confiscation of property after 1915. Some municipal presidents ordered their own

⁴⁴For examples of the confiscation of Madero family properties and the appropriation of their products see Governor to Pres. mun. Rosales, 19 October 1915, Exp. 12,386: "Presidencia Municipal Rosales"; Espinosa Mireles to T.V. Santos, Saltillo, 11 December 1915, Exp. 12,218: "Telegramas . . . 1915 a 1916"; Order of Jesús Acuña, n.p., 5 April 1916, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario.

⁴⁵Tesorero General to Rubén Rodríguez, Saltillo, 31 January 1916, Exp. 12,338: "Tesorería General del Estado . . . correspondencia," AGE: Revolución.

⁴⁶See for example petition of Manuel Madero and others to Gobernación, 22 June 1917; AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 7, exp. 2. Nonetheless, as Richmond notes, by 1918 the family was bankrupt and their assets being used for the payment of debts. See Carranza, p. 52.

confiscations of "enemy" lands.⁴⁷ A petition from Sierra Mojada achieved the confiscation of Regulo J. Garíbar's lands by arguing that Garíbar had fought with the Orozquistas and the Huertistas. Such requests were frequent, although it is not clear how many received a favorable answer.⁴⁸ Just as frequent were local protests against the return of confiscated properties. The municipal president of Torreón advised Espinosa Mireles not to return the property of Federico Reyes, a member of the local Defensa Social who had personally apprehended some Carranza supporters in 1913.⁴⁹

Despite the continued confiscation of properties after 1915, most all intervened lands, including those of Carranza's acknowledged enemies, were eventually restored to their owners.⁵⁰ The return of lands was as much a political measure as their confiscation. Through the Administración de

⁴⁷See for example, petition of Manuel Rodríguez García, 29 May 1917, Exp. 141: ". . . causas que motivaron la intervención de las propiedades de varios personas . . .," AGECE: Revolución.

⁴⁸Pres. mun. Sierra Mojada to Governor, 9 December 1916, Exp. 141: ". . . causas que motivaron la intervención de las propiedades de varios personas . . ."; Pres. mun. Allende to Governor, 21 November 1915, AGECE: Revolución.

⁴⁹Pres. mun. Torreón to Governor, n.d. [1916], Exp. 12,220: ". . . solicitud de Federico W. Reyes . . .," AGECE: Revolución. See also Pres. mun. Jiménez to Governor, 3 March 1916, Exp. 12,365: "Presidencia Municipal Jiménez"; Pres. mun. Múzquiz to Governor, 10 December 1915, AGECE: Revolución.

⁵⁰For a substantial list of lands returned between 1916 and 1919 see Dirección de Bienes Intervenido, "Relación de las propiedades desintervenidos en el Estado de Coahuila," Mexico, 31 March 1919, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 184, exp. 38, fs. 11-16.

Bienes Intervenidos, Carranza compelled hacendados to petition him personally and to explain their behavior during the revolution.⁵¹ The restitution of property was contingent upon the petitioner's promise not to sue the Carranza administration for damages.⁵² Additional conditions were placed upon the return of some lands. Miguel Cárdenas, a grudging supporter of Huerta in 1913, obtained the restoration of lands and irrigation waters in Sacramento only after paying taxes from which he had been exempt before the revolution.⁵³

The limits of Carranza's agrarian reform in Coahuila may be seen in a case involving the Hacienda San Carlos, located in the northern part of the state. The hacienda had provided an important source of recruits for Madero and Carranza, and had served as a base for revolutionary activities. It was, however, a property of Lorenzo González Treviño, an uncle by marriage to the late Francisco Madero, and identified by Constitutionalists as an enemy. The hacienda was confiscated in 1915 and by 1916, it was being administered by Bruno Neira, future governor of Coahuila. Under Neira's administration an

⁵¹Richmond, Carranza, pp. 51-52; Katz, Secret War, pp. 145-146, 288-293. Katz argues that, on the national level, Carranza's return of confiscated lands alienated the peasantry.

⁵²For examples of the formal return of lands see "Copia del Acta de Entrega de La Concha y Anexas," 23 February 1916; "Copia del Acta de Entrega de La Fe Fábrica de Hilados y Tejidos," 18 March 1916, AGN: Gobernación, Período Revolucionario, caja 6, exp. 83.

⁵³Pres. mun. Sacramento to Governor's Secretary, 19 October 1915, Exp. 12,403: "Presidencia Municipal Sacramento," AGE: Revolución.

interesting situation developed in which a group of hacienda workers, organized as a sharecroppers' league under the leadership of Emeterio Garza, attempted to declare their independence of the hacienda. Espinosa Mireles, warned by Neira of the spread of "socialist" ideas among these tenants, ordered the arrest of Garza. Neira then ordered the other members of the so-called Unión de Agricultores to abandon the lands that they were working.⁵⁴

Although Carranza may have angered some Coahuilans with his return of confiscated lands, his Ley Agraria, issued on January 6, 1915, was calculated to reassure Mexico's peasants of his respect for the agrarian question. This law nullified all concessions, sales, and other transfers of communal lands and waters made by jefes políticos, governors, and other officials. Several months after the publication of Carranza's Ley Agraria, Coahuilans began to petition for the return of communal lands taken away during the Porfiriato. By 1920, about twenty-five such requests had been made but only the ejido of Castaños, located in central Coahuila, had been formally returned. Eventually, about twelve petitions were

⁵⁴Bruno Neira to Espinosa Mireles, Piedras Negras, 15 August, 20 September 1916, Exp. 208: "Escritos y oficios sobre diversos asuntos," AGECE: Revolución. It appears that Garza and the other members of the league actually remained on the hacienda. In November 1915, they requested an exemption from debts owed to González Treviño's agricultural and cattle company because of the lack of water and the continuing currency crisis. See Petition of Emeterio Garza and others, Hacienda San Carlos, 9 November 1915, Exp. 11,989: "Solicitud de los Agricultores medieros de la Hacienda de San Carlos," AGECE: Revolución.

approved by the Carranza administration.⁵⁵ Most of those applying for communal lands were from northern and central Coahuila, areas that were given ejidos, colonias militares, and congregaciones during the colonial and Reform eras and that subsequently had them taken away during the Porfiriato.⁵⁶

From 1920 until the era of Lázaro Cárdenas, little change in land tenure occurred. Coahuila remained one of the states in which latifundia was most persistent. In the Laguna, hacendados worked with political authorities to successfully halt land reform. In the north, the Cámara Ganadero de Coahuila fought to keep their titles to communal lands surveyed during the Porfiriato. And in 1933, Coahuila passed a law against the dissolution of latifundia in order to protect the cattle industry.⁵⁷

In the political arena too, Carranza and Espinosa Mireles proceeded cautiously. Like many Carrancista state governments, that of Espinosa Mireles tended toward

⁵⁵Examples of petitions for communal lands may be found in AGECE: Revolución. See for example Pres. mun. San Juan de Sabinas to Governor, 23 February 1916. It appears that some municipal officials simply saw to it themselves that ejidal lands were opened. See for example Pres. mun. Zaragoza to Secretario de Gobierno, 2 October 1915, AGECE: Revolución.

⁵⁶Rita Favret has studied the effect of Carranza's Ley Agraria on Coahuila in, Tenencia, pp. 137-139, 142-143. She notes that the areas from which most petitions issued were also areas in which the PLM, Reyismo, and Maderismo had been strong. See also Richmond, Carranza, p. 68; Katz, Secret War, pp. 270-273.

⁵⁷Favret, Tenencia, pp. 216-217; 153-155. In 1936, Cárdenas redistributed most of the Laguna's irrigated lands into 292 ejidos. See Vargas-Lobsinger, La Concha, p. 143.

authoritarianism. Free and open elections did not occur, and electoral corruption was apparently common.⁵⁸ As late as 1920 the state government intervened in municipal elections, voiding their results when necessary.⁵⁹ The governor, however, was careful to allow at least some popular participation in the political life of several municipalities. Upon assuming his post, the governor named Visitadores Políticos to organize plebiscites in various areas of the state. Jorge E. von Versen was designated Visitador for the Monclova and Rio Grande districts. Although new officials had already been chosen by the governor (perhaps with the help of Carranza), von Versen conducted the plebiscites in the form of town meetings, encouraging, and usually receiving, a popular display of support for the designated officials.⁶⁰

Espinosa Mireles apparently also responded favorably to popular requests for local plebiscites.⁶¹ He received numerous letters from Coahuilans recommending candidates for

⁵⁸This is highlighted by Richmond in Carranza, pp. 146-147.

⁵⁹Evidence of electoral problems may be found in AGECE: Decretos. See for example Decreto 223, Saltillo, 27 November 1918; Decreto 345, Saltillo, 1 March 1919; Decreto 319, Saltillo, 4 February 1919; Decreto 46, Saltillo, 9 January 1920; Decreto núm. 3, Saltillo, 19 November 1919; Decreto 320, Saltillo, 6 December 1920; Decreto 341, Saltillo, 31 December 1920. At the same time, however, by 1920 many local elections were occurring without problems.

⁶⁰Jorge E. von Versen to Espinosa Mireles, n.p., 30 January 1916, Exp. 12,175: ". . . elecciones y plebescito verificados en el Estado . . .," AGECE: Revolución.

⁶¹See for example Cayetano González Pérez to Governor, Del Rio, 3 May 1916, Exp. 12,175, AGECE: Revolución.

local offices. Workers from Cuatro Ciénegas requested as municipal president a native of the area, "a man of energy and noble aspirations," and a person who understood the importance of public education which had been previously neglected. Other groups petitioned the governor, urging him to select local officials who were completely loyal to Constitutionalism.⁶²

Despite continuing manipulation of the electoral system by Carranza and Espinosa Mireles, electoral reforms were eventually introduced in 1919. Detailed regulations sought to assure secrecy in balloting and the ability of all political parties to participate in the electoral process. Municipal presidents were prohibited from judging the capacity of office seekers, and could only register candidates as they presented themselves. Candidates for municipal councils were required to be native Mexicans with residence in the municipality for at least three years. Re-election of council members was prohibited.⁶³

The virtual absence of an open electoral process under

⁶²Segundo Guajardo and others to Governor, Cuatro Ciénegas, 27 December 1915; Marcos Flores and others to Espinosa Mireles, Morelos, 8 October 1915; V. de la Garza and others to Governor, Nava, 6 December 1915, Exp. 12,175: ". . . elecciones y plebescito verificados en el Estado el mes de septiembre de 1915 hasta el de junio 1916," AGECE: Revolución.

⁶³This latter rule was apparently modified by the state congress in 1920, allowing the reelection of council members who vacated their posts ninety days before the election. For a statement of these and other electoral reforms see Decreto núm. 375, Saltillo, 30 March 1919; Decreto núm. 189, Saltillo, 30 June 1920, AGECE: Decretos.

Espinosa Mireles did not mean a disregard for municipal authority and initiative. The governor encouraged municipal activism and local efforts at reform. In an attempt to end corruption and grafting at the local level, the governor raised the salaries of municipal officials.⁶⁴ To help municipal presidents with maintaining order and preserving public health and morality, he decreed the creation of a commission for each town with at least twenty thousand inhabitants. This body, selected by the municipal council itself, was entrusted with administration and oversight of duties related to public health and safety, school attendance, persecution of criminals, and other matters.⁶⁵

Encouraged by the governor's initiative, several municipalities embarked upon ambitious programs of public works and local reform. In Ocampo each councilman took charge of a specific task (education, public health, etc.), a new school was built on ejidal lands taken away during the Porfiriato, and an agrarian committee was established to deal with questions of land and water. The regulation of commerce, including mandated prices on basic items, was one of the local economic measures taken by the Ayuntamiento. Ocampo's council also enacted reforms with a distinctly moral tone. The "Reglamento General de Buen Orden Municipal" included

⁶⁴Un-numbered decree of 25 September 1915, in Exp. 12,157, AGE: Revolución.

⁶⁵Decreto núm. 8, Saltillo, 7 January 1916, AGE: Decretos.

rules against carrying guns, gambling, and loitering in the streets after 10 p.m. The Reglamento de Policía prohibited policemen from drinking.⁶⁶ The local administration of Piedras Negras followed suit by prohibiting the "disgraces" of gambling, cockfights, and open beer halls, while taking steps to punish local officials who indulged in such pleasures.⁶⁷

Another hallmark of the Espinosa Mireles governorship was the reform of the state's taxation system. One goal was to equalize the tax burden of Mexicans and foreigners. This was part of the stated justification of a 1915 decree placing higher taxes on ixtle, hides, guayule, cotton, and minerals, since large numbers of foreign businesses were engaged in the extraction of these products. The extra revenue, moreover, was earmarked to help increase the salaries of public officials.⁶⁸ Higher taxes were also exacted from hacendados and merchants and the revenue used for public services.⁶⁹

The governor also singled out those previously exempted from taxes because of special concessions. In 1917, he

⁶⁶Report of Pres. mun. Ocampo, 1916, Exp. 12,172: "Comunicaciones diversos girados entre este gobierno y las presidencias municipales . . . año fiscal de 1915 a 1916," AGECE: Revolución. See also Pres. mun. Guerrero to Governor, 5 June 1916, Exp. 12,156: "Comunicaciones cambiados entre este Gobierno y la Presidencia municipal de Guerrero," AGECE: Revolución.

⁶⁷Blocker to State Department, Eagle Pass, 8 January, 7 February 1917, NA 812/20261, 20511.

⁶⁸Decreto núm. 4, 2 October 1915 in AGECE: Revolución.

⁶⁹See Richmond, Carranza, pp. 146-147. Richmond highlights Coahuila as one of the Mexican states that had such a populist fiscal policy.

threatened to revoke such concessions from companies that did not re-initiate work within thirty days.⁷⁰ But the stronger trend was toward eliminating such tax breaks completely. Espinosa Mireles pushed individuals and companies enjoying special privileges to begin paying their share, and in some cases he ordered them to pay back taxes. In Múzquiz, for example, the heirs of former Porfirian governor José María Garza Galán were ordered to pay back taxes on their extensive holdings.⁷¹ Finally, the governor clarified the duties of tax officials and elaborated a hearing process in order to end the practice of delaying payment of duties while individuals petitioned for exemptions or discounts.⁷²

At the same time that he sought to equalize and streamline the tax system, Espinosa Mireles encouraged the development of urban properties by decreeing temporary exemptions to those who repaired or otherwise improved such properties. The owners of rural lands not being cultivated were to suffer a tripling of taxes while municipal authorities were authorized to distribute such lands to local residents for cultivation.⁷³

⁷⁰Decréto núm. 32, Saltillo, 8 February 1917.

⁷¹See Espinosa Mireles' order of 31 January 1916 in Exp. 12,338: "Tesorería General del Estado . . . correspondencia," AGECE: Revolución.

⁷²Decréto núm. 153, Saltillo, 13 November 1918, AGECE: Decretos.

⁷³Decréto núm. 14, Saltillo, 28 February 1916; Décreto núm. 19, Saltillo, 11 March 1916, AGECE: Decretos.

Education, a cause championed by Carranza as governor and president, found an enthusiastic supporter in Espinosa Mireles as well. The quickness with which the governor acted on the education issue indicated his acknowledgement of its importance. Special state funds were earmarked for education and the expansion and improvement of schools was a top priority. Teachers' salaries were increased, sometimes by as much as 50 percent.⁷⁴ In addition to reforms in the state tax system designed to create more revenue for schools, Espinosa Mireles decreed a 10 percent tax on admission to all forms of public entertainment and used the funds for education. In a more creative measure, he ordered a batch of confiscated opium sold and the proceeds given to public schools.⁷⁵

In his attention to local educational needs, Espinosa Mireles was careful to emphasize municipal autonomy. A 1916 decree revised a tax placed on all municipal treasuries since 1883 that supported preparatory and professional instruction statewide. The money now went directly to the municipalities to be used for primary education. Espinosa Mireles stressed that this measure provided greater local autonomy and fulfilled one of the promises of the revolution: to grant

⁷⁴See for example Exp. 12,297: ". . . San Buenaventura," 9 November 1915; Exp. 11,916: "Saltillo," 22 September 1915; Exp. 11,942: "Hidalgo," 30 September 1915, AGE: Revolución. See also Decréto núm. 2, Saltillo, 14 September 1915, AGE: Decretos.

⁷⁵Circular 5, Sección de Contaduría, Saltillo, 15 January 1918, AGE: Circulares; Espinosa Mireles to Pres. mun. Saltillo, 15 October 1916, Exp. 210: "Presidencia Municipa de Saltillo, Oficios diversos," AGE: Revolución.

municipalities a significant degree of independence. Likewise, in creating a Junta Central de Educación with branches in each municipality, the governor was careful to note that municipal autonomy would be preserved.⁷⁶

Efforts to expand the availability of education included the requirement that all mining, agricultural, and industrial companies establish at least one primary school in areas where there were over thirty children. Another decree stipulated that there be at least one school for adult men and women for every ten thousand inhabitants in each municipality. Such measures demonstrated Espinosa Mireles' dedication to Coahuila's workers and he emphasized the need to use education to help workers perform their tasks and better understand and appreciate the laws of the Carranza administration.⁷⁷ Finally, more schools were created to help train teachers, and the establishment of a Coahuilan Pedagogical Congress sought to promote good teaching.⁷⁸

The anti-clerical tone that characterized many Carrancista state governments was evident in Espinosa Mireles' insistence on the centrality of public schools and liberal

⁷⁶"... estando entre las promesas de la Revolución triunfante, la de dejar a los municipios en la mayor independencia. . .," Decréto núm. 20, Saltillo, 15 March 1916; Decréto núm. 11, Saltillo, 18 January 1916, AGECE: Decretos.

⁷⁷Circular 1240, n.d., in Exp. 12,166: "Oficios Diversos . . . Ramos Arizpe," 14 September 1915, AGECE: Revolución; Decréto núm. 5, Saltillo, 5 October 1915, AGECE: Decretos.

⁷⁸See Decréto núm. 18, Saltillo, 10 March 1916; Decréto núm. 7, Saltillo, 1 December 1915, AGECE: Decretos.

education. Even private institutions were prohibited from teaching religion and were compelled to follow the curriculum and use the texts of public schools. Inspectors visited private schools to assure compliance. Only lay schools, insisted the governor, could teach individuals to govern themselves, and uniformity of teaching was necessary for the formation of a "national soul."⁷⁹

In his continued support for Coahuila's workers, Espinosa Mireles also proved himself an heir of Carranza. The governor encouraged workers to organize and even donated money to the state's mutualist societies, many of which had been suppressed as "Carrancista" during the era of Villa's domination.⁸⁰ Favorable legislation for workers was a hallmark of the Espinosa Mireles administration, and in 1916 the governor decreed the establishment of a separate ministry of labor. This office was entrusted with the gathering of labor statistics, coordination of workers' organizations, settlement of labor disputes, and formulation of laws for the state's laborers. In 1918, moreover, Espinosa Mireles hosted a national meeting of labor unions at which the Confederación Regional Obrero Mexicano (CROM) was established.⁸¹

⁷⁹Decreto núm. 16, Saltillo, 2 March 1916, AGE: Decretos.

⁸⁰Exp. 12,220 "Documentos Diversos relacionados con las sociedades mutualistas en el estado," 10 March 1915, AGE: Revolución.

⁸¹Villarello Vélez, Historia de la revolución, pp. 305-308; Richmond, "Factional Política Strife," p. 65.

Espinosa Mireles' efforts to support workers and to bolster Coahuila's educational system were in many ways the continuation of policies begun under the Carranza governorship. The emphasis on municipal autonomy and local initiative helped Espinosa Mireles sustain the loyalty of Coahuilan authorities, just as it acknowledged the state's strong heritage of federalism. Changes in the taxation system represented a clear determination to finally abolish the privileges of the Porfirian era. At the same time, however, the promise of effective suffrage that had been the banner of Maderismo, was not immediately realized. Although he introduced electoral reforms and paid lip service to popular political participation, Espinosa Mireles, often with the help of Carranza, manipulated elections and maintained a largely authoritarian government.

The agrarian policies followed by Carranza and Espinosa Mireles perhaps best demonstrated the limits of Constitutionalist reform. Significant expropriations did occur, and Espinosa Mireles proved himself willing to appropriate lands and resources. Yet such measures were temporary, intended to address immediate economic needs or to punish political enemies. Carranza's Ley Agraria eventually restored some communal lands taken away during the Porfiriato, but more significant land reform would have to await the era of Lázaro Cárdenas.

Espinosa Mireles' approach to the agrarian issue and his

careful manipulation of the political system, were both reflections of Carranza's moderate ideological stance, and elements of the more immediate need to reconstruct war-torn Coahuila. At the same time, viable reforms did occur in several areas. In his emphasis on local autonomy, continuing support of Coahuila's workers, restructuring of the tax system, and populist approach to education, Espinosa Mireles acknowledged the significance of the past revolution and the extent to which the demands of the popular classes (while not always articulated) were a central part of that revolution.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Mexico City

Archivo General de la Nación: Archivo de Gobernación, Ramo de Madero, Ramo de Trabajo.

Archivo Histórico de la Defensa Nacional: Fondo Revolución, Archivo Cancelados y Pensionistas.

Centro de Estudios de Historia de México, CONDUMEX: Archivo del General Bernardo Reyes, Archivo de Venustiano Carranza.

Museo de Antropología e Historia: Archivo Francisco I. Madero, Archivo de la Palabra.

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores: Archivo de Relaciones Exteriores.

Saltillo, Coahuila

Archivo General del Estado de Coahuila: Fondo Siglo XIX, Fondo Revolución, Fondo Decretos, Fondo Circulares, Fondo Copiadores.

Archivo General del Tribunal Superior de Justicia: Fondo Histórico.

Archivo Municipal de Saltillo: Fondo Presidencia Municipal.

United States

Department of State. Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Mexico, 1910-1929.

Department of State. Consular Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Piedras Negras, Mexico, 1868-1906.

Department of State. Consular Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Saltillo, Mexico, 1876-1906.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books

- Alessio Robles, Vito. Coahuila y Texas. Desde la consumación de la independencia hasta el tratado de paz de Guadalupe Hidalgo. 2 Vols. 2nd Ed. Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1979.
- Carman, Michael Dennis. United States Customs and the Madero Revolution. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1976.
- Cerutti, Mario. Burguesía, capitales e industria en el norte de México. Mexico: Alianza Editorial, 1992.
- _____. Economía de guerra y poder regional en el siglo XIX: Gastos militares, aduanas y comerciantes en años de Vidaurri (1885-1864). Mexico: Archivo General del Estado de Nuevo León, 1983.
- _____, ed. Monterrey, Nuevo León, el Noreste: Siete Estudios Históricos. Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, 1987.
- Chevalier, Francois. "The North Mexican Hacienda: Eighteenth Nineteenth Century." In The New World Looks at its History, eds. A.R. Lewis and T.F. McGann, 95-102. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963.
- Coahuila: Reseña geográfico y estadística. Mexico: Librería de la Vda. de C. Bouret, 1909.
- Cockroft, James D. Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution 1900-1913. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968.
- Coerver, Don M. and Linda B. Hall. Texas and the Mexican Revolution: A Study in State and National Border Policy 1910-1920. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1984.
- Cosío Villegas, Daniel, ed. Historia moderna de México. El Porfiriato. La vida económica. 2 Vols. Mexico: Editoria Hermes, 1965.
- _____. Historia moderna de México. El Porfiriato. La vida política interior. 2 Vols. Mexico: Editorial Hermes, 1970.
- Cuéllar Valdés, Pablo M. Geografía del Estado de Coahuila. Saltillo, Coahuila: Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1981.

- _____. Historia de la ciudad de Saltillo. Saltillo: Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1982.
- _____. Historia del Estado de Coahuila. Saltillo, Coahuila: Biblioteca de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1979.
- Cumberland, Charles C. Mexican Revolution: The Constitutionalist Years. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972.
- _____. Mexican Revolution: Genesis Under Madero. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952.
- _____. Mexico: The Struggle for Modernity. New York: Oxford, 1968.
- Enríquez Terrazas, Eduardo, and José Luis García Valero. Coahuila: una historia compartida. Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, 1989.
- Enríquez Terrazas, Eduardo, and Martha Rodríguez García, eds. Coahuila: textos de su historia. Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, 1989.
- Falcón, Romana. "Raíces de la Revolución: Evaristo Madero, el primer eslabón de la cadena." In The Revolutionary Process in Mexico: Essays on Political and Social Change, 1880-1940, ed. Jaime Rodríguez O., 33-56. Los Angeles: University of California, 1990.
- _____. "Logros y límites de la centralización Porfirista. Coahuila vista desde arriba." In El dominio de las minorías: República Restaurada y Porfiriato, eds. Anne Staples, Gustavo Verduzco Igartúa, Carmen Blázquez Domínguez, and Romana Falcón, 95-135. Mexico: El Colegio de Mexico, 1989.
- Favret Tondato, Rita. Tenencia de la tierra en el estado de Coahuila (1880-1987). Saltillo, Coahuila: Universidad Autónoma Agraria Antonio Narro, 1992.
- Fujigaki Cruz, Esperanza. "Las rebeliones campesinas en el porfiriato 1876-1910." In Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana. Vol. 2, La tierra y el poder, ed. Enrique Semo, 175-264. Mexico: Siglo XXI Editores, 1988.
- Guerra, Eduardo. Historia de la Laguna. Torreón, su origen y sus fundadores. Saltillo: Imprenta de Coahuila, 1932.

- Guerra, Francois-Xavier. México. Del Antiguo Régimen a la Revolución. 2 Vols. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988.
- Hall, Linda B. and Don M. Coerver. Revolution on the Border: The United States and Mexico, 1920-1920. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988.
- Harris, Charles H. A Mexican Family Empire: The Latifundia of the Sánchez Navarros, 1765-1867. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975.
- Hart, John M. Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.
- Hernández Chávez, Alicia and Ildefonso Dávila del Bosque. "La querrela de Coahuila: municipios y jefes políticos en el Siglo XIX." In Archivo Municipal de Saltillo. Catálogo del Fondo Jefatura Política 1885-1895, 1-16. Saltillo, Coahuila: Archivo Municipal de Saltillo, 1985.
- Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana. Diccionario histórico y biográfico de la revolución mexicana. Vol. 1. Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1990.
- Junco, Alfonso. Carranza y los orígenes de su rebelión. 2nd ed. Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1955.
- Katz, Friedrich. "Pancho Villa, Peasant Movements, and Agrarian Reform in Northern Mexico." In Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution, ed. David A. Brading, 59-75. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
- _____. The Secret War in Mexico. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1981.
- Kerig, Dorothy Pierson. Luther T. Ellsworth: U.S. Consul on the Border During the Mexican Revolution. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1975.
- Knight, Alan. The Mexican Revolution. 2 Vols. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990.
- Lieuwen, Edwin. Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army 1910-1940. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968.

- Lloyd, Jean Dale. "Los levantamientos del Partido Liberal Mexicano en 1906." In Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana. Vol. 3, Campeños, terratenientes, y revolucionarios 1910-1920, ed. Oscar Betanzos, 37-59. Mexico: Siglo XXI Editores, 1988.
- López Portillo, Esteban. Anuario coahuilense para 1886. Saltillo, Coahuila: Tipografía del Gobierno en Palacio, 1886.
- _____. Catecismo geográfico, político, e histórico del estado de Coahuila de Zaragoza. 2nd. ed. Saltillo, Coahuila: Tipografía del Gobierno en Palacio, 1897.
- Meyer, Michael C. Huerta: A Political Portrait. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972.
- Meyers, William K. "Second Division of the North: Formation and Fragmentation of the Laguna's Popular Movement, 1910-11." In Riot, Rebellion and Revolution: Rural Social Conflict in Mexico, ed. Friedrich Katz. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Moreno, Pablo C. Torreón: Biografía de la más joven de las ciudades mexicanas: La Comarca Lagunera. Saltillo, Coahuila: Talleres Gráficos Coahuila, 1951.
- Perkins, Clifford Alan. Border Patrol: With the U.S. Immigration Service on the Mexican Boundary 1910-1954. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1978.
- Plana, Manuel. El reino del algodón en México: la estructura agraria de La Laguna (1855-1910). Torreón: Ayuntamiento de Torreón, 1991.
- Quirk, Robert E. The Mexican Revolution 1914-1915: The Convention of Aguascalientes. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960.
- Raat, W. Dirk. Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903-1923. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M Press, 1981.
- Reed, John. Insurgent Mexico. New York: International Publishers, 1969.
- Richmond, Douglas W. Venustiano Carranza's Nationalist Struggle, 1893-1920. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1983.

- Ross, Stanley R. Francisco I. Madero: Apostle of Mexican Democracy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1955.
- Ruíz, Ramón Eduardo. The Great Rebellion: Mexico 1905-1924. New York: W. W. Norton, 1980.
- _____. Labor and the Ambivalent Revolutionaries 1911-23. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.
- Sariego, Juan Luís. Enclaves y minerales en el norte de México: historia social de los mineros de Cananea y Nueva Rosita 1900-1970. Mexico: Ediciones de la Casa Chata, 1988.
- Vargas-Lobsinger, María. La hacienda de "La Concha": Una empresa algodonera de la Laguna 1883-1917. Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1984.
- Valdés, José de la Luz. Monografía del municipio de Arteaga, Coahuila. Saltillo: Talleres Gráficos del Gobierno del Estado, 1966.
- Vasconcelos, José. Don Evaristo Madero (Biografía de un patricio). Mexico: Impresiones Modernas, 1958.
- Villarello Vélez, Ildefonso. Historia de la Revolución Mexicana en Coahuila. 2nd ed. Saltillo, Coahuila: Biblioteca de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 1983.

Articles

- Beezley, William H. "Governor Carranza and the Revolution in Coahuila." Americas 33 (October 1976): 50-61.
- Carr, Barry. "Las peculiaridades del norte mexicano, 1880-1927: Ensayo de interpretación." Historia mexicana 22 (enero-marzo, 1973): 320-346.
- Falcón, Romana. "La desaparición de jefes políticos en Coahuila. Una paradoja porfirista." Historia mexicana 37 (enero-marzo 1988): 423-467.
- Harris, Charles H., and Louis R. Sadler. "The Plan of San Diego and the Mexican-United States War Crisis of 1916: A Reexamination." Hispanic American Historical Review 58 (August 1978): 381-408.

- Jacques, Leo M. Dambourges. "The Chinese Massacre in Torreón in 1911." Arizona and the West 16 (Autumn 1974): 233-246.
- Kroeber, Clifton B. "La cuestión del Nazas hasta 1913." Historia mexicana 20 (enero 1971): 412-427.
- Mecham, J. Lloyd. "The Jefe Político in Mexico." Southwestern Social Science Quarterly 13 (June 1933): 333-352.
- Meyers, William K. "Politics, Vested Rights, and Economic Growth in Porfirian Mexico: The Cía Tlahualilo in the Comarca Lagunera, 1885-1911." Hispanic American Historical Review 57 (August 1977): 425-454.
- Pompa y Pompa, Antonio. "Estructura de la sociedad coahuilense en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX y la primera del siglo XX." Humanitas 10 (1969): 629-639.
- Richmond, Douglas W. "Factional Political Strife in Coahuila, 1910-1920." Hispanic American Historical Review 60 (February 1980): 49-68.

Unpublished Sources

- Bryan, Anthony T. "Mexican Politics in Transition, 1900-1913: The Role of General Bernardo Reyes." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1970.
- Langston, William Stanley. "Coahuila in the Porfiriato: A Study of Political Elites." Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1980.
- Meyers, William K. "Interest Group Conflict and Revolutionary Politics: A Social History of La Comarca Lagunera, Mexico, 1880-1911." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1980.