The Establishment of the Nueva Vizcaya Militia During the Administration of Teodoro De Croix 1776–1783

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WILLIAM A. DEPALO, JR.

The question of the security of the northern frontier of New Spain occupied the attention of Spanish authorities throughout the eighteenth century. Major reorganizations of frontier defensive strategy were ordered in 1729 and again in 1772 in an unsuccessful effort to stem the rising level of Apache hostilities. It was not until the appointment in 1776 of Teodoro de Croix to administer the newly created Commandancy General of the Interior Provinces that the inferiority of the frontier soldier and the over-extension of the presidial line were finally recognized as the principal causes of the region's deterioration. With cognizance of these factors, Croix corrected the deficiencies in the existing presidial line and implemented the measures necessary to establish a provincial militia corps to augment the regular garrisons in the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya and Coahuila. Raised without expense to the Crown, by 1783 the militia had effectively doubled the troop strength of these two provinces and had made an invaluable contribution to the pacification achieved on the northern frontier during Croix's administration.

The failure of the reorganized presidial line to curtail Apache incursions, the acquisition of Louisiana, and the threat posed by the Russians to the new province of Upper California had forced the Crown by 1776 to implement measures designed to strengthen the region.¹ Accordingly, Charles III ordered the reorganization of the northern provinces into the separate and independent Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas, comprising the provinces of California, Sonora, New Mexico, Nueva Vizcaya,
Coahuila, and Texas. For the position of Commandant General, the King appointed don Teodoro de Croix, Caballero of the Teutonic order and former castellan of the port of Acapulco.  

Croix's appointment carried with it certain royal instructions pertaining to the administration of the nascent autonomous command. With regard to frontier security, the Commandant General was ordered to begin the formation of a provincial militia corps in Nueva Vizcaya to include additional Indian auxiliaries. To further consolidate the defense of the territory, Croix was instructed to establish well-organized frontier settlements capable of defending themselves against Indian depredations. While a principal article of the royal instructions admonished Croix to secure the conversion of the numerous Indian nations indigenous to the region, the Commandant General placed preponderant emphasis upon matters associated with the security of his command.

In order to observe the actual condition of his new command at first hand, Croix conducted an extensive inspection of the northern frontier. During this he convened three *juntas de guerra*. His own observations and the recommendations of the councils of war led the Commandant General to conclude that the presidial line was poorly placed and incapable of defending the interior settlements. Accordingly, Croix ordered the realignment of certain presidios in Nueva Vizcaya and Coahuila to more effectively protect the interior, and to coincide with the proposed line of military settlements. This strategy was based on a concept of two separate but mutually supporting lines of defense: a primary line of presidios and a secondary line of military settlements. The existing presidial line was reorganized into three divisions, each of which provided a forward screen for the assigned sector of the military settlement line. The military settlement line in turn added depth to the system of defense and rendered assistance to the presidial line when and where required. This organizational concept was designed to consolidate defense at critical points by drawing the presidial line closer to the interior settlements and coordinating the activities of both lines of de-
The establishment of the line of military settlements was essentially completed by May 1780 and, with slight modification, this basic defensive strategy remained intact until the termination of Croix's administration in 1783.

While the primary line of defense involved only the relocation or redistribution of forces already in existence, the secondary line of defense was quite another matter. The establishment of the latter cordon necessitated not only the construction of settlements but also the creation of a militia force to garrison the line. When Croix assumed office, he found only 1,997 troops on the entire frontier and therefore asked the Viceroy of New Spain, Antonio María Bucareli, for an immediate increase of 2,000 men. But the existing forces were already burdening the royal treasury with an annual requirement of 800,000 pesos, and because of the imminent possibility of international war, further funds could not be allocated for the frontier. Confronted with an obvious impasse, Croix began the establishment of a provincial militia corps in Nueva Vizcaya to provide the additional troop strength necessary to garrison the line of frontier settlements and secure the principal interior villas, reales de minas, and pueblos.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE MILITIA**

In July 1777 the Commandant General dispatched officers of his command to each interior locality to study the economic situation and initiate the recruitment of able-bodied citizens. By April 1779 Croix's officers had succeeded in forming six militia corps in Nueva Vizcaya and one in Coahuila, comprising a total of 1,852 Spaniards and 1,331 Indian auxiliaries. Of these seven militia corps, four were considered by Croix to be oriented toward the Río Grande, while the remaining three were concerned with the territory south of the Río Nazas. It was these militia units which Croix subsequently drew upon to garrison the military settlement line and supply the compañías volantes.

The first of the four Río Grande-oriented militia units placed in an operational posture was designated the Provincial Dragoon
Corps of San Carlos. Established on 26 April 1778, it was composed of a total of 570 men organized into one squadron of four Spanish companies and six Indian squads, and a second squadron of three Spanish companies and five Indian squads. As was standard with the entire militia corps, each Spanish company was authorized a total of forty-five men, including officers; however, one company in each squadron was assigned a drummer, raising its total strength to forty-six men. Each Indian squad was generally composed of a contingent of twenty-five men. The jurisdiction of the San Carlos dragoons included the settlements of Parral, Santa Bárbara, Guajoquilla, Cerrogordo, and Ciénega de los Olivos. The Spanish companies were garrisoned within these settlements, while the Indian squads were assigned to their respective villages.

The Provincial Dragoon Corps of Príncipe, Santiago, and Santa Rosa de Cosiguriachic formed the remainder of the militia units oriented toward the northern frontier. The Príncipe militia corps, composed of ten companies of Spaniards and ten squads of Tarahumara Indians organized into three squadrons with a total of 671 men, was assigned jurisdiction over the region which included the settlements of Chihuahua, Satevo, and San Gerónimo. The Provincial Dragoons of Santa Rosa de Cosiguriachic formed the largest of the seven militia corps, with 978 men organized into six Spanish companies and 29 Indian squads. The area of responsibility of this unit included the real de minas of Cosiguriachic and its dependencies and the Tarahumara villages which extended along the Sierra Madre Occidental from Papigothic to Carichic. In the province of Coahuila, the Santiago militia corps was assigned to the settlements of Alamo, Parras, and Saltillo. The small contingent of 294 men was organized into two squadrons with a total of seven companies, one of which was composed of Tlaxcalan Indians from the pueblo of San Esteban de Tlaxcala.

South of the Río Nazas, where hostilities were not as intense as on the northern frontier, Croix established the Provincial Dragoon Corps of Durango, San Gabriel, and San Juan Bau-
THE NORTHERN FRONTIER OF NEW SPAIN IN 1780
scale in miles

+ Presidio
= Settlement Line

Compiled from Thomas, Teodoro de Croix, and the Leffra map of 1771.
tista. In Durango, Croix’s subordinates initially proceeded to form six companies of militia, but in the light of the relatively secure position of the provincial capital, the Commandant General felt it more prudent to reduce this number to three companies with a total strength of 126 men. Along the same lines as that established in Durango except with the augmentation of one company of 31 Indian auxiliaries from the pueblo of San Francisco de Malpaís, Croix established the San Gabriel militia corps to garrison the villa of Nombre de Dios, some thirty miles east of Durango. In the more exposed region, which included the settlements of Papasquiaro, Mapimí, and Cuencamé, Croix felt it imperative to form the San Juan Bautista militia corps with eight Spanish companies and two squads of Indian auxiliaries, with a total strength of 387 men.

The Caballero de Croix astutely recognized that variations in local conditions would preclude the attainment of numerical uniformity in the organization of the seven militia corps. He therefore designed the general arrangement to accommodate each specific district. By mid-1779 militia units had been successfully established in all of the principal settlements along the two hundred and fifty leagues of frontier which extended from the Sierra Madre Occidental to the province of Coahuila. Only in the Santiago militia district did the Commandant General fail to complete the formation of units. In the villas of Saltillo and Parras his efforts met with considerable resistance from certain irreconcilable wealthy landowners.

With the formation of the provincial militia corps complete, Croix next turned his attention to the establishment of the line of military settlements prescribed by Article 14 of his Royal Instructions. Croix’s original intention had been to maintain both a provincial militia corps and a line of military settlements. But contributions and taxes having approached their maximum limits, it was decided to garrison the military settlements with militiamen from the already created provincial militia corps. This plan naturally encountered considerable opposition from the settlements whose residents had contributed substantial sums for the
establishment of militia units in their respective areas. Croix envisioned the military settlement line as enhancing the overall security of the frontier, but the citizens failed to understand the advantage of this plan over one allowing each locality to maintain its own integral militia force. This opposition to the relocation of certain militia units persisted throughout Croix's administration and caused him considerable frustration, particularly in the settlements of Parras and Saltillo.

The line of military settlements, as established by Croix, served a double purpose: first and foremost it was a defensive cordon designed to add depth to the presidial line; and secondly, the settlements provided food for both the militia and the presidios. Under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Muñoz, the construction of the settlement line began in October 1779. The first settlement, Namiquipa, was garrisoned by a picket of militia with their families drawn from the provincial militia corps of Santa Rosa de Cosiguriachic. The subsequent settlements were similarly secured by contingents taken from the provincial militia corps nearest to the location of each respective settlement. By May of 1780 the first cordon of the settlement line extending from Namiquipa to Coyamé had been completed. The second cordon, established during 1781, stretched from Dolores to Cuatro Ciénegas circumventing the Bolsón de Mapimi, and included three forty-man posts between Calabazillas and Saltillo. To provide additional security to the interior, Croix reactivated the suppressed presidios of Cerro Gordo and El Pasaje and garrisoned them with militiamen assigned the duty of escorting traffic from the Río Nazas to Chihuahua.

The next organizational measure implemented by Croix was designed to provide the militia with some flexibility and to relieve the militia fund from increasing expenditures. From his force of 1,852 Spanish militiamen, the Commandant General formed a unit of three hundred men to be maintained on active service at all times. This contingent of dragoons was assigned the mission "to carry the war to the rancherías of the hostile Indians, to dislodge those [Indians] who may penetrate between the lines, and
to castigate those who attempt to introduce hostilities into the province.”35 Croix also planned to employ this unit to augment the presidial line by either reinforcing understrength presidios or replacing garrisons engaged in offensive campaigns.36 The troops of this unit were enlisted for a term of six years, following which they received certificates awarding permanent exemption from further frontier military service. Moreover, after completing the prescribed term of enlistment, these militiamen were eligible for grants of land (solares) within the military settlement line.37

From the remaining 1,552 militiamen, Croix organized a special force of 176 grenadiers (granaderos) for the accomplishment of particularly arduous missions.38 The unit was composed of the four tallest, strongest, and most robust men in each of the 44 militia companies, who remained with their respective units until assembled in part or intact at the order of the Commandant General. The grenadiers placed no additional fiscal requirement upon the militia fund as they were paid only when mobilized for a particular assignment.39

The formation of these two special units reduced the number of uncommitted Spanish militiamen available to garrison the military settlement line to 1,376 men. But Croix considered the aforementioned disposition of forces to be the most advantageous for the defense of the province since it permitted effective military operations, assured the ultimate defense of the territory, and relieved the royal treasury of expenditures it would have otherwise been obligated to make. Moreover, these militia units could also be committed to counter any threat posed by European encroachment.40

Supplementing the Spanish militiamen were a total of 1,331 Indian auxiliaries distributed as follows: Santa Rosa de Cosigurachic, 725; Príncipe, 250; San Carlos, 275; San Juan Bautista, 50; and San Gabriel, 31. These Indian auxiliaries served without pay even when engaged in offensive campaigns, the provision of daily rations being their sole remuneration.41 While the principal mission of the Indian auxiliaries was the defense of their respective villages, Croix also assigned them an important rôle in
securing the frontier as a whole. The Santa Rosa contingent, largest by far, was given the mission of interdicting the frontier from the Sierra Madre Occidental to the Real de Cosiguriachic and providing mutual warning and support for contiguous Indian villages. In lieu of interdiction operations, the Indian auxiliaries attached to the Príncipe, San Juan, and San Carlos militia corps were assigned special joint operations with their Spanish counterparts in the vicinity of the Bolsón de Mapimi. A second type of operation involved the employment of two detachments of thirty Indian auxiliaries each and an equal contingent of Spaniards to conduct annual visitas to Tarahumara and Tepehuana villages in order to insure their tranquility and apprehend intransigents. In all of these operations, Croix permitted the Indians to wear their native clothing, use their own weapons (bows and arrows primarily), and conduct their marches on foot. They were, however, placed under the command of the captain of their respective militia corps and subject to the supervision of the Commandant of Militias and the Inspector of Militias. In all cases, Indian auxiliaries were permitted to reside in their own villages but were required to solicit written approval from their Spanish commander in order to leave.

**RECRUITMENT OF THE MILITIA**

Prior to the establishment of an organized militia, the response of frontier settlements to Indian depredations was characterized by inconsistency and inefficiency. Captain Ignacio Garda Rebollo, in a report to Commandant General Croix, provides a pertinent illustration of the procedure used by the settlement of Parras to assemble and equip a reaction force:

The method which settlements have followed in gathering for campaigns is for each individual to present himself at the royal house with all the necessary equipment, arms, mounts, and clothing; and when the situation required it the citizens and merchants contributed money and provisions for the equipping of most of the men.
As may be seen from this description, the method of raising a contingent of settlers to give chase to raiding Apaches was a lengthy and uncertain procedure. Moreover, the process of selecting individuals to participate in the castigation of hostiles was subject to considerable abuse and injustice. Generally, participants were selected by the local administrator (justicia) who most often conscripted those citizens least able to afford the gratuities and donations which would have exempted them from such service. With such obvious inequities contributing to the impotence of frontier defense, the Caballero de Croix initiated recruitment procedures designed to eliminate discriminatory selection of militiamen.

The procedure adopted to select individuals for service in the militia was known as the sorteo. It consisted of a system of drawing lots from among the eligible men of a particular settlement to determine who would be required to serve in the militia. To supplement the sorteo, Croix permitted the practice of election of officers to continue, as he felt that the militia would operate more effectively under leaders of their own choosing. It was Croix's belief that this process of arbitrary selection would not only eliminate many past injustices but would also fill the militia with fit men while leaving those not on the rolls free to pursue their respective occupations.

As an incentive to enlistment, the Commandant General, with royal approval, extended the privileges and exemptions of the fuero militar to the militia. The fuero militar consisted of a special privilege given to officers and enlisted men granting them the benefit of military jurisdiction in both civil and criminal cases. While engaged in active service, all militiamen held the complete fuero; but during periods of inactivity, only the officers and their wives enjoyed the full fuero, the enlisted men retaining military jurisdiction in only criminal cases. In addition to the privileges conferred by the fuero militar, certain pre-eminences such as relief from various taxes and exemption from the requirement to provide quarters and subsistence to the regular army were also extended to the militia. The fuero militar, while effective as
an incentive for enlistment in the militia, was also a source of friction between civil and military authorities. The special privilege was frequently used by militiamen as a general license for evasion of the law.\textsuperscript{52}

In the area of recruitment, Croix experienced minimal difficulty in the establishment of the militia. While the transient nature of many frontier settlements placed a heavier reliance upon the more rooted populations and variable local conditions prevented the creation of a uniform number of militia companies, there were no insurmountable obstacles. The population of more than 100,000 citizens indicated on the general tax roles (\textit{padrones generales de poblaciones}) proved to be more than sufficient to maintain the desired level of militia troop strength.\textsuperscript{53} Moreover, some recalcitrant individuals notwithstanding, the precarious condition of the northern frontier left little doubt in the minds of most settlers that an organized system of defense was imperative.

\textbf{TRAINING OF THE MILITIA}

The implementation of an efficacious training program was yet another factor in the raising and maintaining of a viable militia. In pursuit of this objective, the Commandant General considered as most desirable the establishment of a cadre of regular officers, sergeants, and corporals to conduct the training of militiamen. But the austere condition of the frontier precluded the costly maintenance of a sufficient number of cadre, and any lesser number would have been unable to accomplish the task.\textsuperscript{54} As a solution to this dilemma, Croix implemented a compromise program in which veteran officers were assigned, on a one-time basis, to provide instruction to the officers of the militia. Following this instruction, the militia officers were then reasonably qualified to conduct the training of their respective companies without assistance from regular officers.\textsuperscript{55}

It was envisioned as a consequence of this program that militia units would be able to conduct training in their own villages every Sunday, every two weeks, or every month according to the
interval most compatible with the local situation. The fact that this form of training was only marginal at best did not escape the scrutiny of the Commandant General, who was fully aware that it would never be totally adequate. Croix, however, felt that the program was sufficient for the services which the militia would be required to perform, and at a minimum, the militia would be more effective than raw recruits. 56

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES OF THE MILITIA

By far the most formidable impediment to the establishment of the militia was obtaining sufficient revenues to insure its formation and maintenance. The escalating expenditures for the defense of New Spain exacerbated by the austerity measures imposed by the Royal Order of 1779 forced Teodoro de Croix to rely exclusively upon local resources to finance the militia. 57 Sufficient funds were obtained by imposing certain excise taxes upon the population and by soliciting contributions. Croix's initial efforts to secure funds were quite successful, for the inhabitants of Nueva Vizcaya were generally without reluctance to contribute to the security of their province. 58 But the continuing burden of additional taxes produced subsequent opposition and ambivalence, particularly in the settlements of Parras and Saltillo, and a corresponding decrease in revenues. In general, however, the measures implemented produced sufficient income to enable Croix to successfully raise and maintain a formal militia corps.

Voluntary contributions from individual citizens, collectively termed donativos, constituted the primary source of revenue for the creation of the militia. The donativos consisted principally of currency contributions, but they were also rendered in clothing, weapons, livestock, and trappings which could be used by the militiamen. Contributions varied in accordance with the financial condition of a particular settlement, with the wealthier communities generally furnishing the largest portion of the donations. For example, within the district of the San Juan Bautista militia
corps, the settlement of San Juan del Río contributed 16,264 pesos while only 61 pesos were obtained from the small village of El Gallo. Corresponding donativo variations also occurred between militia districts; the relatively wealthy district of San Juan Bautista gave a total of 30,829 pesos while the district of Santa Rosa de Cosiguriachic, inhabited primarily by Indians, furnished only 5,618 pesos. These disparities did not, however, impede the establishment of the militia. By August 1780, donativos had yielded a total of 131,841 pesos, an amount more than sufficient to cover the initial costs of forming the seven militia corps.

To supplement the donativos in the establishment of the militia and to serve as the principal source of revenue for its ensuing maintenance, Croix levied *arbitrios* or excise taxes upon the sale of selected items. The imposition of arbitrios varied by item and amount of tax with the financial condition of each respective district. In the wealthy mining district of Parral, the following arbitrios yielded nearly 11,000 pesos annually:

- 1 real tax on each silver marc
- 1 real tax on each gold marc converted to silver
- 1 real tax on each mule entering from another province
- 3 pesos tax on each quintal barrel of aguardiente
- 1 peso tax on each quintal barrel of wine
- 2 reales tax on each steer killed or sold
- 4 reales tax on each bull killed or sold
- 2 reales tax on each mule or horse sold
- 1 real tax on each measure (carga) of flour sold

Other products such as wool, tobacco, wheat, wood (cut for resale), salt, cheese, fruit, and mescal received corresponding levies. By August 1780 arbitrios had produced a total of 66,588 pesos which, when added to the amount received to this point from donativos, gave the militia fund a total of 198,430 pesos. It was envisioned by Croix that the continued imposition of arbitrios would provide an annual income of 80,400 pesos for the indefinite sustenance of the militia.

To administer the collection and disbursement of militia funds, Croix established superior juntas de arbitrios in the towns of
Chihuahua, Parral, Durango, and Parras. These juntas collected the arbitrios from all regions of the province and deposited them in the treasuries of their respective districts every four months. The treasuries in turn remitted statements of account to the superior treasuries of either Durango or Chihuahua to be verified by royal treasury officials. Finally, a complete account was furnished annually to the Commandant General to enable its eventual remittance to the King. Under this arrangement, militia funds were collected, administered, and disbursed from locations in the proximity of the seven militia corps rather than being centralized in some distant administrative center. Moreover, this system as established required only slight modification upon implementation of the Intendancy System.

The imposition of arbitrios did not meet with the ubiquitous approval of all residents of the northern frontier. Some settlements attempted to attain relief from the levies by claiming to have experienced debilitating epidemics or impoverishing harvests, while others simply moved their livestock into the adjacent province of Nueva Galicia to avoid payment of taxes. Included among this latter group were the prominent hacendados don Juan Lucas de Lasaga and the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo, owners of considerable land in the vicinity of the villas of Parras and Saltillo. From the inception of the militia, the imposition of additional taxes had encountered vehement opposition from the citizens of this region. By 1782, collections from Parras, a city with an annual commerce valued at 400,000 pesos, totaled only 7,000 pesos in donativos and 10,000 pesos in arbitrios. As a consequence of this recalcitrance, Croix was unable to complete the formation of the Santiago militia corps.

Exacerbating the difficulties encountered in collecting the required revenues, the Commandant General was compelled to answer charges of incompetence levied against him by the prominent hacendados Marqués de Aguayo and Señor Lasaga. These two men had previously complained to the King that as a result of the inactivity of both presidial and militia forces, their properties had been subjected to increasing Indian harassment. In
support of these allegations, they referred to the interval of peace achieved during the administration of Inspector-General Hugo O’Conor (1772-1776). In responding to these charges, Croix placed the blame for any insecurity in that region on the hacendados themselves. He cited their continued resistance to the imposition of arbitrios and their reluctance to provide donativos as the principal reason for the inability to effectively form the militia in Parras and Saltillo. As to the contention of an interval of peace during O’Conor’s administration, Croix suggested that perhaps previous frontier commanders might not have accurately reported the actual extent of hostilities.

Throughout his administration, Croix maintained a genuine concern for the equitable and just imposition of taxes. In this task, he faced the paradoxical dilemma of being incapable of securing the frontier without the militia and of being unable to obtain contributions without curtailing hostilities. Under these circumstances, it is indeed remarkable that Croix succeeded in obtaining sufficient revenues to meet the expenditures entailed by the militia. Despite these obstacles, the Commandant General by mid-1782 had collected donativos and arbitrios amounting to 300,000 pesos, a sum that was more than sufficient to meet the requirements of the provincial militia.

The establishment of the militia required considerable expenditures for the purchase of uniforms, armaments, mounts, and trappings, the preponderance of which were provided by the militia fund. The following figures summarize the cost of equipping each of the three hundred militiamen whom Croix desired to retain on continuous active service:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uniform</td>
<td>45 pesos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musket (escopeta)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saber (espada ancha)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brace of pistols (2)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saddle and trappings</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses (2)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding Mule</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>112 pesos</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To this total of 33,600 pesos, must also be added the extra sum of 4,500 pesos for the purchase of 150 supply mules, which were distributed in the ratio of 25 mules for every 50 militiamen.

The salaries of the officers and men to be maintained on active service constituted the single largest recurring expenditure to the militia fund. The payment of gratuities and salaries to the contingent of three hundred dragoons amounted to an annual cost of 60,120 pesos distributed as follows:

- Pay for 12 Sergeants (240 pesos each per year) .......................... 2,880
- Pay for 6 Drummers (120 pesos each) ........................................ 720
- Pay for 24 Corporals (216 pesos each) ................................. 5,184
- Pay for 258 Soldiers (192 pesos each) .................................. 49,536
- Gratuities for 300 Men (300 pesos for each 50 men) .................. 1,800

Total ......................................................... 60,120

Administrative expenses totaling 6,000 pesos, an allocation of 2,000 pesos to supply rations to Indian auxiliaries participating in campaigns, and an allotment of 1,000 pesos for the purchase of arms and ammunition for the settlement guards brought the total annual requirement for the active militia to 69,120 pesos.

Available documentary evidence provides no precise indication of the pay received by militiamen not engaged in active service. It can be assumed that the remainder of the militia, while being maintained in as great a state of readiness as possible, received no pay unless activated. The schedule of payments for the militia of El Paso del Norte (Province of New Mexico) set down by Croix in the General Report of April 23, 1782, provides some indication of the rate at which activated militia units were paid.
Captains ................................................ 12 reales per day
Lieutenants .......................................... 8 reales per day
SubLieutenants ..................................... 6 reales per day
Sergeants ........................................... 5 reales per day
Corporals ............................................ 4 reales per day
Soldiers ............................................. 3 reales per day

To accommodate additional expenditures of this nature, the militia fund maintained the contingency sum of 20,000 pesos, which if not used was carried forward into the subsequent year.76

Between December 1778 and August 1780 expenditures for the purchase of uniforms, armaments and mounts, salaries, powder and ball, and construction of the military settlement line totaled 94,845 pesos. In this same interval, receipts from arbitrios and donativos amounted to 198,430 pesos, leaving a net balance of 103,585 pesos. With the sum of 20,000 pesos withheld by Croix for anticipated emergency expenditures, there remained a surplus of 83,585 pesos to be carried forward into 1781.77 To augment this balance and to sustain the militia fund indefinitely were the annual arbitrio revenues estimated initially at 80,400 pesos but later revised down to 60,000 pesos.78 While Croix did not have an overabundance of revenues by any means, he did secure sufficient funds to maintain the militia and complete the line of military settlements. But difficulties with the imposition of additional taxes continued to plague the Commandant General throughout his administration, and he was constantly striving to establish an equitable system for the collection and distribution of militia funds.79

**CONCLUSION**

On August 15, 1783, Commandant General Teodoro de Croix relinquished his command to his subordinate Felipe de Neve and departed the northern frontier of New Spain to assume the prestigious position of Viceroy of Peru.80 The policies of his administra-
tion brought to the frontier an unprecedented era of peace and stability. Attesting to the success of his predecessor, Commandant General Neve informed the King that considerable amelioration in the general security of the Internal Provinces had been observed. Specifically, Neve reported that hostilities had decreased, the efficacy of troops and officers had increased, and active offensive campaigns had become a common occurrence. But with Neve's untimely death in August 1784 and the ensuing division of the Commandancy General, efforts to continue Croix's policies were repeatedly frustrated and ultimately abandoned.

The viability of the provincial militia following Croix's departure is open to speculation; conclusive documentary evidence has not yet been examined or possibly does not exist. On the basis of what evidence is available, it appears that the militia fell victim to administrative apathy and public opposition to the continuous imposition of taxes. Viceroy Bernardo de Gálvez during his brief administration (1785-1786) faced the omnipresent dilemma of overburdening the populace with taxes or being unable to maintain a militia to secure the frontier. In the face of continued opposition, particularly from the citizens of Parras and Saltillo, Gálvez instructed Commandant General Jacobo Ugarte y Loyola to submit recommendations for the reform of the militia. It would appear on the basis of this order that the militia had deteriorated considerably in the interim since Croix's departure.

The report of Esteban Lorenzo de Tristán, Bishop of Durango, provides further evidence of the subsequent condition of the militia. The Bishop contended that as a result of partisanship and the influence of vested interests, the militia had atrophied to a point of ineffectuality by 1788. He attributed the attrition of militia strength to lack of pay, low morale, and inactivity, and urged a return to the professional and viable militia established during Croix's administration. Other evidence indicates that vehement opposition to the continued imposition of arbitrios to support the militia persisted into the administration of Viceroy Conde de Revillagigedo (1789-1794). Finally, the comments of Zebulon
Montgomery Pike concerning the condition of the militia in 1807 are worthy of note:

The militia are not worthy of particular notice. . . . At a muster of a regiment of militia at Chihuahua one of my men attended, and informed me that there were about 25 who had fire-arms and lances, 50 with bows and arrows only. . . . As to military spirit they have none.87

Pike's description of this contingent of the Nueva Vizcaya militia is bleak indeed.

The ultimate fate that the militia appears to have suffered may have been inevitable under any circumstances. Despite the rapid changes which plagued the Commandancy General following Croix's departure, events outside of New Spain played a major rôle in shaping the destiny of the northern frontier. The French Revolution of 1789, the growing aggressiveness of the nascent United States toward Florida and Louisiana, and the controversy with England over Nootka Sound (1789-1790) all combined to divert Spain's attention from the northern frontier permanently at a time when funds and personnel were critically needed.88 In any event, notwithstanding the subsequent state of the militia, it is clear that Teodoro de Croix brought an unprecedented measure of security to the Internal Provinces and that the militia played a decisive rôle in the achievement of this objective.
APPENDIX A
THE PROVINCIAL MILITIA CORPS
OF NUEVA VIZCAYA, 1779^89

SAN CARLOS 570 Men

1st Squadron—169 men
  1st Co—Parral
  2nd Co—Valle de San Bartolomé
  3rd Co—Real del Oro
  4th Co—Ciénega de los Olivos
  Indians—150 men

2nd Squadron—126 men
  1st Co—Santa Bárbara
  2nd Co—Guajoquilla
  3rd Co—Cerro Gordo
  Indians—125 men

PRINCÍPE 671 Men

1st Squadron—127 men
  1st Co—Chihuahua
  2nd Co—Chihuahua
  3rd Co—Chihuahua

2nd Squadron—126 men
  1st Co—Chuviscar
  2nd Co—Santa Isabel
  3rd Co—Babonoyava
  Indians—125 men

3rd Squadron—168 men
  1st Co—Satevo
  2nd Co—Santa Cruz de Fapacolmes
  3rd Co—Julimes
  4th Co—San Gerónimo
  Indians—125 men

DURANGO 126 Men

1st Squadron
  1st Co—Durango
  2nd Co—Hacienda de Carcaría
  3rd Co—Hacienda de Guadalupe
SAN JUAN 387 Men

1st Squadron—169 men
  1st Co—San Juan del Río
  2nd Co—Real de Coneto
  3rd Co—Valle de la Sauceda
  4th Co—Santiago Papasquiaro

Indians—50 men

2nd Squadron—168 men
  1st Co—Cactlan
  2nd Co—Real de Mapimi
  3rd Co—Río de Nazas
  4th Co—Real de Cuencamé

SAN GABRIEL 157 Men

1st Squadron—126 men
  1st Co—Villa de Nombre de Dios
  2nd Co—Villa de Nombre de Dios
  3rd Co—Villa de Nombre de Dios
  Indians—31 men

SANTA ROSA DE COSIGURIACHIC 978 Men

1st Squadron—127 men
  1st Co—Real de Cosiguriachic
  2nd Co—Carretas
  3rd Co—Cerro Prieto
  Indians—250 men

2nd Squadron—126 men
  1st Co—Valle de Basuchil
  2nd Co—Papigochic
  3rd Co—Temósachic
  Indians—475 men

SANTIAGO 294 Men

1st Squadron—168 men
  1st Co—Pueblo de Alamo
  2nd Co—Parras
  3rd Co—Parras
  4th Co—Parras
2nd Squadron—126 men
1st Co—Villa del Saltillo
2nd Co—Villa del Saltillo
3rd Co—San Esteban de Tlaxcala

APPENDIX B
THE MILITARY SETTLEMENT LINE, 1780

Distribution of Forces in Nueva Vizcaya and Coahuila

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Line Totals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Line: Presidios</td>
<td>Janos</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casas Grandes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Presidios of</td>
<td>S. Buenaventura</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>405</td>
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<tr>
<td>N. Vizcaya</td>
<td>Carrizal</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>San Eleazario</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidios of</td>
<td>La Babia in Santa Rosa</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coahuila</td>
<td>Aguaverde in San Fernando</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>San Juan Bautista</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Line: Settlements</td>
<td>Namiquipa</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malanoche</td>
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<td>Majalca</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Settlements of</td>
<td>San Gerónimo</td>
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<td>Nueva Vizcaya</td>
<td>Hormigas</td>
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<td>1st Cordon</td>
<td>Chorreras</td>
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<td>Pueblito</td>
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<td>Coyamé</td>
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<td>Presidio de Las Juntas</td>
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<td>Settlements of</td>
<td>Dolores</td>
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<td>2nd Cordon</td>
<td>Santa Rita</td>
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<td>Guajoquilla</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Las Cañas</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Pelayo</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Settlements of</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nueva Vizcaya</td>
<td>San Juan de Casta</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>3rd Cordon</td>
<td>Calabazillas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three 40-man posts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from Calabazillas</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to Saltillo</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two 50-man posts between</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Saltillo and Monclova</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlements of</td>
<td>Villa de Monclova</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coahuila</td>
<td>Nadadores</td>
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<td>Sardinas</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cuatro Ciénegas</td>
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<td>250</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1725</strong></td>
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NOTES


2. Ibid.


4. Ibid., paragraph 14.

5. Thomas, p. 19.

6. Ibid., pp. 35-36.


8. Croix to José de Gálvez, No. 458, Arispe, Jan. 23, 1780, Informe General, paragraph 122, AGI, Guadalajara 278. (Hereinafter cited as Croix, General Report of 1780.)

9. Ibid., paragraphs 127-32. The presidios of Janos, San Buenaventura, and Carrizal and a *compañía volante* garrisoned in the Casas Grandes valley comprised the first division of presidios; the presidio of San Eleazar and the Paso del Norte militia squadron made up the second division; and in Coahuila, the third division consisted of the relocated presidios of La Babia (in Santa Rosa) and Aguaverde (in San Fernando), and the well-placed presidio of San Juan Bautista. See Appendix B for a complete breakdown of the distribution of forces on the presidial and military settlement lines.


12. Ibid., p. 152.


14. Ibid., paragraphs 74-75.

15. Thomas, p. 54.
16. Croix to Gálvez, No. 595, Arispe, Jan. 23, 1781, paragraph 14. For a complete table of organization of the Provincial Militia Corps refer to Appendix A.

17. Ibid., carpeta 7.
18. Ibid., paragraph 14.
19. Ibid., paragraph 24.
20. Ibid., paragraph 44.
21. Ibid., paragraph 47.
22. Ibid., paragraph 75.
23. Ibid., paragraph 37.
24. Ibid., paragraph 40.
25. Ibid., paragraph 36.
26. Ibid., paragraph 76.
27. Thomas, p. 54.
31. Thomas, p. 54.
32. Croix to Gálvez, No. 595, Arispe, Jan. 23, 1781, paragraphs 59-60.
33. Thomas, p. 47.
34. Croix to Gálvez, No. 595, Arispe, Jan. 23, 1781, paragraph 60.
35. Ibid., paragraph 79.
36. Ibid., paragraph 82.
37. Ibid., paragraphs 96-98.
38. Ibid., paragraph 83.
39. Ibid., paragraph 99.
40. Ibid., paragraphs 85-90.
41. Ibid., paragraph 129.
42. Ibid., paragraphs 126-27.
43. Ibid., paragraph 130.
44. Ignacio García Rebollo to Teodoro de Croix, Saltillo, Sept. 1, 1780. Informe sobre el establecimiento de milicias en las jurisdicciones de Parras, Saltillo, y Mapimí, paragraph 1, AGI, Guadalajara 283.
45. Croix to Gálvez, No. 595, Arispe, Jan. 23, 1781, paragraph 64.
46. Ibid., paragraph 71.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., paragraph 51.
49. Lyle N. McAlister, The "Fuero Militar" in New Spain 1764-1809 (Gainesville, 1957), p. 7. Military fueros were of two specific types: the fuero militar ordinario pertaining to the regular army and the fuero
militar privilegiado applying only to the militia. The latter fuero was codified in Spain in 1767 with the issuance of the definitive Real declaración sobre puntos esenciales de la ordenanza de milicias provinciales de España.

50. Ibid., p. 11.
51. Ibid., p. 9.
52. Ibid., p. 14.
53. Croix to Gálvez, No. 595, Arispe, Jan. 23, 1781, paragraph 77.
54. Ibid., paragraph 101.
55. Ibid., paragraph 103.
56. Ibid., paragraphs 104-05.
57. Croix to Gálvez, No. 735, Arispe, April 23, 1783, enclosing copy of the first part and the original of the second part of his Informe General, paragraphs 434-35, AGI, Guadalajara 279. (Hereinafter cited as Croix to Gálvez, No. 735, Arispe, April 22, 1782.) The Royal Order of 1779 which, among other things, suspended offensive operations, was promulgated to reduce expenditures as a result of Spain's imminent involvement with the rebellious English colonies. For a detailed interpretation of the Royal Order of 1779 see Max L. Moorhead, The Apache Frontier: Jacobo Ugarte and Spanish Indian Relations in Northern New Spain 1769-1791 (Norman, 1968), pp. 120-33.
58. Thomas, p. 41.
60. Ibid., paragraph 45.
61. Ibid., carpeta 7.
62. Ibid., paragraph 17.
63. Ibid., carpeta 7.
64. Ibid., paragraphs 116-20. The depositories for the militia revenues were established at Durango (caja real), Chihuahua, Parral, Valle de San Bartolomé, Real del Oro, and Parras.
65. Ibid., paragraph 121. The extension of the Intendancy System to New Spain was approved by Charles III in August 1769, and a single intendancy was established in the province of Sonora in that same year. The full system of twelve intendancies was not, however, implemented until 1786. Herbert I. Priestly, José de Gálvez Visitador General of New Spain 1765-1771, University of California Publications in History, vol. 5 (Berkeley, 1916), p. 289.
67. Croix to Gálvez, No. 735, Arispe, April 23, 1782, paragraph 424.
69. Thomas, p. 60.
The escopeta was a light, smooth-bore, muzzle-loading musket varying in caliber from .60 to .75 and utilizing the miguelet ignition system. The espada ancha was a popular single-edged sword with a short eighteen-inch blade. The pistol was a smooth-bore weapon of .70 caliber with a 12.5 inch barrel and a miguelet ignition. Sidney B. Brinckerhoff and Odie B. Faulk, *Lancers for the King: A Study of the Frontier Military System of Northern New Spain with a Translation of the Royal Regulations of 1772* (Phoenix, 1965), pp. 71-75.

Felipe de Neve to Galvez, Arispe, Dec. 1, 1783, Informe General, paragraph 56, AGI, Guadalajara 520. Neve, who had previously been governor of the province of California and commandant inspector of the Internal Provinces, was well qualified to comment upon the state of frontier security.


Priestly, p. 140.


Thomas, p. 68.

Croix to Gálvez, No. 458, Arispe, Jan. 23, 1783, paragraph 149, AGI, Guadalajara 278.