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ABSTRACT

As the 1980s prove to be a difficult test for many revolutionary regimes throughout the world, Mexico is not excepted. The nation has been ruled by a single-party regime since the turbulent years of its revolution over sixty years ago. The institutional party, the PRI, has fostered its position as the true guardian of the Revolution and its ideology in similar fashion to the Communist Party in the Soviet Union or China. Just as these Communist regimes face significant challenges to their hegemony, Mexico's PRI also faces the most severe challenges to its legitimacy and hegemony over Mexican political and economic life since conception. The degree to which the military is recognized as an agent of change or guardian of the status quo will be critical for Mexico's future stability and for U.S. strategic interests south of the border.

This study examines the military's historical roots in Mexico from the nation's pre-Columbian heritage through to the contemporary period. The intent of the historical analysis is to search for causes and insights that provide continuity of character within the Mexican military as an institution and to evaluate the degree to which the military responds to crisis in Mexican society. The

suggested thesis that the military serves a key political role by serving to restore equilibrium to the society when the regime's legitimacy is challenged, either externally or internally.

The model offered for understanding the military's role in politics and society in Mexico is that of the Armed Party. Revolutionary military leaders gave birth to the hegemonic regime that rules Mexico. In the process of developing civil supremacy, the armed forces assumed a subservient role within the regime, rather than apart from it as an independent, professionalized military. The political role of the military was defused, not defeated, and has resurfaced during crisis events that threaten the regime's hegemony.

This study focuses on events since 1982 and the current regime crisis. The military's role and responses to the contemporary political and economic challenges are evaluated against the Armed Party model, suggesting that the model is still a valid method for understanding Mexico's record of civil supremacy over the military during the last, sixty years, and for future analysis of a unique Latin American nation.

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CRISIS AND LEGITIMACY:
THE ROLE OF THE MEXICAN MILITARY
IN POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Richard James Kilroy, Jr.
Newport News, Virginia

B.S., Santa Clara University, 1979
M.A., University of Virginia, 1981

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Faculty of the University of Virginia
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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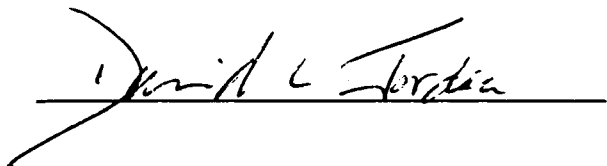
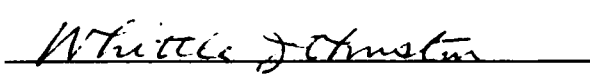



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Three years ago, the thought of returning to the University to complete my doctoral studies was but a pipe dream. The U.S. Army's sages at Assignments Branch reminded me that such a degree was not necessary, and, furthermore, my chances of selection for the Army's Foreign Area Officer program were negligible due to my being in a shortage branch that would not release me for a new career field. Yet, as Jesus reminded his disciples, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

So, first and foremost, I thank God for His involvement in the affairs of men and His help in seeing this project through to completion. Left to my own devices, I probably would have accepted the Army's wisdom and would be digging foxholes in Korea right now. Instead, I will now be able to spend the next six months in language school and the following year in Mexico, furthering this research as an exchange officer to the Mexican Command and General Staff College.

The people at the University of Virginia who have assisted in reaching this plateau are numerous. Within the Department of Government and Foreign Affairs, I wish to first thank Inis Claude, for without his support seven

years ago, I would never have had the confidence to go beyond the Master's level. I also owe much to David Jordan, who as my advisor, first reader, and mentor these past years taught me a greater appreciation for the study of Latin America and exposed me to a deeper level of understanding of this region's unique cultural and political development. I wish to thank Whittle Johnston for his willingness to accept the responsibilities as second reader on this project. His insights have contributed immensely to making this a much more readable work. I am also indebted to William Taylor in the History Department, who made Mexico real for me, rather than simply an academic subject. Through his courses and his comments on the text, I have a greater appreciation for Mexico: its culture, history, art, literature, and most of all, its people.

There are others who have contributed to the completion of this project that I wish to acknowledge. I am thankful for the efforts of Bruce Punch, who as head of the Department of the Army Area Studies and Language Program, helped to procure funding for my research in Mexico this past summer. During that stay, Major Michael Borders, Assistant Army Attache, acted as my sponsor, arranging many interviews, as well as making the services of the Defense Attache Office available for my needs. His

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R.J.K., Jr.

November 1989

INTRODUCTION

A former United States Ambassador to Mexico, Francis J. White, once commented "Any book on Mexico should be written from the impressions the foreigner receives during his first month here. A more prolonged investigation will devour the writer and will never end."¹ Having spent the last year on this research, including six weeks in Mexico, I can attest to the accuracy of Ambassador White's observations. I quickly became consumed by the wealth of information, and the diversity of opinions and insights concerning this subject matter.

There are numerous academics and military professionals in this country who have studied the Mexican military. Their works are referenced throughout this text. In this light, the following research is not a "pioneering" effort; rather, it is a "search and rescue mission," attempting to analyze the theses that have been offered, and testing them against the contemporary issues facing the military in Mexico today. In the process, a "variation" on a thesis is offered in helping to understand the unique

relationship between a political regime and a military organization in a nation whose proximity to the United States makes this effort continual and necessary.

The theme of this study concerns the nature of legitimacy of the political regime in Mexico and how that regime responds to a crisis, whether that crisis is political, economic, or otherwise. The role the military plays in the regime response is evaluated in a historical context as an attempt to determine the nature of civil-military relations that has characterized Mexican political life from antiquity to the contemporary period. In so doing, the Armed Party model is offered as a variation on Samuel Huntington's thesis of civil-military relations for understanding the nature of the relationship of the military to the state in Mexico. This model is then evaluated against the theses that have been offered to this date within the academic communities in this country and Mexico.

To begin, a few definitional constructs are necessary for understanding the key terms used throughout this study. Max Weber defines legitimacy as "a belief in the validity of the existing society and its rules and norms."² Based on this definition, political legitimacy involves the belief that the political institutions and governing authorities offer valid representation of the society's

shared values and enforcement of the society's rules and norms. Roberto Newell G. and Luis Rubio F., in Mexico's Dilemma: The Political Origins of Economic Crisis, would add the element of consensus to this definition, arguing that in Mexico, "the state emerged from the constitutional process as the only legitimate entity capable of imposing and attaining a consensus."³

The nature of legitimacy in Mexico, as in most Latin American nations, also concerns a religious dimension that cannot be ignored. The relationship between Church and State that produced the notion of the divine right of kings, created a significant political vacuum in Latin American nations in the early 19th century as the Iberian monarchies fell and Spain and Portugal's colonial holdings emerged as independent nation-states. Latin American political regimes since then have fought over the "right to rule" in lieu of a monarch.⁴ The spiritual aspect of legitimacy contributes to the belief that once in power, a regime attains legitimacy by virtue of conquest and that challengers are "illegitimate" alternatives to the regime's authority.

In Mexico, the Revolution (from 1910-1940) produced a regime and an ideology that carries an element of religious conversion. The champions of the Revolution were also champions of the new religious faith. The "right to rule"

in contemporary Mexico is measured against the norms and rules of the Revolutionary faith. Legitimacy is measured in the regime's adherence to this tradition.

The nature of a crisis is more difficult to define. In one sense, a crisis could be any situation that questions the regime's political will or legitimacy. From independence through the Revolution, Mexico experienced a recurring state of crisis and instability, broken by occasional stability in the form of strongly authoritarian regimes. Prior to the Revolution and immediately after, each transition of presidential power evoked a crisis for the regime, which sought stability and order in this violent process. Presidential succession today again evokes a crisis of legitimacy as the regime loses its political consensus and must resort to greater fraud to maintain power. Political crises in Mexico also have strong economic roots, measured against the ability of the regime to produce growth and prosperity. In this light, a crisis in Mexico can be defined as any situation which has the potential to create political instability and disorder, creating an imbalance in the relationship between the regime and society.

This study focuses on the response of the military in Mexico to these concepts of crisis and legitimacy as a means for understanding the nature of civil-military

relations. By analyzing these concepts in a historical process, appropriate models may be offered to define the role of the military in Mexican politics and society. The purpose of this study is to determine the most appropriate model of analysis today in light of the regime crisis that emerged in 1982. To do that, however, it is necessary to understand Mexico and its past. What occurs today in Mexican political life is very much a continuation of methods and practices that worked so well in the past.

Chapter I examines the historical development of the armed forces in Mexico from the pre-Columbian period through the Revolution. In summarizing over four hundred years in less than eighty pages, the intent is not to rewrite history. Rather, an effort will be made to discover historical patterns that relate to the themes of crisis and legitimacy that may be insightful for later analysis. The model of civil-military relations that characterizes most of this period is that of a Praetorian Guard, where the military served as the only institutional mechanism for legitimately controlling political power, managing the national bureaucracy, and determining regime succession.

In pre-Revolution Mexico, consensus was a rare commodity in a nation ravaged by deep political divisions on the fundamentals of what constitutes the legitimate

political authority in lieu of a King. The Mexican Revolution produced a political consensus defined by the radical revolutionary ideology written in the Mexican Constitution and personified in the formation of a single political party as the legitimate heir of the crown. The Revolutionary leaders were military officers who sought to change Mexico's praetorian past by reducing the military's strength and the ability of general officers to impose a change of government. By creating a "professionalized" military, these Revolutionary leaders in fact created an Armed Party, a political regime that owed its existence to the loyalty and subservient nature of the military institution.

The Armed Party model is a variation on a theme developed by Samuel Huntington, whose pioneering works on civil-military relations continue to influence much of this dialogue today. In The Soldier and the State, Huntington develops five most likely models of civil-military relations that characterize the interaction of three variables: ideology, power, and professionalism. By combining high and low extremes for power and professionalism, along with antimilitary or promilitary ideologies, eight possible variations occur, of which Huntington discounts three.⁵ Huntington's thesis correlates low military professionalism with a greater

tendency to intervene politically in states with antimilitary ideologies (according to Huntington, most Western nations espouse antimilitary ideologies). As the military becomes more professional, it also becomes less political, since the two ethics are considered mutually exclusive.⁶ In other words, the military institution loses its mystique as a professional organization when military leaders intervene in politics.

According to Huntington's analysis, the model that best summarizes Mexican politics prior to the Revolution is that of an antimilitary ideology, high military power, and low military professionalism. This is also the model that Huntington argued (in the 1950s) characterized most contemporary Latin American states. Since Mexico appeared to be the exception, a more appropriate model for this nation after 1940 appeared to be an antimilitary ideology, low military power, and high military professionalism. The decrease in military power and increase in professionalism would explain the absence of the Mexican military from political intervention. This is the model that Edwin Lieuwen supports in his works, Arms and Politics in Latin America and Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army 1910-1940.⁷

Since these works were written, Huntington's thesis has been challenged by military coups in Brazil in 1964,

Peru in 1968, and Chile in 1973, where highly professional militaries assumed political power from constitutionally elected officials. Mexico alone seemed to bear out the analysis. Yet, even Lieuwen's works were challenged by those who questioned the degree the military in Mexico was "apolitical" and "depoliticized."⁸ In this light, a variation of Huntington's thesis and Lieuwen's analysis, is the Armed Party; a combination of antimilitary ideology, low military power, and low military professionalism. Huntington argues that this model is more appropriate for modern totalitarian states. This study argues that this model is more appropriate for Mexico as well.

Chapter II explores the relationship of the new political regime and the military from 1940 through to 1981. The military's subordination to civilian control and the use of military power to bolster regime maintenance is discussed. The themes of crisis and legitimacy are related to civil-military relations during this period as numerous crisis events trigger regime responses that involve the military. The key issues during this time involve Mexico's role in World War II, the postwar political and economic developments, the violence of the student movement in the 1960s, and Mexico's insurgency and oil wealth in the 1970s. The economic factor in evaluating the regime's efficacy as a criterion for legitimacy is further elaborated throughout

this chapter as Mexico heads towards the regime crisis of 1982.

Chapter III is devoted to the discussion of the regime crisis that came to a head in 1982 with Mexico's financial debacle and the nation's inability to meet its international debt obligations. In addition to the debt issues, drug trade, election fraud, and immigration and population problems are discussed as contributing factors to the regime crisis. The military response to each of these is evaluated against the regime's perceived legitimacy in eyes of Mexico's military leaders. Since the regime crisis stirred much academic interest in the possibility of renewed militarism in Mexico, the appropriateness of the Armed Party model is evaluated against the military response to the crisis events of this period.

In Chapter IV, an analysis of the Mexican military's role today in politics and society is offered. The issues that are discussed are those which many analysts pointed to as indicators of a changing role of the military in Mexico: the modernization program, national security doctrine, and U.S. military ties. This chapter concludes with a discussion of civil-military relations in Mexico in light of international political developments in 1989, offering a projection for the 1990s. The Armed Party model is again

assessed against contemporary developments in Mexico and other parts of the world and the appropriateness of this model in Mexico for future analysis is defended.

This study concludes by offering a suggestion that further analysis of civil-military relations in Mexico is best served by observing other states that are more closely tied to an Armed Party model of civil-military relations: China, the Soviet Union, and other East-bloc nations. This study is not meant to be comparative, since such comparisons between Mexico and modern totalitarian states offer more dissimilarities than similarities. Rather, the intent is to suggest that previous analysis that looked at Mexico in light of civil-military relations in the rest of Latin America or the United States is not adequate. Mexico may simply be *sui generis*, yet some interesting parallels exist between what is occurring in hegemonic Communist regimes and in Mexico as economic liberalization and democratization have created new pressures and strains for one-party systems in these nations. Regime responses to these new crises and the degree of legitimacy the regime maintains as it seeks to manage change are crucial for stability and order. The military's political and social role as guardian of national order is emphasized during such turbulent times.

Endnotes - Introduction

¹ Frank R. Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1964) xii.

² Roberto Newell G. and Luis Rubio F., Mexico's Dilemma: The Political Origins of Economic Crisis (Boulder: Westview, 1984) 2.

³ Newell G. and Rubio F., 34.

⁴ Samuel F. Bailey, ed. Nationalism in Latin America (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1971) 55.

⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1957) 96.

⁶ Huntington, 95.

⁷ Edwin Lieuwen, Arms and Politics in Latin America (New York: Praeger, 1960) and Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army 1910-1940 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1968).

⁸ These themes are developed more fully in Chapter IV. As a result of conversations with LTC Stephen Wager, the use of the terms "apolitical" and "depoliticized" should always be in quotation marks when used in this context.

CHAPTER I - HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES

Any attempt to understand Mexican culture and history and their impact on the military must begin with pre-conquest Mexico. The great Indian civilizations of Mexico are unequalled in our North American heritage, where the Indians were never integrated into the social fabric to the degree it occurred in Mexico. Few *norteamericanos* (the Mexican name for those north of the Rio Grande River)¹ can even identify their nation's indigenous peoples or claim Indian blood in their ancestry. However, the *mestizo* (mixed Indian and white blood) is the dominant ethnic class in Mexico, owing to the high degree of intermarriage amongst white settlers and natives.

Mexicans tend to glorify their Indian past, emphasizing the accomplishments of the great Indian civilizations over their Spanish colonial heritage. Heroes of Mexico's pre-Independence past are Aztec warriors, such as Cuitláhuac and Cuauhtémoc, rather than the Spanish conquistadors, such as Hernán Cortés and Bernal Díaz.² The Mexican armed forces desire to perpetuate the Indian

"warrior-spirit" by naming their battalions and warships after their Indian ancestors.

According to legend, the Aztecs were the last of seven tribes to enter the Anahuac Valley, following the decline of the Toltecs. The Aztecs settled on two small islands in Lake Texcoco, according to the instructions of their God of War, Huitzilopochtli, where Aztec leaders observed an eagle devouring a serpent.³ It was here, about 1325 AD, the Aztecs built the great city of Tenochtitlan, precursor to today's largest city in the world, Mexico City.

The Aztecs were fierce warriors. They conquered most opposing tribes in the region, enslaving their captured foes and offering defeated combatants the "honor" of being sacrificed to Huitzilopochtli. This cruel practice eventually aided in the defeat of the Aztecs, as their indigenous foes cooperated with the Spanish to bring about the fall of the Aztec empire.⁴

Aztec society was based on a military aristocracy, whose leaders were those who distinguished themselves on the battlefield. This military aristocracy produced the chief speaker, who [claiming the title of a "living god"] enjoyed a great deal of power over his subjects.⁵ The chief speaker also possessed a form of **patronato real** (royal patronage) in his ability to nominate priests and control their rise to power.⁶

The contemporary Mexican military considers itself a product of its Indian heritage; however, it is also a product of its Spanish ancestry. The Spanish conquistadors brought the collapse of Mexico's Indian empire with the imposition of western civilization. One historian notes,

This prolonged crusade had left a permanent impression upon the character of the Spaniard. He was a warrior, governed by a quixotic personal pride, who honored feats of daring and endurance but who was apt to despise the peaceful pursuits of industry and commerce as appropriate to an alien and inferior race. He was a Catholic, who had learnt to identify his religion with the independence and the genius of his nation, and for whom the adherents of other religions were the enemies of God, deserving to be persecuted and plundered. The concepts of religion had, for the Spaniard, a peculiar reality; for the sake of transcendental ideas he was ready to kill or be killed, to endure hardships and practice the extremities of mystical devotion, and also to torture and murder with a callousness that was equally extreme.⁷

Although this statement is rather deterministic, it does reflect part of the cultural heritage of the Mexican military that lends itself to predatory militarism. The carnage of the independence through revolutionary periods of Mexican history must be understood in light of this past.

A. Colonial Mexico pre-1810

Spanish control over New Spain lasted approximately three hundred years, almost twice as long as British colonial rule in the North American colonies. Just as the British fought indigenous Indian uprisings, the Spanish also faced numerous rebellions throughout their colonial rule, primarily north of the Chichimec Frontier. These uprisings remained isolated, handled by a few regular army companies. The commercial interests of Mexico City were protected by the **Provincias Internas** (Interior Provinces) which acted as a buffer to prevent the southern migration of the Indians.⁸

The Spanish military presence in 17th century Mexico was primarily composed of **criollos** (Spaniards born in New Spain). The officer corps was based on a system of privilege, rather than professionalism.⁹ **Fueros** (special rights or privileges enjoyed by military officers) were a peculiarity of the Spanish Army that was perpetuated in the New World. These privileges would continue into the independence period, providing a source of contempt and abuse within the military.

The army formed a network of **presidios** (forts) throughout the countryside to assist the pacification effort. The embattled Indians were defeated militarily by

1600, through a war policy of **fuego y muerte** (fire and death). Captured Indians were incorporated into the army by promises of special privileges, such as titles of nobility, food, clothing, and money. Further insurrections were suppressed through deceit and treachery practiced by military officers.¹⁰

For almost two hundred years, the army remained small and insignificant. Permanent troops were limited to two companies of palace guards and the viceroy's escorts.¹¹ Although some **presidios** remained occupied, many were abandoned. Commercial societies in the larger cities of Mexico and Puebla organized their own hired hands to protect their commercial interests from an occasional uprising. Large landholders did likewise in rural areas as it was evident that the colonial army did not have the manpower available to pacify the countryside.¹²

The army did not undergo any significant change until 1764 when the fear of British aggression against Spain's colonial holdings concerned the Spanish crown. Charles III sent two regiments of regular Spanish Army troops to New Spain to bolster their defenses. During this period the standing army was modernized and formed into a regular army and a militia. Conscription, largely of mestizos and mulattos, caused widespread rioting throughout the country. The regular army grew in size, yet remained poorly

equipped, primarily due to the colonial administrators' fear that a large, competent army would threaten their political power and Spanish rule.¹³

The political and economic reforms (known as the Bourbon reforms) occurring in Spain after 1765 had a direct impact on New Spain. The Spanish monarch relaxed many of the economic restrictions on inter-American trade in the colonies at this time. The results of these reforms in New Spain included growth in colonial economic activity and an influx of Spanish colonists which included merchants and administrators seeking positions in the burgeoning colonial bureaucracy. Most of the administrative positions excluded *criollos*, leaving them to seek service elsewhere. One area open to them was the military, where they could enjoy the *fueros* and become "an independent and privileged caste."¹⁴ Thus, by 1810, the army was viewed by the middle class as one of the few means of social advancement open to them.

In 1808, the French invaded Spain. The deposed Bourbon monarch, Charles IV, abdicated the throne and was imprisoned, along with his son Ferdinand VII, in France. Spain became an occupied country, with Joseph Bonaparte (Napoleon's brother) in power. In New Spain, the *criollos* reacted by announcing that sovereignty had devolved to the people and that the colonial administration was empowered to elect its new legitimate head of state to rule in place

of the king. The *criollos* supported the current viceroy, Iturrigaray, who was sympathetic to their cause, in his call for a provisional junta to govern the colony. The *gachupines* (native-born Spaniards) opposed any notion of power-sharing with the *criollos*. Mexico's first military coup occurred in 1808, as the Spanish Viceroy Iturrigaray was seized in his sleep by three hundred "volunteers of Ferdinand VII."¹⁵ He was replaced by Pedro de Garibay, a senile old soldier, who was simply a pawn of the *gachupin* administrators.

On the eve of Mexican independence, the army was ill-prepared to face a popular insurrection. The military was a hollow force, composed of privileged officers and poorly trained and equipped soldiers. Mexican soldiers characteristically had low morale and little sense of mission or loyalty to the colonial administration. Christon Archer in The Army in Bourbon Mexico summarizes the state of the army on the eve of battle:

Just or not, the army of New Spain failed to perform as its planners had intended. In establishing the army in Mexico, Spain was all too successful in transplanting the weaknesses rather than the strengths of the European armies. Very often it was the dregs, rather than the stout artisans, tradesmen, and laborers, who filled the ranks. Although part of the failure may be attributed to the small amount spent on colonial defense, it is clear that the martial virtues Spain hoped to inculcate did not take root . . . Frederick the Great once remarked, 'If my soldiers began to think, no one would remain in the ranks.' Mexicans

did not even have to think to see the disadvantages of army life.¹⁶

The Spanish Army in New Spain perpetuated a military caste that had little in common with the Mexican people. It existed to maintain order and protect the colonial administration from internal and external threats. Although unsuccessful in regard to these missions, the army did provide a means of educating and training Mexico's future military and political leaders. The army also became the organizational structure by which Mexico's leaders would control the nation and determine the succession of leadership throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

B. Independence and After 1810-1848

Mexico's War of Independence lasted from 1810 to 1822. Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla's **el Grito de Dolores** (the Shout of Dolores) was a call for rebellion heard throughout New Spain, and abroad. Hidalgo's rebel army, **la tropa insurgente** (insurgent troops), was Mexico's first popular armed force - a truly indigenous mixture of Indians and peasants.¹⁷ Its military leadership and organization, however, were provided by **criollos**, such as Hidalgo and a colonial army defector, Captain Ignacio Allende.

As a military leader, Allende was characteristic of a pattern seen throughout Mexican history of the opportunistic military officer whose loyalties coincided with their economic interests. As a large landowner, Allende had much to gain from the defeat of Spanish colonial power. Allende introduced Hidalgo to the Querétaro Literary Club, a group of liberal thinkers, intellectuals, and adventurous army officers who sought to win over *criollos* to support their political agenda of reform.¹⁸ Along with fellow *criollo* officers, such as Abasolo, Aldama, and Jiménez, Allende wanted an organized military campaign. Since the rebels did not discriminate between *gachupín* or *criollo* in their wrath, they were not prepared for what was to follow. Henry Parkes comments in A History of Mexico, "Allende was horrified by the disorder; he had anticipated a military rebellion and seen himself as a general leading his army to victory; but what was happening was a social revolution."¹⁹

The rebels quickly grew in numbers, reaching 80,000, due to a great deal of indigenous support and defections from the colonial army. A colonial officer could be promoted from captain to general as a reward for inducing a large number of privates to defect with him to the rebel forces.²⁰ Although, the colonial army only numbered approximately 28,000 at the time of the rebellion, many

criollo officers remained staunchly loyal to the Spaniards, desiring to protect their positions of privilege. The rebel army was characterized by a strong sense of loyalty to their leaders, such as Hidalgo, Allende, and Morelos, as well as a sense of mission and zeal lacking in the colonial army conscripts.²¹

The rebel army under Morelos reached the zenith of its power in 1815, by laying siege to Mexico City. The colonial army eventually achieved a break-out of the embattled city, defeating the rebels and capturing Morelos, who was later executed.²² Morelos' death brought an end to the organized rebellion, but, as Frank Tannenbaum notes in Mexico: The Struggle for Peace and Bread, "The army he [Morelos] commanded for five years tested the Spanish power in Mexico to the straining point and very nearly defeated it."²³ Many of the revolutionary officers retired to the countryside to enjoy their earlier plunder. Others, such as Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria, continued the revolution at the local level in small guerrilla operations.

Due to intrigue and collusion between the army and the church, the independence movement gained a new advocate within the highest echelons of the colonial administration. A handsome young Catholic officer, Colonel Agustín de Iturbide, was chosen by clerics and others in the

administration to become the new viceroy, superseding then current military leader, General Apodaca.

General Apodaca was viewed by the church and the aristocracy as an unacceptable leader since he was too lenient with the rebels, as well as ineffectual in failing to return lost property to the Church and landowners.²⁴

After a military defeat at the hands of Guerrero, Iturbide, defected to the rebels, bringing with him his colonial army. Guerrero accepted the support of Iturbide and together they issued the **Plan de Iguala** on 24 February 1821, with its three guarantees: a constitutional monarchy, protection of the Catholic Church, and equality of the **gachupines** and **criollos**.²⁵ Iturbide gained the support of the new Spanish Viceroy Juan O'Donojú, besieged in Veracruz with yellow fever, along with General Anastasio Bustamente, who brought his 6,000 troops with him. Iturbide was able to form the Army of the Three Guarantees, whose mission was to secure a victory over the remaining loyalist forces and implement the **Plan de Iguala**. Iturbide achieved a master stroke of diplomatic appeasement, bringing together rebel and royalist alike, finally uniting the divided **criollos** with the revolution.

Although Mexico was now free from Spanish colonialism, it did not experience the type of social revolution envisaged by Hidalgo or Morelos. The army was the dominant

force, politically and socially, expanding its influence and privilege with the decline of the colonial administrative institutions. The Catholic Church also remained powerful. What had begun as an indigenous movement of **mestizos** and Indians to achieve social and economic equality had become a victory of the **criollos**, who had replaced the **gachupines** as Mexico's new administrators.²⁶

While the newly formed Congress deliberated over aspects of Mexico's future, such as cutting the size of the army and formulating the country's new governmental structure, Iturbide took steps to ensure his political ascendancy. He staged a demonstration by the Army of the Three Guarantees in the streets of Mexico City on the evening of 18 May 1822, proclaiming him Agustín I, Emperor of Mexico. The next day, Iturbide marched on Congress, gaining constitutional legitimacy for his newly acquired position.²⁷ Although Iturbide violated one of the guarantees of the **Plan de Iguala** by not waiting for a royal personage to assume the throne, he justified his actions based on Mexico's need for a monarch to immediately restore order to the nation and to fulfill his own ordained destiny as Mexico's liberator and savior.

With Iturbide in command, declaring himself generalissimo of the army and High Admiral of the navy, the

military assumed control of the nation - a position it would not concede for the next century. Iturbide formed eighteen departments throughout the countryside, each commanded by a commandant-general. These were positions of great power, offered as rewards for those officers loyal to Iturbide during the revolution. The government did little to limit the power and local autonomy of these garrisons. Officers, in command of their conscripted Indian soldiers, continued to rob and plunder the local population. These officers were mostly *criollo*, "whose tastes ran to cock fighting, gambling, horsemanship, and scarlet uniforms with plenty of gold braid."²⁸

Once in office, Emperor Agustín's immediate problems were financial. The country was in debt and the bills for the revolution were mounting. The solution would have been to dismiss many of the generals and unnecessary bureaucrats and to confiscate church holdings. However, these class interests had brought Agustín to power and therefore could not be alienated. As U.S. envoy to Mexico, Joel R. Poinsett noted in 1822, "As long as he [Iturbide] possesses the means of paying and rewarding them - officers and soldiers - so long he will maintain himself on the throne. When these fail he will be precipitated from it."²⁹ Therefore, Agustín turned to foreign banks and governments for loans, while offering generous concessions to foreign

owned businesses.³⁰

Agustín set the precedent in Mexican politics of strong-man rule. It became evident to his conservative opposition that the only means to overcome the Emperor's authority was to replace him with another military leader of equal stature. There were many revolutionary generals who were equally ambitious, and also disgruntled over inadequate pay and promotion opportunities. Many were not as strongly supportive of the Catholic Church as Agustín. These officers joined the growing freemasonry societies, which had their start in Mexico during the early years of the independence movement.

Masonry has a long and clouded history in Mexico. Hidalgo, Morelos, Guerrero, and Arizpe were all masons, influenced by the federalist (republican) traditions espoused in the *yorquinos* (York Rite) lodges.³¹ U.S. envoy Poinsett is credited with fueling the masonry fire in Mexico by helping to establish the York lodges, which had ties to U.S. and British business interests. Pro-Hispanic Bourbonists came to be associated with *escoceses* (Scotch Rite Masonry), with its centralist desire for a strong national government.³² Thus, what later became the liberal-conservative conflict of the mid-nineteenth century had its beginnings in York (federalist) versus Scottish (centralist) Rite Masonry.

The first challenge to Agustín's authority came from a fellow military officer, Antonio López de Santa Anna Pérez de Lebrón. Santa Anna was serving as commander of the military garrison at Veracruz when he pronounced (announced his rebellion) against Agustín. Santa Anna began his military career as a cadet in the royal Standing Regiment at Veracruz, rising quickly to the rank of colonel. Santa Anna was a conservative, promoting the centralist political philosophy which had produced Iturbide. Yet, he was an opportunist who recognized the strong federalist movement which desired to depose Agustín. Santa Anna was soon joined by other revolutionary leaders, including Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria who supported federalism. In February 1823, they issued the **Plan de Casa Mata**, proclaiming an end to the Mexican Empire and the establishment of a truly republican Mexico. Agustín, realizing his fate, abdicated the throne, and sailed to Europe, only to return the next year, when he was then arrested and executed.³³

The provisional government of 1823 took on the task of formulating a republic and drafting a constitution, styled after the U.S. model with three branches of government: an elected chief executive, a representative legislature, and a judiciary. Although the form of the constitution represented the liberal-republican bias toward

a federal system of government, those issues dear to the conservatives, such as *fueros* for the military and clergy, official recognition of Catholicism as the national religion, and emergency powers for the chief executive, remained untouched.³⁴ Since there was no true consensus or cooperation between the elites, the constitution carried little authority and could easily be changed by whatever faction was in power in order to justify their continued rule. This was evidenced by the fact that between 1821 and 1857, Mexico experienced fifty changes in government.³⁵ The presidency was treated as a monarchy, with those in power assuming absolute authority over all aspects of government and society.

As the centralist versus federalist rift continued to develop, Santa Anna emerged as a tragic political figure who could play off both sides in order to foster his own prestige and aggrandizement. Considered a true national hero after the overthrow of Agustín, Santa Anna savored his role as mediator in Mexico's incessant crises. Over the next thirty years, Santa Anna's dominance in Mexico's political life would wax and wane repeatedly. Eleven times, he himself would assume the presidency, often alternating between representing liberal or conservative interests, ultimately acting on his own.

Santa Anna's ability to rally the Mexican Army and lead it both in victory and defeat testified to the continued charisma and **personalismo** (personality cult) that characterized Mexico's political-military leaders. His record also epitomized the worst of Mexican militarism, where military leaders battled incessantly for control of the nation's power and purse. Santa Anna's victory over the Spanish at Veracruz in October 1829 further solidified his hold on national hero status until his later defeat at the hands of Sam Houston at San Jacinto in 1835.

The new Republican Army mirrored the inadequacies of its predecessor. Under the influence of Santa Anna and Generals Filisola, Bustamente, Paredes, Barragán, and Armijo, "the Spanish pattern prevailed in tactics, ordinances, uniform, armament, and drill, so that the Mexican officer and soldier of this period looked picturesque but somewhat outmoded." ³⁶ Senior officers' appearances outdistanced their performance, creating a discrepancy between ranks which caused many more competent junior officers to leave the service.

In 1835, just prior to the war with Texas, the Mexican military was organized into thirteen infantry battalions, named after heroes of the War of Independence, such as Hidalgo, Morelos, and Allende. There were also thirteen cavalry regiments, named after battlefields of the war,

such as Iguala, Cuautla, and Veracruz. The tactics these forces employed were those of the Spanish colonial army, with frontal assaults in line and column formations.³⁷ As the American War of Independence had proven, these were costly and outdated.

The loss of Texas has remained a sore point in Mexican-American relations to this day. Although Mexico had initially encouraged American settlement in Texas as a means to buffer U.S. annexation, by 1830 President Guerrero recognized the error of this policy as Texans pushed for autonomy from its mother state of Coahuila. President Guerrero initiated two policies which sent Texans over the brink: the abolition of slavery and increased customs duties.³⁸ In 1832, Stephen F. Austin went to Mexico City to plead the case for Texas, only to be arrested and imprisoned for eighteen months. Santa Anna sent the Mexican Army, under the command of General Cos, to Texas in 1835 to enforce the new legislation, only to be driven out of San Antonio.

Santa Anna saw another opportunity to increase his status as a national hero, as he had done at Tampico against the Spanish. Six thousand recruits were raised and marched 1,000 miles, from San Luis Potosí to San Antonio, Texas. The forced march took two months, leaving many casualties in personnel and equipment due to cold and

disease.³⁹ The loyalty and sacrifice of the common Mexican soldier was evident throughout this tragic and costly war. Fortunately, Santa Anna found a weakly- defended fortress at the Alamo, where 150 Texans, under the command of William Barrett Travis, successfully withheld Santa Anna's army of 3000 for two weeks. With one final assault, the Mexican Army sounded the *degüello* (dating back to the Moorish wars meaning "no quarter"), executing all remaining defenders.⁴⁰ Santa Anna applied the same fate to 365 prisoners captured at the battle of Goliad two weeks later.

Santa Anna's victory at the Alamo on 6 March 1835 was short lived. On 21 April, the Mexicans were defeated at San Jacinto where Santa Anna was captured. He agreed to sign two treaties in exchange for his freedom: one treaty agreed to end hostilities and remove all Mexican forces south of the Rio Grande River and the second secretly recognized Texas' independence from Mexico. While the Mexican government disavowed any agreements made by Santa Anna, the defeated general proceeded to Washington to plead the case for Texan independence, attempting to salvage at least his political clout with the U.S. government. He eventually returned to Mexico in disgrace: a traitor who had given Texas to the *norteamericanos*.

Santa Anna reemerged politically in 1838 during the French seizure of Veracruz. The French military action occurred due to Mexico's inability to pay its foreign loans. The French seized the customs houses in order to extract payment. The Mexican military was expanded to 60,000 in order to combat the expected French invasion. The fledgling Mexican Navy had already been defeated during the French blockade. Santa Anna hastened to Veracruz to act as an advisor to the military commander on site.⁴¹ Santa Anna managed to negotiate a settlement with the French, promising to pay the 600,000 peso bill. When the French left, Santa Anna was again hailed as a national hero for his role in "repelling" the French invasion.⁴²

In 1845, the United States Congress voted to annex Texas. Since Mexico had never officially recognized Texas' independence, the Mexican government severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. The Polk administration sought to annex the territory before Texan fear over recapture by Mexico forced Texas to seek help from Britain. Meanwhile, Mexico thought it could militarily defeat the Americans if war broke out, counting on British support in appreciation for the economic concessions Mexico had granted the British since Mexico's independence.⁵¹ Through a series of diplomatic maneuvers, the United States used the pretext of unpaid claims by American citizens against the Mexican

government to move forces into the disputed territory between the Rio Grande and the Nueces Rivers. Since Mexico did not recognize this territory as part of Texas, the occupation was interpreted as an act of war and an invasion of Mexico's sovereignty.

The Mexican-American War lasted from 1846-1848, and the results continue to influence U.S.-Mexican relations. U.S. policy towards Mexico over Texas statehood and western expansion was brinkmanship, expecting Mexico to concede to U.S. demands. K. Jack Bauer comments in The Mexican War,

Polk and his advisors believed at each step that the application of a little more pressure would convince the Mexicans that the United States was serious in her demands and force the start of serious negotiations. The Americans did not understand mid-nineteenth century Mexico and failed to realize that the Mexicans would not countenance the loss of territory unless it was forced upon them by the destruction of their capacity to resist. Indeed, Mexico underwent the shattering of her army, the seizure of her capital, and the threat of a total and possibly permanent occupation of her territory before any government would negotiate a settlement.⁴³

In the end, the U.S. acquisition of Texas made distrust of the U.S. by Mexicans, "a fact of political life."⁴⁴

Santa Anna reemerged once again during the Mexican-American War. The U.S. allowed him to pass through a U.S. naval blockade due to his promise to President Polk

that he would help negotiate an end to the conflict, with favorable terms for the U.S.⁴⁵ Instead, Santa Anna helped to raise an army in San Luis Potosí to fight the U.S. invaders. The opposing armies met at Cerro Gordo. Although Santa Anna possessed the favorable terrain, General Winfield Scott out-maneuvered him with his artillery, causing severe casualties. Santa Anna returned to Mexico City once more under a cloud of suspicion, as many thought he had sold out to the United States.⁴⁶ Since Mexico's leaders had few options, they continued to finance Santa Anna's efforts.

On the outskirts of Mexico City, the Mexican Army once again faced the **norteamericanos**, only the stakes were now much higher. Henry Parkes comments,

During the next three weeks the Mexicans fought with a courage and an obstinacy which startled the invaders. For the first time the war had begun to eclipse the conflict of the parties. The Mexican Army consisted no longer of Indian conscripts, but of creole and mestizo volunteers who were prepared to die in the defense of their capital city; and Santa Anna, untiring in his efforts to organize his troops and exposing himself recklessly in the forefront of every battle, seemed almost to have been metamorphosed not into a Napoleon of the west but into something more honorable: a national leader.⁴⁷

In defeat, this became Mexico's "finest hour."

History books are replete with examples of courage during the final American assault on Mexico City. The San

Blas Battalion will always be remembered for its courageous defense of Chapultepec Hill on 13 September 1847, where Colonel Xicotén Catl saved the battalion colors from capture before he died along with *los niños héroes* (the boy heroes), military cadets who wrapped themselves in the Mexican flag and jumped from the walls of Chapultepec Castle rather than surrender to the U.S. aggressors.⁴⁸ Yet, there were other examples of courage throughout the war that are less known, such as the battle of Angostura on 22 February 1847, where, after 48 hours of forced march without rest, Mexican forces attacked up hill against a well dug-in American position. The Mexicans seized the first ridge, held it all night in the rain, and continued the assault the next day, capturing subsequent enemy positions and materiel. After forty days and 10,000 casualties, the unit reached San Luis Potosí, only to rest four days before turning east to march on Veracruz.⁴⁹

The Mexican-American War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on 2 February 1848. In the process, Mexico lost over half of its national territory to the United States with little more than \$15 million in compensation. Yet, in the loss, Mexicans were to gain a greater sense of a national consciousness, united in their xenophobia and outward disgust towards the United States.

The political outcome of the war with the U.S. was devastating for Mexico. The military was discredited and political institutions lost much of their legitimacy before the Mexican people. Mexicans look back on this period in shame. They hold Santa Anna as a true antihero, deserving of his unpopular treatment in the country's history books. On the whole, they have little pride for their military leaders who brought about the defeat, yet they venerate the common soldier who fought bravely and with tenacity in the face of the enemy.⁵¹ The Mexican military and government continued to be dominated by strong men similar to Santa Anna for some time. Politically, Mexico continued to suffer instability as political and military leaders failed to achieve the legitimacy necessary to pacify the nation. Peace and stability were at a premium and the Mexican nation was continuing to search for answers that would end the recurring crisis of regime maintenance.

The first half-century of Mexican independence was a period of continual instability and chaos, military defeat, and a true crisis of national identity for the fledgling nation. The search for legitimacy characterized much of this period as Mexico's political leaders were forced to ultimately depend on military power as a means to acquire and maintain power. The praetorian nature of Mexican political life had taken hold in a society that knew little

else. The second half of the nineteenth century would bring new experiments in government and civilian leadership that would challenge the praetorian patterns established since independence.

C. The Period of Reform 1849-1875

Mexico's civil war, or War of Reform, lasted from 1858 to 1861. Prior to 1858, the seeds of reform had been planted in the minds of progressive military officers who sought to change Mexico's historical pattern of dependency upon strong-arm tactics and to limit the dominance of the Church and landed aristocracy. The discrediting of the military after the Mexican-American War contributed significantly to the desire of these progressive leaders to change Mexico's political system. Yet, the power of the elite and conservative military leaders could only be broken temporarily, as Mexico continued to face the crisis of regime maintenance in a winner-take-all battle for the minds of men and control of the nation's purse strings.

Following the war with the United States, the subsequent administrations of General Herrera and General Arista were among the most honest and reform-minded in Mexico for some time.⁵² They shared the desire of many intellectuals that the Mexican government needed a campaign

of moralization in order to gain respect in its international affairs. General Arista came to terms with the British over its war debts and he even went as far as to reduce military appropriations in an attempt to break the power of the conservative military leaders.

However, Arista faced the problem of credibility when negotiating international contracts and agreement as his administration had to deal with his nation's historical record of instability. Diplomatic correspondence from then U.S. Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, to General (President) Arista in 1850 reveal the inherent distrust and lack of confidence Mexico faced in its international dealings.

If the administration of your government were always to be in the hands of gentlemen such as those who now direct it and according to report are about to succeed them, there would be no occasion for the stipulations of the character referred to. Your excellency will however pardon me for saying that the stipulation was deemed advisable from an apprehension of a different state of things which seemed to derive some warrant from past events in the career of your Republic. I most heartily desire that the future may totally disappoint any such anticipations.⁵³

Secretary of State Webster's assessment of Mexico's situation was entirely accurate, although the realism conveyed in America's foreign policy toward Mexico did little to bolster the legitimacy of Arista's regime.

Within two years, Mexico was again in a state of chaos, as U.S. Minister to Mexico, Robert Letcher reported to Secretary Webster:

Conspiracies upon conspiracies have been concocted night after night to seize Arista and put Sales in his place. - A few nights ago Arista got word of the plot -- he drew up his artillery in the Palace with some 400 soldiers well armed to defend himself. Twenty of these soldiers were placed in a kitchen behind a barricade, and at a late hour of the night, one of the leading conspirators disguised himself as a Lepero [sic], and with money, induced them to proceed to seize General Arista and deliver him to a certain place. This plot, I understand, failed in consequence of a dispute which arose with the residue of the troops in regard to the distribution of 15,000 dollars. the Palace is kept under guard every night; troops and artillery being placed at the gates and on the top, and a detachment of forces nightly stationed in the tower of the Cathedral, so as to have complete command of the Plaza in front of the Palace. - The President is laboring under great trepidation from an apprehension of assassination. He keeps his horse saddled all night, in readiness, in case of an emergency to make his escape. . . . In short, society is in a most terribly distracted condition. I must say, General Arista is to be pitied, for I consider him a true patriot.⁵⁴

General Arista was eventually overthrown in January 1853 by military conservatives united with their traditional clerical and landholder support. They once again brought back Santa Anna from exile to lead Mexico further along the paths of centralism and anti-republicanism. Santa Anna declared himself dictator,

claiming the title "His Most Severe Highness" and proceeded to undo many of Arista's policies, which included building-up the army to well over 90,000. Santa Ana brought in Spanish and Prussian officers to help train and discipline the Mexican Army behind a strong authoritarian model.⁵⁵ At one point, Santa Anna entertained the notion of hiring Swiss guards since they were "more reliable" than Indians and better prepared to handle external pressures.⁵⁶ Eventually, Santa Anna exhausted the treasury and many generals and bureaucrats grew restless as their benefits were slowly eroded. The U.S. helped bankroll some of Santa Anna's debt through the Gadsden Purchase of 1855. The \$10 million received for 78,000 square kilometers of land helped ensure the loyalty of the army for at least another year.⁵⁷

Major territorial concessions made to the U.S. by Santa Anna helped raise the ranks of nationalist support for the liberal reformers opposed to the *vendepatria* (those who sell out the country) oligarchy. In Guerrero, a holdout of longtime Morelos supporters, a popular uprising occurred, organized by liberal thinkers Juan Alvarez, Ignacio Comonfort, and Benito Juárez, a full-blooded Zapotec Indian. In March 1854, they published the *Plan de Ayutla* while in exile in Louisiana. The Mexican liberal agenda, as defined in the *Plan*, called for parliamentary

democracy, curtailment of military and clerical **fueros**, secularized education, the abolition of slavery, and land reform. In essence, "it was the Mexican version of the French Revolution against feudalism and privileges."⁵⁸ However, it was too much too soon. The conservative oligarchy was still powerful, finding itself in a war of survival against the reformers. The result was a bloody and protracted civil war which led to a foreign occupation and eventually ruthless and despotic rule of Porfirio Díaz for thirty-four years.

In 1855, the liberals came to power, as Santa Anna fled the country once again. Juan Alvarez assumed the title of provisional president, while Benito Juárez became Minister of Justice. Juárez moved quickly to abolish the military and clerical **fueros**, intending to reduce the power of the military and ecclesiastical courts through the **Ley Juárez** (Juárez Law). He also went after seizing Church property with the **Ley Lerdo** (Lerdo Law). Recognizing Juárez's need to confront the military and the clergy, U.S. Minister to Mexico, John Forsyth, offered his suggestion to U.S. Secretary of State Marcy that the U.S. could help with at least one program by providing quality military personnel to be distributed throughout the Mexican Army.

These will control the army, which is made up in its rank and file, of all admirable raw material of the soldier, of men who are hardy

active, and frugal, docile as children and easily managed to fight or rebel by the officers immediately over them, with plenty of courage to follow wherever their officers will lead, and with the most surprising locomotive powers . . . The material of the officers is miserable, as that of the men is admirable. It is through their avarice - not ambition - that revolutions are bred. Such an army could be kept in absolute moral and physical order, by a few thousand American troops.⁵⁹

With Ignacio Comonfort's election to president in 1856, the hard-line liberals were replaced with more moderate ones, as the Church and conservative military leaders fought back. Comonfort sold-out to the oligarchy, and with the help of conservative General Félix Zuloaga, seized power from the liberals, arresting Juárez and dispersing the liberal leaders to the countryside. The ensuing civil war took the form of guerrilla warfare, as bands of militia formed under liberal officers who had defected from the ranks.

By 1860, the liberal armies had grown strong enough to defeat the conservatives, returning Benito Juárez to power. Juárez faced an uphill battle to consolidate his regime and stave off the threat of foreign intervention precipitated by Mexico's moratorium on foreign debt repayments. The United States, preoccupied with its own civil war, was of little help. Britain, Spain, and France secretly negotiated a joint effort to invade Mexico in October 1861,

and seized the customs houses, fully aware that the U.S. was powerless to stop them.⁶⁰ While the British and Spanish eventually withdrew their forces, the French had other plans.⁶¹

Napoleon III's Mexican advisors convinced him that the French Army would meet little resistance on its march to Mexico City. In fact, he expected them to receive spontaneous support from the Mexican people. However, General Laurencez's forces were met by the Mexican Army, under the command of General Ignacio Zaragoza at Puebla, where on 5 May 1862, the French were routed and sent fleeing to Veracruz. There, they awaited reinforcements, 30,000 strong, under the command of General Forey. The French again marched on Mexico City, meeting the mass of the Mexican Army at Puebla.⁶²

The French laid siege to Puebla for two months. Under command of General González Ortega and without resupply, the Mexican Army surrendered, leaving the road clear to Mexico City. The captured Mexicans were marched to Veracruz where the French shipped them to France for internment. General Ortega and a young colonel, Porfirio Díaz were among those to escape during the forced march.⁶³ Unable to defend Mexico City, President Juárez fled.

The French arrived to the cheers of the conservatives in the clergy and oligarchy who welcomed the return to

monarchical rule. The new emperor, Maximilian, was a tragic figure: a noble man yet a weak leader, he attempted to rule benevolently, showing a deep respect for the Mexican people and love for the Mexican countryside. The French proceeded to rape the country, exacting payments from the customs houses and refusing to return confiscated Church properties. These action, along with Maximilian's passion towards democracy and disdain for the old world aristocracy, began to cost him the support of those who brought him to power. Meanwhile, the French Army was having great success in pacifying the countryside, eliminating the last strongholds of liberal opposition. Maximilian's political leanings were therefore tolerated as long as he maintained stability.⁶⁴

The end to French occupation of Mexico came not from internal forces, but from the end of the U.S. Civil War in April 1865, when the U.S. demanded that the French leave. The U.S. had economic interests at stake in Mexico. Secretary of State Seward commented that Americans "want(ed) dollars more, dominion less."⁶⁵ Napoleon, not desiring to risk war with the U.S., ordered the withdrawal of French forces. Maximilian, however, decided to stay on after the final French forces departed Mexico in February 1867. With a loyal Mexican Army of 15,000 to 20,000, Maximilian sought to fend off the resurgent Republican Army

at Querétaro, where he met his defeat. The Republican Army, under the command of General Porfirio Díaz, entered Mexico City triumphantly. The war with France however, was costly as casualties were in excess of 50,000.⁶⁶

Benito Juárez returned to head the provisional government. He quickly resumed his reform program with a new vigor and a desire to destroy the causes of Mexico's inherent instability and disorder. His primary targets were the education system and the military. In regard to education, Juárez sought to implement secularized compulsory free education. His desire to educate the Indian masses was fueled by his strong anticlericalism.⁶⁷ Concerning the military, Juárez proceeded to dismiss two-thirds of the 90,000 man Liberal Army. He was convinced that militarism was the chief curse of the Mexican Republic. Those released from service were given no pensions and no thanks for their efforts. Many veterans, bitter over their treatment, staged numerous revolts, only to be suppressed harshly by Juárez's loyal military chief, General Sóstenes Rocha.⁶⁸

The greatest threat to Juárez and his program of liberal restoration, was General Porfirio Díaz. It was Díaz who felt the greatest indignation over Juárez's treatment of the military, having been personally snubbed by Juárez during his triumphal entry into Mexico City after

the fall of Maximilian. Díaz ran against Juárez in the 1867 presidential elections and lost. Díaz refused to command troops against his rebellious soldiers protesting his electoral defeat. In 1871, Díaz ran again, losing a second time to Juárez. Díaz invoked the no reelection principle of the 1857 Constitution. He rebelled, only to have his insurrection put down by General Rocha, with Díaz's brother, Félix, killed in the uprising. Díaz fled to Nayarit as there was no true support for his cause at the time.⁶⁹

The death of President Juárez in 1872 ushered in the decline of the Mexican Republic. Juárez's successor, Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, could not claim the legitimacy of Juárez. Lerdo's regime faced a crisis during the subsequent elections of 1876, when he refused to resign the presidency. Porfirio Díaz used the pretext of Lerdo's renunciation of the no-reelection clause of the Mexican Constitution to launch a rebellion against the government. On 21 November 1876, General Porfirio Díaz returned to Mexico City, this time for the next thirty-four years.

Mexico's experiment with liberal-progressive reforms and civilian government failed as the major stumbling blocks against change -- the Church and the military -- could not be tamed. Juárez moved too quickly in some areas to undo the centuries of political, economic, social, and

religious order ingrained in Mexico. In some areas, he did not move fast enough.

In regard to the military, the liberal reformers recognized the problem of militarism, yet failed to address the causes. Upon the French withdrawal and the defeat of Maximilian, Mexican nationalism was at its peak and the country momentarily united behind the Republican Army and its leaders. Instead of building on this support and reorganizing the military into a national army or strictly controlling its purse strings, Mexico's leaders dismissed the army with little pride and too little appreciation for their efforts. Unemployed soldiers and generals in a depressed economy are a dangerous mix. Porfirio Díaz built his support on this discontent and Mexico experienced a new chapter in authoritarian rule.

D. The Porfiriato 1876-1910

In some contemporary Mexican literature, Porfirio Díaz's status as an antihero is comparable to that of Santa Anna. Díaz's regime is characterized as tyrannical, embodying the worst attributes of **caudillismo** (autocratic rule or bossism). Mexicans tend to forget his humble roots and his initial success in bringing order and progress to Mexico. Instead, they remember the excesses: namely, that

his lengthy stay and the price of modernizing Mexico was not worth the cost to individual liberty and economic freedom. In most historical accounts, however, Díaz is accepted as a true national hero: a patriarch who supported anticlericalism and anti-imperialism.⁷⁰

Porfirio Díaz was a *mestizo*, born to a poor Oaxacan family in 1830. He progressed in school, yet never managed to complete his law studies. Instead, he sought advancement through one of the few means available for ambitious *mestizos* in nineteenth-century Mexico, the military. Throughout the War of Reform, Díaz sided with the liberal faction in the military and fought bravely against the French occupation army. He only turned against Juárez and Lerdo when they violated the 1857 Constitution and sought reelection.⁷¹

In his first four years in office, Porfirio Díaz tackled many of the nation's economic problems with success. He dealt with the problem of illegal smuggling across the border with the United States by enlarging the border patrol and challenging the U.S., not permitting U.S. troops to cross the border in pursuit of smugglers and bandits. He also increased his international credit rating by agreeing to pay \$4 million in claims by private U.S. citizens against the Mexican government. By the time his presidency was over in 1880, Díaz had gained a great deal

of popular support. Despite the wishes of his followers, Díaz obeyed the provisions of the Mexican Constitution and stepped down, turning the presidency over to Manuel González, a fellow military officer, chosen largely due to Díaz's respect of soldiers and distrust of politicians.⁷²

General (President) Manuel González was a true military strong man, who embodied the spirit of the Spanish conquistador.⁷³ He enjoyed the spoils of his office, abusing the power and authority entrusted to him. He fostered the old oligarchic ties to the Church and landed aristocracy characteristic of previous Mexican military dictators. His administration was rife with scandal and innuendo. He even managed to alienate his own bureaucracy by withholding pay under the auspices of meeting the nation's foreign debt obligations incurred during the economic crisis of his presidency. By the end of González's four year term in 1884, even Díaz's political foes eagerly supported Díaz's return to office. There is much debate as to whether González was his own man, or merely a puppet of Díaz during this interregnum; if, in fact Díaz had used one of Santa Anna's political tactics of leaving office to an incompetent administrator, only to bide his time and later return an even more popular figure with a free hand to exploit the power of the presidency. The abrupt change from his

previous four years would give credence to this argument. However, the evidence seems to support the thesis that González was given relative freedom during his four years in office and that Díaz changed, rather than perpetuated a premeditated plan of absolutism.⁷⁴

For the next twenty-seven years, Porfirio Díaz controlled Mexico's destiny under a ruthless administration that allowed for little dissent or disagreement with the chief executive. Assassinations of political opponents occurred over rumors of rebellion; such was the fate of General García de la Cadena. State governors were all Porfirian appointees, trusted military *caudillos* given a free reign of terror over their localities, provided they remained loyal to Díaz.⁷⁵ The policy of "pan o palo" (bread or stick), was Díaz's way of buying his opponent's loyalty, or else having them eliminated. Through this tactic, Díaz held the military in check, destroying any possible threat of a coup. As a further check on the military's strength, he used the *rurales*, an armed constabulary which pacified the countryside through the infamous *Ley fuga* (Law of flight), whereby 10,000 people were to be killed "while attempting to escape."

Díaz further consolidated his power and legitimacy by coopting the Catholic Church, a traditional enemy of the liberals. Díaz's marriage to the devout Carmelita, the

daughter of his Secretary of Interior, Romero Rubio, allowed Díaz to seek a rapprochement with the Church and obtain a secret agreement with Archbishop Labastida.⁷⁶ Díaz agreed not to enact the anticlerical programs of the 1857 Constitution in exchange for the power to approve clerical appointments (a reemergence of the *patronato real*). The Church also gained the right to once again acquire property, a right protected by Díaz throughout his administration.

After his 1892 reelection, Díaz appointed José Yves Limantour to be his Secretary of Treasury. It is through Romero Rubio's and Limantour's influence, along with Limantour's *científicos* (scientific scholars - today's equivalent being technocrats), that Mexico's economic future took shape. Díaz came under Limantour's intellectual spell, and gave him free reign to bring Mexico out of its economic malaise. Limantour recognized the need to improve Mexico's image abroad to gain much needed foreign investment and capital. Political stability was key to this process and Díaz's policies of maintaining order at any price were encouraged. As Jan Bazant comments in A Concise History of Mexico, "In the mind of Porfirio Díaz as well as his collaborators, order and economic progress came to justify army rule."⁷⁷

By 1894, Limantour was able to balance the budget, the first time in Mexican history, and also provide a surplus in revenue. Díaz now thought that Mexico was cured of its revolutionary cycle, as he believed unpaid generals were the cause of revolutions.⁷⁸ Retired generals were kept loyal through the Trust of Chiefs and Officers, a retirement "dole" where retirees could collect half their salary simply by registering.⁷⁹ Díaz believed he could afford to continually buy off his opposition without any threat of the economic well running dry.

Díaz undertook modest efforts to modernize the armed forces. In 1880, he established the Chapultepec Military Academy, seeking cadets from "good families."⁸⁰ The Academy produced approximately sixty graduates a year. By 1900, half of all Porfirian officers were graduates of the Academy. Many traveled abroad, studying at French, British, and U.S. military schools. The ranks, however, continued to be manned through a levy system of forced conscripts, usually from the poorest and most undesirable elements of society.⁸¹ Díaz distrusted many of his older "loyal" military leaders, and therefore did not provide them with men or arms necessary to mount a successful insurrection. For this reason, he used state governors to counterbalance the power base of regional commanders (and vice versa). Although more

professionalized, the military remained fragmented with little operational cohesion.

Díaz feared a popular uprising more than foreign military intervention. In 1875, the military numbered over 100,000. By 1911, this number was reduced by approximately sixty percent.⁸² Díaz also reduced the overall share of the military budget, channeling funds into the *rurales* instead. Díaz negotiated a purchase of armaments with Krupps of Germany and accepted a limited German military mission from 1870 to 1914 to help train Mexicans in the use of these weapons. However, this was primarily an economic venture, aimed at playing off European interests against the U.S. Díaz never accepted any other military missions to help train or professionalize the armed forces.⁸³

By 1910, foreign investment in Mexico exceeded the total capital owned by Mexicans themselves. This fact helped erode Díaz's traditional support amongst the urban middle class, who, as a rising economic and political power, resented the foreign economic penetration of the nation. The urban intellectuals also desired increased governmental support of Mexican arts and less dependence on foreign influence. These undercurrents of frustration came to the surface with the 1906 presidential election.

The heir apparent to President Díaz was General Bernardo Reyes, who served as governor of Nuevo León and

commander of the Northeastern Military District. Reyes had the military backing in Díaz's cabinet, while the **científicos** supported Limantour. Díaz initially opted toward turning over the presidency to Limantour, only to back off and declare himself president for another four year term. Reyes did not pronounce against Díaz, knowing full well that such an action would be premature. As John Womack comments in Zapata and the Mexican Revolution, "General Bernardo Reyes, who knew his country well, knew what contesting Díaz's authority would mean -- how it could lead to violence, then civil war, then revolution, and the total upheaval of Mexican society, and then, if the United States intervened, the eclipse of Mexican sovereignty."⁸⁴ In other words, Reyes recognized the destabilizing effect a military coup would produce in a nation that had come to appreciate the material benefits of peace and stability.

Such apprehension, however, did not dissuade a group of liberal congressmen from calling for a revolution. The Flores Magon brothers and others issued their publication Regeneración while in exile in St. Louis, Missouri on 1 July 1906. Later that year, a strike at the U.S. owned Anaconda mines at Cananea in Sonora, Mexico, was broken by U.S. troops who were later replaced by Mexican soldiers. Over one hundred Mexicans were killed in this incident which gave rise to growing criticism of the Díaz regime in

the U.S. and Mexico. The key issue in the U.S. was the inability of the Porfirian regime to control dissent, while for the Mexicans the main issue was Díaz's inability to protect the nation from foreign intervention.⁸⁵

In 1908, President Díaz announced his plans to step down in 1910. This announcement brought a resurgence of opposition leaders out of exile, including General Reyes. In Coahuila, a wealthy liberal landowner, Francisco Madero, published a book entitled The Presidential Succession of 1910. The book evoked a strong sense of Mexican patriotism and, through its tepid third edition, managed to gain Madero the support of diverse opposition leaders.⁸⁶ Madero campaigned for nomination as the liberal candidate in the election. In June 1910, Díaz announced his intent to remain in power, ordering the arrest and crack down on his political opposition. Francisco Madero was initially arrested and later released, fleeing to the U.S. where he would organize the military phase of the revolution.

The failure of the Porfiriato to deal with issues of agrarian reform, presidential succession, and the nation's economic crisis produced a regime crisis in Mexico. The accomplishments of his earlier regime are overshadowed by the crisis of regime maintenance in light of the rising expectations of an urbanized middle class and an exploited rural population. In the end, the missed opportunities and

character of Díaz contributed to the loss of legitimacy of his regime.

Díaz did succeed in breaking the power base of the military which produced Mexico's history of **cuartelazos** (barracks revolts) and pronouncements leading to coups. However, the generals Díaz paid-off for the past thirty-four years would prove little help against a new force, led not by military septuagenarians, but by a diverse group of revolutionaries. Although these men had little military training, they possessed a strong sense of patriotism and physical courage, capable of inspiring great sacrifices on behalf of the Mexican nation.

E. The Mexican Revolution 1910-1940

Francisco Madero called for an armed insurrection in October 1910 under the banner of the **Plan de San Luis Potosí**. Madero assaulted militarism, comparing Mexico under Porfirio Díaz with "Roman Republican praetorianism" [sic].⁸⁷ The **Plan de San Luis Potosí** called for the formation of a revolutionary army -- **El Ejército Libertador** -- comprised of civilian volunteers and Federal Army defectors. Madero promised rank based on the number of troops a leader could muster. Once in power, the new government would ratify these wartime military

grades, thus allowing military leaders to remain in the army. Defecting **federales** (federal troops) were also promised promotions as they responded to Madero's plea, "remember (that) the mission of the army is to defend institutions and not the unconscious support of the tyranny."⁸⁸

At the outbreak of hostilities, the Federal Army was in a sorry state. Edwin Lieuwen comments that prior to the Mexican Revolution, "the word 'army' became synonymous, in the eyes of civilian political leaders, with crime, venality, violence, and corruption, and Mexico's nineteenth-century historians did not hesitate to attribute much of the nation's political, social, and economic miseries to militarism."⁸⁹ Corruption, for example, is illustrated by the officers who aspired to the rank of jefe (field grade officer), who were then authorized to order unit supplies, often taking their share in the process. Payrolls, often padded with names in order to procure more funds, resulted in the low number of men (12,000) mustered for combat in 1911.⁹⁰

To the **federales** advantage, the revolutionaries were not a cohesive fighting force prior to 1916. The rebels fragmented into small, company-size bands, which were mobile and well armed. They were also well supplied by many small towns and villages throughout the countryside.⁹¹

Due to this logistical support, battles were fought in the countryside, avoiding the larger cities and federal garrisons. The revolutionaries feared the federal artillery; therefore, they fought limited engagements and did not resort to siege or trench warfare.⁹² Leaders of the revolutionary armies were regional chieftains, such as Emiliano Zapata in Morelos, Pancho Villa in Chihuahua, and Venustiano Carranza in Coahuila. Their differences outnumbered their similarities as each had a different vision for Mexico's future; however, on one issue they agreed: Díaz must be defeated. On this, they united under Madero's leadership.

Friedrich Engels once commented to Karl Marx that, "it is an evident fact. . . that collapse of discipline in the army has been a condition of every victorious revolution."⁹³ Although it lacked the threat of external conflict that Engels anticipated would help lead to such a collapse, Mexico was no exception. Many deserters joined the revolutionaries; however, they were most often "led" there by their commanding officers. The rank and file were extremely subservient, following orders to fight, or desert, as the case may be.

By May 1911, Díaz realized the futility of his efforts and resigned. An interim government was established under President de la Barra, who proceeded to dismiss the

revolutionary armies. Those who resisted were labeled as bandits. In Morelos, Zapata was one of those who continued to fight. In the north, Pascual Orozco also remained in opposition. The commander of the Federal Army, General Victoriano Huerta, continued the offensive against the rebels. By August 1911, the **Ejército Libertador** had been reduced to 12,000, while the **federales** numbered 16,000.⁹⁴ In October 1911, Francisco Madero was elected president. The revolutionary leader was now commander-in-chief of the Federal Army.

Madero made a grave error by not taking efforts to disband the Federal Army. Madero's political naiveté failed to recognize the threat the **federales** posed to his infant administration. Instead he sought to win them over with praise and conciliation, emphasizing the fact that the dictatorship had been defeated, not the Federal Army. Madero praised the federal soldiers as defenders of republican institutions, hoping to gain their support and prevent further disorder.⁹⁵ Madero gave General Huerta free reign to defeat the rebel forces of Orozco and Zapata. Although successful against Orozco, Huerta could do little to stop the growth of the Zapatista forces. Huerta was temporarily retired by Madero after he could not account for one million pesos in war funds.⁹⁶

Meanwhile, Félix Díaz, Porfirio's nephew, staged his own counterrevolution, finding support amongst the oligarchy, the Church, and former Porfirista General Bernardo Reyes. A head of an American banking company in Mexico made the following observation about General Díaz to U.S. Chief of Staff, General Leonard Wood, "Díaz can be Mexico's 'man on a white horse' if the U.S. helps him come to power."⁹⁷ The insurrection was put down by a reinstated General Huerta and Generals Díaz and Reyes were imprisoned in comfort.

The effect of these constant challenges to Madero's leadership was a regime crisis, where the legitimacy of the new revolutionary government was in question. The U.S. contributed to the crisis, further discrediting the Madero regime by threatening intervention, due to Mexico's continuing political instability and violence.⁹⁸ U.S. Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson was an outspoken critic of Madero. When federal troops released Generals Díaz and Reyes from prison and marched on the national palace, it was Wilson who negotiated the secret "Pact of the Embassy" with Díaz and Huerta in order to bring about Madero's downfall.⁹⁹

Huerta fought a "phony war" against Díaz, never truly attempting to defeat the rebel forces. Instead, the army killed many innocent civilians with their random artillery

barrages. Many **federales** were killed in hopeless frontal assaults, while Huerta kept back his loyal followers.¹⁰⁰ For **La Decena Trágica** (ten tragic days), street fighting and chaos consumed the capital city. Finally, General Huerta announced his defection to the counterrevolutionary cause, arresting Madero and his vice president, Pino Suárez, having himself sworn in as Secretary of Interior, which "legally" gave him the right to assume the presidency in the absence of a president and vice president.¹⁰¹

Huerta's presidency was a triumph of the established Porfirian order over the Revolution. With the collusion of U.S. Ambassador Wilson, the oligarchy (comprised of the Church, large landholders, and the army) was now back in control of Mexico. The **hacendados** (large estate owners) established their own defense forces to protect their interests and support the new regime. The Archbishop of Mexico offered a "Te Deum" for the new president. General officers replaced elected governors and cabinet officials. In the midst of this new militarism, German Minister to Mexico, Paul von Hintze, made the following observations of the Huerta regime:

The government displays a corruptibility and depravity that exceeds anything known in the past. Everyone seems to want to steal as fast as he can, because he knows that he does not have much time for it. . . (one of the worst is the eldest son of the President, Captain Huerta) Unfortunately, the army is not free of this corruption.¹⁰²

Many of the revolutionary leaders who came together to depose Porfirio Díaz, once again united to defeat Huerta. They united their opposition to the Huerta dictatorship under the **Plan de Guadalupe**. Venustiano Carranza was designated first chief of the Constitutionalist Army by the Coahuila rebels. Pancho Villa and Alvaro Obregón eventually joined forces with Carranza after considerable debate over Carranza's leadership and his ties to wealthy landowners. Groups of urban workers, called "Red Battalions" also joined in the fight. Zapata, however, refused to join forces with Carranza, continuing his rebellion in the south.

For the civilian population, the renewed rebel offensive brought little change, as "the tyranny of officials and the looting of bandits and guerrilleros - federals and constitutionalist were each as bad as the other."¹⁰³ Carrancista generals were allowed to keep income derived from seizing **haciendas** (landed estates). Many used the funds to better their armies while most simply lined their pockets. Some generals made deals with **hacendados** (estate owners) offering protection from confiscation and peasant uprisings in exchange for extortion monies.¹⁰⁴ Of the revolutionary leaders, Obregón alone showed some statesmanship, with an appreciation for democratic principles. He despised Mexican militarism, seeking to

discourage looting and violence. Villa, however, remained a true bandit, possessing a great deal of **personalismo** and respect from his followers.¹⁰⁵

The United States government, pressured by U.S. business interests in Mexico, strongly supported U.S. intervention to end the crisis. Newly elected president Woodrow Wilson opposed U.S. military intervention, instead hoping that Mexico could elect "good" men to office. President Wilson recalled Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson and embargoed weapons sales to the Huerta government. President Wilson supported a Constitutionalist victory all the while attempting to diplomatically persuade Huerta to step down.¹⁰⁶

By April 1914, Wilson saw the futility in diplomatic efforts. Instead, he sought a pretext ,with ideological justification, for U.S. involvement in the Mexican crisis. He was given the opportunity when sailors from the USS Dolphin, were seized in Tampico.¹⁰⁷ U.S. Ambassador Henry T. Mayo requested a formal apology, the arrest of the Mexican officer in charge, and a 21 gun salute to the United States flag. Huerta was insulted. He used the opportunity to raise nationalist support against the U.S. Meanwhile, Wilson gained Congressional approval for armed intervention and the seizure of Veracruz on 14 April 1914. In the ensuing conflict, two hundred Mexicans were killed

and Huerta gained more nationalist support for his regime in the face of foreign intervention. Even Carranza protested the American action. With rising political opposition at home, Wilson was forced to withdraw U.S. forces after six months of occupation.¹⁰⁸

With the defeat of Huerta and the dismantling of the Federal Army by Carranza, the rebel forces began fighting each other. Carranza sought to solidify his support at the Aguascalientes Conference in October 1914, only to see the revolution become factional. At one point, there were four separate governments, all claiming to represent the nation.¹⁰⁹ The key to Carranza's victory came with the support of General Obregón and U.S. diplomatic recognition of the Carranza government in October 1915, after decisive victories over Villistas at Celaya and León. In January 1916, Villa turned his wrath northward, attacking American settlements north of the border. Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico brought 12,000 U.S. forces under the command of General John Pershing in pursuit.¹¹⁰

The Pershing expedition did little to enhance Mexican-American relations. In fact, Villa's popularity grew, along with his army, reaching 10,000. Pershing's goal of occupying all of Mexico was overly ambitious. President Wilson did, however, consider seeking a declaration of war from Congress after an American

contingent, commanded by Lieutenant Charles T. Boyd, was defeated at Carrizal by a Carrancista army element commanded by General Félix Gómez. Once it was discovered that the U.S. forces initiated the hostilities, Wilson backed off, eventually withdrawing Pershing's forces.¹¹¹ Upon their withdrawal, young Lieutenant George S. Patton, made the following observation, "one must be a fool indeed to think that people half savaged [sic] and wholly ignorant will ever form a republic. It is a joke. A despot is all they know or want."¹¹²

World War I only served to increase the strain in Mexican-American relations. Evidence shows that Villa's attacks on U.S. territory were provoked by secret negotiations with the German Secret Service, through the Villista agent Félix Sommerfield. Félix Díaz is also believed to have struck a deal through the Deutsche Bank in Mexico to finance a Mexican war with the U.S. if he were elected president. In the U.S., there was talk of a secret San Diego Plan, which would involve fomenting an uprising by Mexican-Americans in Texas to support a Mexican war effort.¹¹³

The Zimmermann telegram is the most famous incident of German-Mexican collusion during World War I. In November 1916, as Carranza consolidated his power in the form of a new Mexican Constitution at the Querétaro

Congress, the Mexican envoy in Berlin approached the German Secretary of State Zimmermann with the following proposal:

1. elaboration of a new friendship pact, involving commercial and maritime treaties.
2. a request for German instructors for the Mexican Army.
3. building of German munitions factories in Mexico.
4. a request to purchase German submarines.
5. establishment of a direct radio link between Mexico and Germany.¹¹⁴

Carranza feared a U.S. invasion. He felt his best hope lie in fostering ties with Germany as a counterbalance to U.S. aggression. In much the same way Porfirio Díaz played off European commercial interests against those of the U.S., Carranza sought to do the same, only now the stakes were much higher. The Germans acceded to Mexico's requests with one additional stipulation, that Mexico would declare war on the U.S., attacking the southern flank.¹¹⁵

By the time the Mexican government received the Zimmermann telegram, the German Secret Service had had considerable success in infiltrating the Mexican military and creating a pro-German factor. There were at least forty officers of German-Mexican extraction in key defense positions within the Carranza government. Major supporters of German intrigue were Sonoran General Plutarco Calles, Chief of Police General Breceda, Minister of Communications Mario Méndez, and Minister of the Interior Aguirre Berlanda.

The British, French, and American intelligence services were also quite active in Mexico, attempting to counter the German presence. British objectives were to: deny the Germans a foothold in Mexico, protect their business interests, avoid U.S. intervention, and eventually overthrow Carranza. The U.S. simply wished to keep Mexico quiet during the war in Europe and further prevent the implementation of the socialist doctrine of the 1917 Querétaro Constitution.¹¹⁶ Pro-Allies in the Mexican military included General Pablo González, a French trained officer, thirteen state senators, and the governor of Coahuila.

Carranza officially remained neutral, maintaining that Mexico never received Zimmermann telegram. Secretary of War General Obregón was adamant that Mexico should not become involved in the European conflict considering Mexico's internal problems. The Constitutionalist Army remained divided; Villa and Zapata continued their rebellion; the economy was in a shambles; and peasant groups demanded immediate agrarian reform.

By 1919, Mexico's political stability improved considerably. Guerrilla forces were under control. Zapata was assassinated through deception by a federal officer claiming to have defected to the rebels. Villa's best commander, General Felipe Ángeles, was killed. The Mexican

people were tired of warfare. Whole families were uprooted in the conflicts, as **las soldaderas** (wives and girlfriends) followed their men from battle to battle. This migration reduced the importance of regionalism in Mexico. Those who rose in the ranks through heroic acts began to think in terms of national aspirations. For them, the Revolution was irreversible, and the reform laws were more than abstract ideals.

From 1916 to 1920, Carranza took definitive steps to counter militarism. In 1917, the official name of the army changed from the **Ejército Constitucionalista** (Constitutionalist Army) to the **Ejército Nacional** (National Army). Carranza sought to avoid the mistake of Madero, by creating a new national army. The 1917 Constitution further listed several articles intended to limit abuses of military power, such as: outlawing armed assemblies, denying quarter to soldiers in peacetime, requiring elected officials to resign from military service ninety days prior to election, and restricting the military from involvement in nonmilitary affairs.¹¹⁷

Secretary of War General Obregón was commanded to reduce the size of the army and bring regional commanders under control of the national government. Obregón retired three-fifths of the officer corps, placing them in the Legion of Honor of the National Army, where they received

retirement pay and constituted a "ready reserve." Retired enlisted soldiers were also placed on a reserve status; however, they received no compensation.¹¹⁸ Under Obregón's orders, General Francisco Urquiza reorganized the military educational system and established the **Academia del Estado Mayor** (General Staff Academy). He also reopened the **Colegio Militar** (Military College) as a new officer training school and by January 1920, 240 cadets were enrolled.

The one area that Carranza could not control was the military budget. In 1914, 31% of government expenditure went to the military. By 1917, it rose up to 72%.¹¹⁹ Carranza realized the high price of loyalty and that the best way to keep the military from reasserting itself was to ensure general officers' financial needs were being met. Therefore, the military budget remained in the sixty percentile for the next four years.

Carranza's downfall came from within, rather than from any of the rebel insurgencies. Obregón developed a large power base amongst the workers and peasants, along with more radical military officers. Obregón's loyal military leaders formed the **Confederación de Regional Obrera Mexicana** or **CROM** (Confederation of Regional Mexican Workers) to promote Obregón's candidacy for president. Carranza, attempting to diffuse Obregón's support in the

north, had Obregónista General Plutarco Calles transferred to Mexico City and Carrancista General Ignacio Pesqueira promoted to governor of Sonora. While Carranza's intent was to eliminate the military from presidential politics, Obregón simply declared, "My spirit is civilista (civilian)."¹²⁰

In April 1920, General Calles and General de la Huerta joined Obregón in pronouncing against Carranza in the **Plan de Agua Prieta**. Carranza's legitimacy was questioned by his attempt to impose an unacceptable presidential candidate, former Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. Ignacio Bonillas. The rebels formed the **Ejército Liberal Constitucionalista** (Liberal Constitutionalist Army) with de la Huerta designated as **Jefe Supremo** (Supreme Chief). Obregón took control of the military operation, marching south to Mexico City. Along the way, he gained overwhelming support from the National Army, including General Lázaro Cárdenas. Carranza fled Mexico City for Veracruz as Obregón's forces occupied the city. The moderate phase of the Revolution had ended and the radical phase was to begin.¹²¹

Even though the presidency of Alvaro Obregón only lasted from 1920-1924, his impact on Mexican society was to continue for many more years. He expanded the power of the presidency by gaining new support from labor and the

peasantry as counterweights to the military. His principal support came from the Labor Party; however, labor bosses soon became as corrupt as military leaders.¹²² Obregón was forced to use the military against labor strikes in 1923 and 1924. He gained increased support of the peasantry as he enacted many of the previously ignored agrarian reform laws of the 1917 Constitution which included land redistribution and Indian education.

Obregón still faced the problem of militarism coupled with many unemployed generals. His most serious threat came from Carrancista General Pablo González, who still commanded a force of 20,000 in Nuevo León. Eight million pesos (the Treasury only had eleven million) were spent buying the loyalty of González's army. Federal monies were also spent buying the loyalty of old *federales*, such as Félix Díaz, and other Carrancistas and Villistas, as well as paying off War Minister General Serrano's gambling debts.¹²³ Obregón faced one final threat in 1922, when Carrancista General Francisco Murguía pronounced against him. Murguía's rebellion was easily defeated by the indebted General Serrano.

Obregón had successfully diffused the opposition, although the National Army had yet to become the type of organization Obregón envisioned; i.e. free from political entanglement. Obregón's policy towards integration was to

bring all officers, except Carrancistas, Villistas, and Gonzalistas, into the National Army. Generals were paid 50,000 pesos for their loyalty as Obregón allowed material gain to replace political ambition.¹²⁴ Yet, graft and corruption remained synonymous with the regional military leaders in the outlying military zones. They did not perform their mission of protecting internal order as they allowed bandits to go unchecked in Chihuahua and Indian uprisings to occur in Sonora. State governors therefore formed their own militias, called **guardias blancas** (white guards), **defensas sociales** (social defense forces), or **cuerpos de voluntarios** (voluntary corps). In time, these forces became as ruthless and brutal as the military. Obregón was ultimately forced to confiscate their arms.

Obregón followed through on his promises to reduce the size of the army and its percent of the budget. When he came into office, the army stood at 100,000. Within the first year, Obregón reduced it by 30,000; 10,000 the next year. He employed the same tactics learned whilst War Minister under Carranza by retiring officers to agricultural colonies, allowing them work, rather than remaining idle, awaiting the next coup. His most dramatic efforts, however, came with military expenditure, which went from 61% of the budget in 1921 to 36% in 1922 and 1923.¹²⁵ This was the true miracle of the Obregón

presidency: i.e. to buy off his opposition while reducing military expenditure at the same time. Obregón actually spent a high per capita figure (26.4 pesos per soldier) in 1922, but the effect was to unify the National Army and decrease the "number of hands in the pot," which allowed him then to reduce the actual military share of the budget. Therefore, "Obregón, by his political policy and his budgetary policy, discovered the key to stability in Mexico. Obregón is the man who found Mexico's manner of escaping perpetual civil wars which seem to have begun during the decade 1910-1920."¹²⁶

Obregón believed he had found the solution to Mexican militarism in the budget process; it was not through more money, but less that the cycle could be broken. Instead of feeding the fire with more federal money, Obregón realized he could reduce the military budget by funding a smaller, more loyal National Army, rather than attempting to coopt all potential military opposition leaders by funding their private armies. Military leaders soon found themselves with few followers as the well ran dry. In the process, Obregón was able to grant the National Army annual pay increases while, at the same time, reducing overall military expenditures in real terms.

Obregón took a number of steps to enhance the professionalism of the armed forces during his

administration. He increased the number of regional military commands from 20 to 35 in order to fragment the power base of any one commander. He also appointed more civilian governors over military governors, using them as a check on each other's power. Obregón further sought to curb the military's political involvement by ordering them to abstain from conversing with opposition candidates and discouraged their support of such candidates. Enlisted soldiers were provided standardized uniforms and ordered to wear them at all times. Education was also offered to conscripts. Finally, the army was put to work, as Obregón created nineteen special public works battalions to undertake projects, such as road building, irrigation, and railroad and telegraph repair.¹²⁷

The issue of presidential succession in 1923 again brought the nation to its knees. Obregón nominated Plutarco Calles, another true reformer, to continue to enact the goals of the Revolution. More senior military officers were enraged. General de la Huerta led the opposition, commanding an army of over 50,000. The opposition had the support of the traditional elites, who feared a more radical regime under Calles. The regular army stood at only 35,000, yet a massive show of support came from the peasant reserves and militias who backed the regime. Obregón was also successful in gaining U.S.

diplomatic recognition by virtue of the Bucareli Agreements of 1923, giving U.S. oil companies virtual concessions over subsoil rights in Mexico.¹²⁸ The U.S. shipped arms to assist Obregón against the de la Huerta forces. The disunity of the opposition and the failed rebellion signified the success of Obregón's policies to isolate regional strong men and maintain centralized military supremacy over them.

At the end of Obregón's presidential term, General Plutarco Calles emerged as the presidential heir. Calles was to dominate Mexican politics for the next twelve years. His initial administration lasted from 1925-1928. During this time, he continued Obregón's reforms which included doubling the amount of land distribution and tripling the number of rural schools. He also increased public works projects, such as hospitals, roads, and communications. Money for these efforts came primarily from the heavy taxation of the wealthy business owners and foreign corporations. In 1926, after a challenge from the Archbishop of Mexico, José Mora y del Río, to defy the 1917 Constitution, Calles cracked down on the Church, enacting the most severe provisions of the Constitution: prohibiting religious processions; closing Church schools, convents, and monasteries; deporting foreign priests and nuns; and requiring registration of priests.¹²⁹

The Mexican bishops' response to the government crackdown was to close church doors, suspend public worship, and refuse to administer the sacraments. Many militant Catholics took up arms against the government, including Catholic military officers, to the cry of "Viva **Cristo Rey**" (Long Live Christ the King). The Cristero Rebellion, as it was called, lasted until 1929, when its militant elements were soundly defeated by government forces.¹³⁰ The result of the government forces' victory was a further consolidation of governmental power in the hands of the president and the increased subordination of the armed forces to governmental control.

With the rebellion behind him, Calles turned his attention to the military. He wished to further reduce its percentage of the budget, desiring more funds for his public works projects. He assigned the task to General Joaquín Amaro, his Minister of War. Amaro was a full-blooded Indian, who rose in rank on the battlefield. He was a professional soldier who sought to make military service an honorable profession and reduce the threat of militarism. Edwin Lieuwen in Mexican Militarism: the Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army comments,

Amaro was determined to change the army from a vehicle for advancing one's political aims into a nonpolitical institution which would restrict itself to the military tasks of defending the nation against internal and external threats. In the young officers he sought to instill a new sense of

discipline and of obedience to civil authority.¹³¹

The measures taken by Amaro were far reaching, in all aspects of military life. A moratorium was placed on promotions. All general officers were required to submit written justifications of their position. Lesser ranks were reduced, placing a ceiling of 55,000 on total manpower. In 1926, Amaro had his legal staff draft four new general military laws. The Organic Law defined the three fold mission of the army to "defend the integrity and independence of the nation, to maintain the constitution, and to preserve internal order." The Law of Promotions ended the standard practice of automatic promotions based on rank and years in service, along with the practice of appointing **generales de dedo** (field promotions), or even blanket promotions for being on the winning side. Instead, promotions were to be based on vacancies and merit, with competitive exams. The Law of Discipline simply communicated the idea of military service as a sacrifice of personal ambition for the good of the nation. The Law of Retirement and Pensions set age limits of 45 years for enlisted men and 70 years for general officers, with entitlement to pensions after 20 years of service.¹³²

A key element of Amaro's professionalization campaign was the founding of the **Escuela Superior de Guerra** or **ESG** (Superior War College). The **ESG** was formed to prepare officers for the responsibilities of command and to instill in them the "fruits of superior character" necessary to form strong bonds of loyalty to superior officers.¹³³ The **ESG** became a significant force in defining the relationship of the new professional military officer to the apparatus of government Calles was building.

Amaro also undertook a number of measures to improve military life for soldiers and enhance their **esprit de corps**. Military schools became more challenging, offering instruction in new technologies, such as the Military Aviation School. New barracks were constructed, new uniforms purchased, and personal hygiene emphasized. Army sports teams were encouraged and the **soldaderas** discouraged. Enlisted soldiers also published their own weekly newsletter, **La Patria** (the Fatherland), in order to "boost morale and instill a sense of mission."¹³⁴

The presidential succession of 1928 brought another challenge to the military reforms of Calles, who initially supported the candidacy of General Arnulfo Gómez, until Alvaro Obregón decided to seek the office once more. Obregón had tremendous popular support, so Calles backed off and supported Obregón, thinking he would return the

favor next time around. Gómez received support from former War Minister Serrano, and together they attempted a coup. Calles' new army survived the test, with only 25% of active duty soldiers defecting to the rebels.¹³⁵ In July 1928, Obregón was reelected president, only to be assassinated by a religious fanatic two weeks later.

Calles maintained control over Mexico's destiny during the next **sexenio** (the new six-year presidential term of office) by implementing three consecutive presidencies to serve out Obregón's term: Portes Gil (1928-30), Ortiz Rubio (1930-32), and Abelardo Rodríguez (1932-34). Calles formed the **Partido Nacional Revolucionario** or **PNR** (National Revolutionary Party), as a national forum for political debate and candidate selection to allow for orderly presidential succession. Many general officers were excluded from the first **PNR** convention in 1929, included Generals Gonzalo Escobar, Jesus Aguirre, Marcelo Caraveo, Claudio Fox, and Roberto Cruz.¹³⁶ Known as the Escobar Rebellion, these officers pronounced against Calles under the **Plan de Hermosillo** in March 1929. The National Army lost one-third of its officers and 30,000 soldiers to the rebel forces, united under the title **Ejército Renovador de la Revolución** (Renewing Army of the Revolution). After a difficult two and one-half month campaign, the Calles' forces aided by agrarian workers battalions defeated the

opposition. The professional army thus survived another test, aligning itself with the regime in power, rather than defecting in mass to the opposition.

Although Mexico had appointed presidents in office, everyone knew that the true power rested inside the PNR with a military cabal consisting of Calles, Amaro, Governor (General) Saturnino Cedillo of San Luis Potosí, Governor (General) Lázaro Cárdenas of Michoacan, and General Juan Andreau Almazán. Calles retained his title of **Jefe Máximo** and he was not successfully challenged until 1934. At that time, Lázaro Cárdenas rose up as the new leader, brandishing his support from labor and junior military officers and enlisted men. His candidacy split the cabal along conservative and radical lines, yet Calles felt he could control Cárdenas once in power.¹³⁷

The Cárdenas presidency (1934-1940) is held today as a benchmark in Mexican politics. The Mexican masses remember Cárdenas as a true radical reformer who made sweeping changes in Mexican government and society that are still felt today. His legacy includes the formation of the **Partido de la Revolución Mexicana** or **PRM** (Mexican Revolutionary Party), precursor to today's **PRI**, a socialization of the Mexican economy, the formation of a corporate state, and the "depoliticization" of the armed forces.¹³⁸

Cárdenas's wide-ranging social reforms had an immediate impact on the military. He rapidly accelerated land redistribution, encouraged labor strikes, and also befriended Marxist labor leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano. These actions alienated many conservative military officers, including a pro-German faction led by former Villista General Nicolás Rodríguez, who formed a neo-Nazi organization called the "Gold Shirts."¹³⁹ Cárdenas also attacked the military economically as he closed many gambling houses and other illicit businesses that benefited from military patronage and financial backing.

Cárdenas did not fear the old military generals who were still around. Instead, he was banking on the support of younger officers and enlisted men who supported his reform program. In return for their support, Cárdenas improved the standard of living of soldiers and their families by building schools and hospitals for their dependents, increasing pay, uniform, and pension allowances, and raising the dignity of the common soldier by giving the military an appearance as an honorable profession.

The **Plan Sexenio Militar** (Six year Military Plan) further spelled out Cárdenas's military reform program. His overarching goals were the moral and professional advance of the military and the organic betterment of the

military institution.¹⁴⁰ Building on those measures implemented under Calles, competency exams were instituted for all promotions, merit being the sole criterion for promotion; career lengths were shortened from 35 to 25 years, with maximum age caps on rank (48 years for junior officers, 58 years for colonels, and 65 years for generals); and part-time employment was banned. Yet even with the increased outlays in military expenditure, the percent of the national budget spent on the military continued to decline. By 1938, the figure was below 20%.¹⁴¹

The formation of the PRM was the means by which the Revolution became institutionalized within the government. Cárdenas brought in the major power brokers in society creating four sectors within the party: the labor unions, the peasantry, the military, and a catchall group called the popular sector. By institutionalizing conflict and crisis management, Cárdenas reduced the military's share of national power to a percentage. Instead of having the final say, they were brought into the process from the beginning. Addressing his critics, Cárdenas had this to say, "We did not bring the military into politics. It was already there. In fact, it had been dominating the situation and we did well to reduce its influence to one in four."¹⁴² Cárdenas encouraged military members to join

other sectors, thereby fragmenting their political unity even further. Cárdenas's intent was to create a "politicization" that ultimately would lead to a "depoliticized" military no longer producing barracks revolts and coups.

The 1940 general elections proved to be the test of Cárdenas's reforms. Many retired generals formed their own political party, the National Union of Veterans of the Mexican Revolution, to oppose Cárdenas's leftist programs and the rising power of the masses. General Francisco Coss founded the fascist National Party of Public Salvation. The rise of numerous other opposition parties testified to the fragmentation of the old guard. Within his own party, the PRM, Cárdenas made his choice for his successor in the former War Minister, Avila Camacho. General Almazán protested, being the senior ranking officer. He accused Cárdenas of attempting to impose Avila Camacho on the nation.

Almazán gained considerable backing from the active duty military and business interests. By September 1939, Cárdenas feared a rebellion more than an election loss to Almazán. Cárdenas banned all political activity on military bases, restricting the military to PRM activities only.¹⁴³ There were a few minor uprisings, but these were suppressed by forces loyal to the regime.

In 1940, Avila Camacho won the election. Almazán's supporters returned to active duty, receiving pay increases and vacations. Cárdenas's military reform had proven successful; the military has not mounted a successful challenge to the regime nor imposed a coup upon an elected president since; Avila Camacho remains the last former military head of state; and **civilista** control of the government has become the norm in Mexican politics.

The removal of the military from direct intervention in politics in Mexico was a long and bloody process. Many soldiers marched to their death at the whim of some general desiring the spoils of the presidency. Even those who mounted successful coups never lasted long, eventually meeting the same fate as those they overthrew. Yet, in the process, Mexico was building a sense of nation identity; it no longer feared U.S. or European intervention; internal strife was being limited to regional conflicts; and the government was finally addressing many of the social ills left from hundreds of years of colonialism, foreign intervention, and predatory despots. Avila Camacho's famous declaration that he was a "believer," also promised a healing of the nation's spiritual wounds.¹⁴⁴

As Mexico, and the world, faced an uncertain future looming on the horizon, it was evident that Mexico had a confidence in its political institutions and a growing

sense of national identity. The Revolution had created something in Mexico that had been lacking for some time; a sense of legitimacy based on peaceful presidential succession. It was in the party formed by Mexico's military leaders that legitimacy rested and the belief in civilian control of the nation that curbed militarism.

This first chapter has examined the historical development of the armed forces from Pre-Columbian time through the Mexican Revolution to 1940. The intent has not been to rewrite history, but rather to discover patterns and relationships in the civil-military spectrum that will be of interest for the remaining chapters.

The patterns of 18th and 19th century alliances with conservatism, the excesses of the Porfiriato, and the chaos of the Mexican Revolution have created a strong fear of resurgent militarism in contemporary Mexican life. The value the modern military places in symbolic gestures of loyalty to the civilian president are necessary to enforce the military's ties to the ideals of the Revolution and not the military's more sordid past. Yet, the military continues to perpetuate the excesses, including an extreme sense of loyalty to commanders (personalism over ideas), the need for financial incentives and rewards, and public accolade. Issues such as these will continue to define the role of the military in Mexican society and undergird the

complex relationships between civil and military authority during a regime crisis well into the late twentieth century.

The historic model of the Mexican military through to the Revolution is that of the Praetorian Guard. The nation's political leaders were predominantly military men, bent on acquiring and holding power in a nation divided by regionalism and class interests. The military provided one of the only institutional mechanisms for maintaining order in society, most often uniting with the Church and the oligarchy to control the nation's purse and political power. Although many military leaders arose who embraced liberal sentiments, once in office, they reverted back to the old ways of doing business, by concentrating more power into the hands of the nation's chief executive.

The Mexican Revolution changed the model of civil-military relations. Instead of a Praetorian Guard, the military assumed the role of the Armed Party. The political institutions that arose were formed by military men bent on destroying militarism; the ability of disgruntled generals to usurp power by pronouncing against the incumbent president. This was the method they had used to come to power, so they sought to redefine the rules. Changes of government would be civilized, as long as everyone played by their rules. The party backed by the

army became the mechanism for change in the political card game, since as Hobbes noted, in the end "clubs are trump."¹⁴⁵

F. Endnotes - Chapter I

¹ Mexicans refer to those who live north of the Rio Grande River as norteamericanos, which translates as North Americans. Mexicans resent the use of the term "Americans" to describe only people of the United States, since Mexicans also consider themselves Americans. Geographically, however, Mexico is considered part of the North American continent.

² Riding, Alan, Distant Neighbors: A Portrait of the Mexicans (New York: Vintage, 1986) 23.

³ Henry Bamford Parkes, A History of Mexico (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1938) 20. The eagle and the serpent are present on the national seal and flag of Mexico today.

⁴ George B. Winton, Mexico: Past and Present (Nashville: Cokesbury, 1928) 35. Human sacrifice was particularly repugnant to the Spanish conquistadors, who were reminded of the Biblical accounts in Leviticus of human sacrifice to the god Molech and how God's anger burned against Israel for following this practice.

⁵ James D. Cockcroft, Mexico: Class Formation, Capital Accumulation, and the State (New York: Monthly Review, 1983) 15. During the Mexican Revolution the same practice occurred. Mexico's "rulers" in the early twentieth century were war heroes, earning their rank on the battlefield.

⁶ The Aztec chief speaker was also the commander-in-chief of the army. His authority over his soldiers was a precursor to the concepts of cacique and caudillo evident in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Parkes, 22).

⁷ Parkes, 28-29.

⁸ Christon Archer, The Army in Bourbon Mexico, 1760-1810 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1977) 1. The Chichimec Frontier was the region north of a line from Tampico on the east coast to the west coast. The terrain north of this land was very arid and generally considered a wasteland, not suitable for habitation or exploitation.

⁹ Edwin Lieuwen, Arms and Politics in Latin America (New York: Praeger, 1960) 102.

¹⁰ Cockcroft, 34.

¹¹ Jorge Alberto Lozoya, El ejército mexicano (Mexico: El Colegio de México Jornadas 65, 1984) 16.

¹² Lozoya, Ejército, 16.

¹³ Lozoya, Ejército, 17-20. Another reason the regular army remained basically inept was the lack of experience amongst the colonial administrators in building a professional military organization. Within colonial society, there was little interest in military service and too few regular Spanish officers to train the troops. Also, General Villalba was not authorized to recruit Blacks or Indians for fear they could not be trusted with weapons (Archer 11). By the turn of the century, the regular army consisted of only 9,000 to 10,000 troops and the militia approximately 12,000 soldiers.

¹⁴ Cockcroft, 53-56. Parkes, 117. By 1810, the colonial army had grown to 40,000, with half of this number composed of non-Spanish soldiers and half of the officers of criollo descent.

¹⁵ Parkes, 142.

¹⁶ Archer, 277.

¹⁷ Lozoya, Ejército, 24.

¹⁸ Parkes, 145.

¹⁹ Parkes, 149. Allende sought to stop the rioting and looting that followed while Hidalgo accepted the turmoil of social change.

²⁰ Lieuwen, Arms, 102.

²¹ The spiritual dimension of the conflict cannot be denied, as the rebel forces marched under the banner of the Virgen de Guadalupe (patron saint of the Indians and rebel forces). In fact, the Spanish Viceroy had the Virgen de los Remedios (a wooden idol worshipped since Cortes as a symbol of Spanish power) brought from its sanctuary to the city, where he proceeded to prostrate himself before the statue, proclaiming it General of the Spanish Army. To many believers this action represented the symbolic spiritual battle that was occurring between the Virgen de

Guadalupe and the Virgen de los Remedios on the battlefields of Mexico. Frank Tannenbaum, The Struggle for Peace and Bread (New York: Knopf, 1950) 38.

²² Mexico, A Country Study (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1985) 31, 320.

²³ Tannenbaum, 38.

²⁴ Iturbide actually favored independence; however, as with Allende, he too had grown quite wealthy and feared the loss of property if a true social revolution occurred. He had been retired by General Apodaca due to Iturbide's racketeering of silver trains. It was in his "retirement" that Iturbide came under the influence of many prominent government officials and ecclesiastics at a Catholic retreat named **La Profesa** (the Professed). Through their instruction, Iturbide came to identify himself with Matías Monteagudo, the chief instigator of the coup against Viceroy Iturrigaray. Iturbide sensed his religious calling to greatness and could not, therefore, argue with God. (Parkes, 158-169.)

²⁵ Mexico, 32.

²⁶ Archer, 30. Parkes, 175.

²⁷ Tannenbaum, 41.

²⁸ Parkes, 177.

²⁹ Jan Bazant, A Concise History of Mexico: from Hidalgo to Cardenas 1805-1940 (New York: Cambridge University, 1988) 35.

³⁰ Parkes, 178. It was this pattern of borrowing and debt spending that would characterize Mexico's economy for years to come. The selling of concessions to foreign commercial interests would fuel the nationalist fires against the regime, which was tied to the oligarchy. Much of the liberal-conservative conflict of the nineteenth century was over issues which we today would consider problems related to economic nationalism.

³¹ Frank R. Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1964) 32-33.

³² Bazant, 38. Cockcroft, 68.

³³ Parkes, 186.

³⁴ Mexico, p. 35.

³⁵ Cockcroft, 61.

³⁶ Nieto, Brown, Hefter (ed.), El soldado mexicano 1837-1847 (México: Documentos Históricos Militares, 1958) 50. The disparity in pay was also quite evident as general officers received in excess of 6000 pesos per month, while a conscript earned about 20 pesos. The national artillery corps had been disbanded in 1833 and the nation's indigenous small arms industries had been abandoned much earlier. The standard weapon of the Mexican infantry were unserviceable flintlocks, called the "Brown Bess," sold by the British, having a range of less than 100 yards.

³⁷ Nieto, 55.

³⁸ Parkes, 200.

³⁹ Nieto, 50.

⁴⁰ Parkes, 203.

⁴¹ In the ensuing battle, Santa Anna was wounded, losing his leg, yet earning the much coveted appellation, "deserved well of the fatherland." (Nieto, 61.)

⁴² For the next ten years, the Mexican government remained in a state of continual chaos, as the revolving door of the national palace saw generals come and go. Santa Anna occupied the president's office three different times in three years. In 1843, he took drastic economic measures to bolster the economy, selling major mining concessions to the British. Santa Anna increased export fees 20%. The bulk of the revenues went to financing the army and buying the loyalty of opposing generals. In fact, from 1822 to 1845, the military expenditure exceeded the government's income in sixteen out of twenty-three years. Ernest Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage (New York: Century, 1928) 297.

⁴³ K. Jack Bauer, The Mexican War (New York: Macmillan, 1974) xix.

⁴⁴ Bauer, 4.

⁴⁵ Parkes, 214.

⁴⁶ Parkes, 218. In fact, if anyone sold out, it was a band of disgruntled Irish Catholics who deserted their Protestant commander, General Winfield Scott, and joined

the Mexicans, fighting under the banner of the St. Patrick's Battalion.

⁴⁷ Parkes, 219.

⁴⁸ At the base of Chapultepec Castle today stands a monument to **los niños héroes**; Juan de la Barrera, Vicente Suárez, Juan Escutia, Fernando M. de Oca, Francisco Márquez, and Augustín Melgar. Their dramatic deaths communicate the heroic fatalism of Mexican national character. Contrast their deaths with those of Colonel Travis and Davy Crockett at the Alamo, who died taking as many of the enemy with them as they could. Much is learned by examining a nation's heroes.

⁴⁹ Nieto, 77.

⁵⁰ Tannenbaum, 43.

⁵¹ Frederick C. Turner, The Dynamic of Mexican Nationalism (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1968) 40.

⁵² Parkes, 222.

⁵³ William R. Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Inter American Affairs 1831-1860 Vol. IX - Mexico, Documents 3772-4476 (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1937) 67.

⁵⁴ Manning, 469.

⁵⁵ Parkes, 226.

⁵⁶ Manning, 752. Santa Anna was propagating the belief among his junior officers that another war with the U.S. was unavoidable.

⁵⁷ Parkes, 228.

⁵⁸ Mexico, 40.

⁵⁹ Manning, 855-856.

⁶⁰ Mexico, 41.

⁶¹ Parkes, 255. Napoleon III had been approached by Mexican exiles, such as Jose Miguel Hidalgo, Francisco Xavier Miranda, Bishop Labastida, and Santa Anna, who sought French support for imposing a European monarch on Mexico as a means to "save" the nation from liberalism.

Napoleon entertained notions of grandeur over the challenge to rescue a besieged Catholic nation.

⁶² Bazant, 85. This was Mexico's only victory over an invading foreign army, which explains the festivities of the **Cinco de Mayo** national holiday.

⁶³ Parkes, 257.

⁶⁴ Parkes, 263.

⁶⁵ Parkes, 267. Although Juárez was successful in recruiting approximately 3000 Union veterans to help Mexico's war effort.

⁶⁶ Cockcroft, 78. Of the 69,000 Mexicans who fought the French, it is estimated that approximately 39,000 were **licenciados** (educated professionals). Therefore, the cost of the war on Mexico's elite was even more staggering.

⁶⁷ Concerning Juárez, "He would have welcomed Protestantism, he once said, since Protestant missionaries would have taught the Indians to read instead of spending their money on candles for the saints." (Parkes, 279.)

⁶⁸ Parkes, 280. The military's need for recognition and public accolade is a theme that occurs often in Mexican history and remains important to this day.

⁶⁹ Parkes, 280-281.

⁷⁰ In the case of Díaz, some Mexicans have the ability to separate the man from his government, satisfying the need for personalistic leaders they can claim as national heroes. (Turner, Dynamic 116.)

⁷¹ Mexico, 44.

⁷² Parkes, 288.

⁷³ Parkes, 288.

⁷⁴ See Don M. Coerver, The Porfirian Interregnum: The Presidency of Manuel González of Mexico 1880-1884 (Ft. Worth: Texas Christian University, 1979). What is evident is that González was extremely loyal to Díaz, deserving of Díaz's support during the interregnum. González once wrote to Díaz, "If with my blood a single one of your sorrows could be avoided, I would gladly shed it; and if my poor life were needed in order to preserve your life for my unfortunate country, I would sacrifice it." (Coerver, 39.)

⁷⁵ Parkes, 291.

⁷⁶ Díaz recognized the need to obtain Church support for his regime in order to survive, politically. Subsequent regimes in Mexico would also learn this lesson painfully.

⁷⁷ Bazant, 99.

⁷⁸ Parkes, 296-298.

⁷⁹ Edwin Lieuwen, Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army 1910-1940 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1968) 2.

⁸⁰ Lieuwen, Militarism, 3.

⁸¹ Friedrich Katz, The Secret War in Mexico (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1981) 28.

⁸² Cockcroft, 93.

⁸³ Katz, 28. Germany did make numerous attempts to expand its military influence in Mexico throughout the early 1900s. Charge d'affaires Flocker arranged a German naval fleet visit in 1904. He also sought to purchase Baja California with the intent to establish a German naval base on the Pacific coast. Díaz did approach the Germans in 1906 with a request for a German military mission to help train and equip the Mexican Army; however, the Germans backed off for fear of antagonizing the U.S. The Germans thought that good U.S.-German relations were preferred over good German-Mexican relations. By 1907, Germany reversed its position on offering a mission to Mexico; however, this time Mexico backed off due to its economic crisis its need for good relations with the U.S. and Britain in order to receive financial support.

⁸⁴ John Womack Jr., Zapata and the Mexican Revolution (New York: Vintage, 1968) 57.

⁸⁵ Cockcroft, 93.

⁸⁶ Stanley R. Ross, Francisco I. Madero: Apostle of Democracy (New York: Columbia University, 1955) 64.

⁸⁷ Lieuwen, Militarism, 8.

⁸⁸ Ross, 121.

⁸⁹ Lieuwen, Militarism, xi.

⁹⁰ Lieuwen, Militarism, 8.

⁹¹ Zapata's army used the two-fifths rule, dos quintos, similar to the Spanish guerilla system: of every five men, two served in the battalion, two worked the fields, and one remained to protect the families. Jorge Alberto Lozoya, "Breve Historia del Ejército Mexicano," Aportes No. 20 (abril 1971): 123.

⁹² Lozoya, Ejército, 46.

⁹³ Donald Hodges and Grandy Ross, Mexico 1910-1982: Reform or Revolution? (London: Zed, 1979) 11.

⁹⁴ Lieuwen, Militarism, 12.

⁹⁵ Ross, 180. It is interesting to note the different tactics employed by Juárez and Madero, two civilistas who found themselves in power, but realizing such power could only be maintained if the military were held in check. Juárez sought to disband his victorious army, which cost him their support. Madero sought to win the loyalty of the defeated Federal Army, leaving it in place, which allowed it later to defeat him. Both chose different tactics, yet, the results were similar. Concerning Madero's choice of Huerta to command the Federal Army, the story goes that Madero did not trust Huerta due to his heavy drinking. Huerta won over Madero by pointing out President Lincoln's acceptance of U.S. Grant, a notorious alcoholic, to lead the Union forces.

⁹⁶ Parkes, 329.

⁹⁷ Katz, 49.

⁹⁸ Parkes, 330. The U.S. stationed over 100,000 troops along the border during the crisis, and continued to stockpile arms and ammunition at the U.S. Embassy.

⁹⁹ Arthur Link, Wilson, The New Freedom (Princeton: Princeton Univeristy, 1956) 353.

¹⁰⁰ Katz, 97.

¹⁰¹ Mexico, 52.

¹⁰² Katz, 119.

¹⁰³ Parkes, 339.

¹⁰⁴ Other tactics included those of General Francisco Robelo, who as governor of the Federal District ordered the looting of prominent families; or, General Ortiz Rubio, who as governor of Michoacán ordered the kidnapping of a wealthy woman in Morelia for ransom; or, Colonel Meza Prieto, who as Chief of Police of Mexico City made false arrests of the wealthy, extorting large payments for their release. (Katz, 234.)

¹⁰⁵ Parkes, 341. Obregón did use the state railways to enhance his chickpea harvest by extorting his competition since he controlled the only means to get the harvest to market.

¹⁰⁶ President Wilson sent U.S. Envoy John Lind, former governor of Minnesota, to Mexico to offer the good offices of the U.S. Government to settle the conflict. In his introductory letter, President Wilson noted that, "The present situation in Mexico is incompatible with the fulfillment of international obligations on the part of Mexico, with the civilized development of Mexico herself, and with the maintenance of tolerable political and economic conditions in Central America." (Link, 357.)

¹⁰⁷ An officer and seven crewmen were arrested after landing ashore in search of fuel. The Huertista officer in command, Colonel Ramón Hinojosa, had arrested the Americans because Tampico was in a state of emergency. They were all released within ninety minutes.

¹⁰⁸ Bazant, 144.

¹⁰⁹ Mexico, 53.

¹¹⁰ Turner, Dynamic, 229.

¹¹¹ Katz, 310.

¹¹² Katz, 309.

¹¹³ Katz, 329-341.

¹¹⁴ Katz, 349.

¹¹⁵ In January 1917, the Germans initiated unrestricted U-boat warfare in the Atlantic Ocean. They felt the time had come for a declaration of war from the U.S. In order to counter this threat, the German High Command plotted a Mexican counterattack on the U.S. in response to a U.S. attack on Germany. The answer to Mexico's request was sent by telegram on 17 February 1917, from Secretary Zimmermann.

In return for Mexico's aggression against the U.S., Germany would ensure the return of Mexican territory, including Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. Unbeknownst to the Germans, or Mexicans, the British had broken the diplomatic codes and a copy of the message was delivered to President Wilson. (Katz, 349.)

¹¹⁶ Katz, 460-475.

¹¹⁷ Lieuwen, Militarism, 44-45.

¹¹⁸ Lieuwen, Militarism, 46.

¹¹⁹ Lieuwen, Militarism, 47.

¹²⁰ Lieuwen, Militarism, 51.

¹²¹ Lieuwen, Militarism, 58.

¹²² Lieuwen, Militarism, 59.

¹²³ Guillermo Boils, Los militares y la política en México (1915-1974) (Mexico: Ediciones Caballito, 1980) 40. The total for General Serrano's gambling debt exceeded 80,000 pesos.

¹²⁴ Obregón confessed once that the reason most generals trusted him was because he had only one arm and could therefore steal less. Yet, Obregón also commented that he knew of no general who could refuse a "blast of 50,000 pesos." (Lieuwen, Militarism, 65.)

¹²⁵ Lieuwen, Militarism, 68.

¹²⁶ James W. Wilkie, The Mexican Revolution: Federal Expenditure and Social Change Since 1910 (Berkeley: University of California, 1967) 105.

¹²⁷ Lieuwen, Militarism, 70-72.

¹²⁸ Riding 70, 230. Obregón violated the tenets of the 1917 Constitution, granting concessions for cash. In this regard, Mexico's new rulers were not very different from its old ones. The rhetoric of the Revolution took a back seat to economic realities.

¹²⁹ Jean A. Meyer, The Cristero Rebellion: The Mexican People Between Church and State (New York: Cambridge University, 1976) 43.

¹³⁰ David C. Bailey, Viva Cristo Rey! The Cristero

Rebellion and the Church-State Conflict in Mexico (Austin: University of Texas, 1974) 79. The Cristeros believed that most military officers were Masons, bent on destroying Catholicism in Mexico. The perception of the Cristeros was that Masons wanted to turn Mexico into a "Protestant bailiwick." (Brandenburg 129.)

¹³¹ Lieuwen, Militarism, 93.

¹³² Mexico, 318. Amaro also wanted to reduce the number of general officers, which stood at 158 for a 53,000 man force. This translates into a ratio of 1:335, or six times the U.S. average.

¹³³ Génesis de la Escuela Superior de Guerra (Mexico: Secretaria de Guerra y Marina, 1933) 31.

¹³⁴ Lieuwen, Militarism, 95.

¹³⁵ Lieuwen, Militarism, 99.

¹³⁶ John W.F. Dulles, Yesterday in Mexico: A Chronicle of the Revolution, 1919-1936 (Austin: University of Texas, 1961) 437.

¹³⁷ Lieuwen, Militarism, 114.

¹³⁸ Lieuwen uses the term "depoliticization" as a characteristic of the Cárdenas era; yet, as noted in the Introduction this paper takes issue with his analysis. Cárdenas is also credited with establishing the first nationalist Mexican Masonic lodges in 1927. The "Cardenist Lodges" promoted a strong sense of nationalism in reaction to British, Canadian, and North American control of the Valley of Mexico Lodge that occurred in 1910. (Brandenburg, 194-197.) The new **yorquinos** under Cárdenas challenged the **escoseses** of Aleman and others who favored greater foreign economic openings to the United States and Europe. Within the PRM, many positional lines were drawn based on lodge affiliation. There were military officers in both camps.

¹³⁹ Lieuwen, Militarism, 119. Cárdenas did have a falling out with Lombardo in 1939 over Cárdenas's choice of his political successor for president, Avila Camacho.

¹⁴⁰ Lieuwen, Militarism, 118.

¹⁴¹ Stephen Edward Kern, The Decline of the Cárdenas Legacy in Mexican Politics (Master's Thesis: University of Virginia, 1988) 38.

¹⁴² Kern, 41.

¹⁴³ Lieuwen, Militarism, 134.

¹⁴⁴ Wilkie, 88.

¹⁴⁵ Gordon Clark Schloming, Civil-Military Relations in Mexico: 1910-1940: A Case Study (PhD Dissertation: Columbia University, 1974) 20.

CHAPTER II - THE MODERNIZATION PERIOD - 1940 to 1982

Many historians recognize the end of the Cárdenas regime in 1940 as the end of the period commonly referred to as the Mexican Revolution. After 1940, militarism is defeated, as civilian rule becomes the norm in Mexican politics. The military becomes an "apolitical" force, no longer the arbiter of the nation's destiny or subject to strong arm tactics of personalistic leaders.¹

This chapter will examine the above thesis, as it pertains to political developments in Mexico from 1940-1981. Edwin Lieuwen's analysis is correct in noting a significant change in civil-military relations that occurred as a result of the Revolution; however, the model Lieuwen offers of an "apolitical" or "depoliticized" military is not the most appropriate model of analysis. Instead, this chapter will explore the Armed Party model that emerged during the Revolution and will trace the development of this model into the early 1980s. In effect, the military's "residual" political roles will be highlighted, particularly during a regime crisis, when the

legitimacy of the political system is in question.

The national elections of 1940 had been a test of the demilitarization policies begun by Obregón, Calles, and Cárdenas. Their success was not assured, by any means, since the most likely candidate was General Almazán, another personalistic military strongman. Although Cárdenas's chosen successor was also a military man, General Avila Camacho was not the "heroic leader" type, instead rising to his position through various staff and administrative assignments.² His election signaled the success of institutional politics, whereby the political party would be the legitimate political authority in Mexico for determining presidential succession and not the military.

Yet, to state that the military had become "apolitical" in the 1940s is an oversimplification. A more accurate assessment would be that the military's involvement in Mexican politics had been transformed from a dominant to a supporting role. President Avila Camacho removed the military as a sector of the official party, shifting its support to the popular section. In essence, this move did not necessarily defuse the military's presence in the party structure. Instead, it caused a tactical realignment of forces that would more closely tie the military with the institutional apparatus of the

bureaucracy and less with individuals. This realignment did not play down the significance of **camarillas** (personalistic interest groups that promote the careers of members for their loyalty to the leader). Rather, it contributed to the diffusion of power and cohesion within the military as a bloc, allowing for limited personal ambition in exchange for loyalty and submission to the regime.

International events were also contributing to this process as these events were transforming the Mexican military from the inside. The scope of conflict associated with World War II left few nations the opportunity to remain politically neutral and removed from the impact of war, and Mexico was no exception. World War II had an impact on the military in terms of professionalism and modernization that lent credence to Lieuwen's thesis. However, the extent to which the War contributed to this process is exaggerated. Instead, the War years were a time for defining the role of the military within the regime and determining the limits to military authority vis-a-vis Mexico's civil bureaucracy.

A. World War II

In June 1940, President Cárdenas sent word to Washington, advising President Roosevelt that Mexico stood ready to take its position alongside other nations of Latin America, "that in the event of any act of aggression against the American continent which brought the United States into war, the U.S. could count on full military and naval cooperation from Mexico in addition to the use of Mexican territory and Mexican national bases for American forces."³ It is of interest to note that Cárdenas went as far as to express a willingness to join in a military alliance with the United States. Considering Mexico's historical record vis-a-vis the United States, and Cárdenas's recent nationalization programs, such a stand might have seemed incongruous; however, such an alliance was also supported by the Latin American nationalist, Haya de la Torre (leader of the APRA party), and the Marxist Mexican labor leader, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, as a hedge against fascism.⁴ Cárdenas's position toward the United States also suggests a political realism that friendly relations with the U.S. would aid his political survival by softening his leftist image with conservative factions in the military, as well as business and the Church.

The early war years brought the U.S. and Mexico together in a number of ways which influenced the Mexican armed forces. The political costs to Mexico, however, were always an issue. As John Childs notes in Unequal Alliances: The Inter-American Military System,

For Mexico, there were economic, political, and military dangers in too long a sustained intimate relationship with the U.S., and there was a special sensitivity to the issue of U.S. troops on Mexican soil. The Mexican - U.S. bilateral relationship was thus characterized in World War II by an extraordinary delicacy in which every military decision was fraught with political implications. Negotiations, joint planning, and even discussion were protracted, sensitive, and almost unnatural in contrast with the easier Brazilian-U.S. military relationship.⁵

In terms of joint military cooperation within the hemisphere, the wartime relations between the U.S. and Mexican militaries were second only to Brazil.⁶ The formation of the Joint Mexican-U.S. Defense Commission (JMUSDC) in 1942, the April 1941 Treaty of Reciprocal Military Transit Rights, Mexican participation in the Inter-American Defense Board, lend-lease, and a number of other bilateral agreements for radar installations and use of air fields testified to the increased contact and cooperation between the Mexican and U.S. militaries.

Two issues that emerged from wartime negotiations between the U.S. and Mexican militaries characterized both

the degree of change occurring in Mexico and the depth of nationalist sentiment of its leaders. The first concerned the subordination of the military leaders to centralized authority of the regime. Military negotiators in Washington had little autonomy to make decisions without approval from Mexico City.⁷ This contrasted sharply with the historical exploits of a Santa Anna, or many of the revolutionary generals who felt they represented the Mexican people and were free to negotiate with the U.S. The second issue concerned the sensitivity of the Mexicans toward the presence of U.S. troops on Mexican soil. The Mexican government demanded that all U.S. military personnel serving in Mexico be under the command of Mexican officers. The Mexicans were also sensitive to the mere appearance of U.S. troops in Mexico, requiring Army Air Corps personnel utilizing Mexican air fields to wear Pan American airline uniforms.⁸

While the Mexican government continued to tread a fine line between nationalism and pragmatism, the Mexican military sought to take advantage of the wartime alliance with the U.S. to forward its own goals of modernization and professionalism. Through lend-lease, the Mexican military gained over \$50 million in military supplies, mostly small caliber weapons and ordnance. They also received training and educational assistance, both in the U.S. and Mexico.

While Mexico would not accept a U.S. military mission, military technical experts were allowed to man radar sites and airfields, training Mexican nationals to operate much of the equipment.⁹

Direct Mexican participation in the war was outlawed by President Avila Camacho in February 1943; however, in July 1943, Foreign Secretary Padilla and U.S. Ambassador Messersmith began discussions over the involvement of a Mexican air unit in combat operations. The subject was not brought up at the JMUSDC until September 1943 by General Cárdenas (then serving as Secretary of National Defense).¹⁰ Although the Mexican military may have supported a more active role in the war effort much earlier, it is again evident that in terms of policy-making, the military had to defer to the national government before proceeding with actual negotiations.

As Secretary of Defense, Cárdenas played a significant role in limiting the military's influence over wartime policy-making in Mexico. Cárdenas continued to bolster the institutional mechanisms over the praetorian patterns that often "forced" governments to see things the way the military saw them. In this sense, Cárdenas enhanced the role of the military as the armed defender of the party apparatus that he had helped to form. By restricting the military to purely defense-related functions, Cárdenas

supported Avila Camacho's move to further isolate the military from the policy-making process within the party while increasing the image of the military as the defender of the nation and its political institutions.

Cárdenas helped to achieve these objectives by supporting Mexican efforts to participate militarily in World War II in at least two significant ways. In June 1944, a combat aviation squadron traveled to the U.S. for training. In April 1945, **Escuadrón de Pelea 201** of the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force arrived at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, armed with 25 Republic P-47 Thunderbolts. Thirty-two Mexican pilots flew over seven hundred combat missions in the Pacific theater, suffering seven casualties.¹¹ Also, based on a January 1942 agreement, 250,000 Mexican nationals living in the U.S. were inducted into the U.S. military. Approximately 14,000 saw combat, suffering over 1000 casualties.¹² These Mexican war veterans helped to foster the image of the Mexican military as a professional organization, contributing to the institutional process directed from within the party structure. By taking part in the international conflict, Mexico sought to diminish the old perceptions of Mexico's praetorian past by showing the world that Mexico's government was a responsible political ally and its military was a professional fighting force.

Two key political events also took place during World War II which helped to solidify the legitimacy of the regime. In September 1942 at Mexico's Independence Day celebrations, all living ex-presidents of Mexico joined President Avila Camacho on the balcony of the National Palace. More than a sign of unity during the war, it was also symbolic of Mexico's national reconciliation.¹³ While almost all of these were military men, they were often bitter political rivals, who now publicly recognized the need to support regime maintenance. Then in April 1943, President Roosevelt traveled to Monterrey, Nuevo León to meet with President Avila Camacho, the first time a U.S. President had traveled south of the border to meet his Mexican counterpart.¹⁴ The national and international prestige associated with such an occurrence was enormous, as Mexico sought to show the world that it was a responsible ally and no longer a liegeman to U.S. political and economic interests.

David Ronfeldt summed up the role of the military in Mexico in the 1940s as "avoiding the limelight."¹⁵ The political ascendancy of the presidency and the regime during the war certainly attest to the military's back seat concerning the affairs of state. Even in the budget process, the military percentage of total government expenditures continued to decline, from 21% in 1940 to 15%

by 1945.¹⁶ This is truly remarkable when one considers the impact of World War II on most other Latin American militaries which used the war as a means to bolster their arsenals and their political power at the same time.

Evidence does suggest that General Cárdenas had a strong desire to exploit the lend-lease program as an alternative to domestic spending on the military. Mexico's strong support of an Inter-American Defense Treaty at the Chapultepec Conference in February 1945 suggests this particular motive.¹⁷ By August 1947, Mexico changed its position completely at the Rio Conference, rejecting the formation of a military arm to the Organization of American States (OAS), as will be explained later in this chapter.

The impact of World War II on the Mexican military was significant, not so much for what was accomplished, but rather for what was not. Although the doors were opened for increased dialogue between the Mexican and U.S. military, they were not creating a funnel, channeling a large amount of resources and influence south of the border. While the rise of U.S. military power over the European powers created a significant change in influence over the Brazilian military after World War II, no such transformation occurred in Mexico. The influence of French, German, or other European militaries had always been marginal in Mexico and historical relations between

Mexican and the United States dictated that U.S. influence must remain checked. Mexico's refusal to accept a U.S. military mission characterized the desire of the nation's political leaders to prevent the Mexican military from becoming an independent actor in the future, tied to foreign influence. The Mexican military needed to remain subordinate to the regime and tied to the institutional goals of the Mexican Revolution, of which a strong sense of nationalism and xenophobia were important.

B. Post-War Development

In 1946, the PRM became the **PRI, el Partido Revolucionario Institucional** (Institutional Revolutionary Party). Neither the name, nor the basic structure of the party have changed in the last forty-three years.¹⁸ In essence, the official government party of Mexico became institutionalized in more than name only. The party's choice for a successor to Avila Camacho was Miguel Alemán Valdés, a lawyer, and the first elected civilian president to take office since the Revolution. In fact, Alemán faced no serious opposition from the military. Two opposition parties, however, were formed by military men to oppose Alemán: General Castro's Mexican Constitutionalist Party and General Calderón's Revolutionary Revindication Party.

Together, both candidates garnered no more than 3% of the popular vote.¹⁹ The significance of their opposition to Alemán was that their support appeared to be formed completely outside of active duty ranks, indicating a clear alignment of active duty forces with the regime's choice of successors.

President Alemán continued the policies of his predecessors in reducing the influence of the military within the regime. The percentage of the defense budget declined from 15% in 1946, at the beginning of his term, to 8% in 1952, at the end of his term. However, Edwin Lieuwen believes that the **coup de grace** for the military occurred in 1947 at the Rio Conference, where the Mexican military's support for an Inter-American Defense Council in the permanent structure of the Organization of American States was soundly defeated by their civilian counterparts.²⁰ The message the Mexican regime sought to communicate to her hemispheric neighbors over the OAS vote was that Mexico did not wish to foster any lasting ties to the U.S. that would provide the Mexican military an international voice, or a significant decision-making capability in an international arena. Civil supremacy was not so much at stake in Mexico as was the perception Mexican civilian bureaucrats sought to communicate to its neighbors that Mexico's praetorian past was over. Instead,

the Inter-American Defense Board was established, having little political clout, but much more ceremonial significance. Mexico did sign the Rio Treaty of Mutual Assistance, receiving antitank weapons systems and M4 Sheridan and M3A1 and M5 light tanks for its compliance.²¹ However, Mexico refused to enter into any bilateral mutual defense treaties with the U.S., resting on its foreign policy objectives of self determination and nonintervention.

To an outside observer, the postwar period in Mexico does appear to be a culmination of demilitarization policies, as Lieuwen states. Yet, within the regime, the military was still present in key leadership positions. The president of the PRI from 1946 to 1952 was General Rodolfo Sánchez Taboada. In fact, military men would continue to serve as party president for the next two administrations, until 1964.²² In 1946, eight states and two territories had military men serving as governors.²³ Twenty-one state senators and twenty-two deputies in the national legislature were still military men.²⁴ These statistics suggest that the regime still recognized the need to reward individually ambitious yet loyal military officers, while at the same time reducing the corporate strength and unity of the military as a whole.

Although the military's percentage of the budget was in decline, military officers were still involved in the decision-making process on how federal money was to be spent. As Stephen Godspeed noted of Mexico in 1947, "Army officers are associated with almost every governmental venture involving the spending of money."²⁵ Also, the military budget in Mexico did not accurately reflect true national expenditures for military-related spending. Construction projects, civil affairs programs, and other nonpersonnel and nonequipment expenditures often came through other funds. Thus, an analysis of military influence that relies solely on declining military budget figures throughout the postwar period would be misleading and only partially accurate.

The 1950s brought a change in doctrine for the Mexican military, away from the territorial defense plans emphasized during World War II as the nation's top priority. A well-known text in Mexican military schools in the late 1930s and 1940s was General Alfonso Corona del Rosal's Moral Militar y Civismo (Military Morale and Public Spiritedness). The first edition (1938) stressed the first priority of the army to defend the national territory from exterior attack. A subsequent edition in 1952 changed the first priority of the army to conserving internal order.²⁶

As evidence of this new priority, in 1952, the army was called upon to put down riots in Mexico City by the **Federación del Partido del Pueblo Mexicano** or **FPPM** (Federation of Mexican Peoples' Party), supporters of General Miguel Henríquez Guzmán in his election bid for president. Henríquez Guzmán went as far as to solicit support from the United States in his effort to defeat the **PRI** candidate, Adolfo Ruíz Cortines.²⁷ Henríquez Guzmán's supporters, **Henriquistas**, envisioned a return of radical populism, reminiscent of the Cárdenas regime.²⁸ The significance of Henríquez Guzmán's revolt was that the active duty military remained loyal to the **PRI** and that his support came from without rather than within active duty army ranks.

In international affairs, Mexico continued to avoid any binding security agreements with the U.S. During the Korean War, the U.S. sought to enlist Mexican support by promising military aid (\$62 million earmarked for Latin America). Mexico refused to join in the war effort, or adhere to the tenets of the U.S. Mutual Security Assistance Act, where all signatories subscribed to the "defense of democracy" throughout the world.²⁹ Mexico did not wish to be pressured into committing troops outside of their national territory. Mexican political leaders felt such a policy would contradict Mexico's foreign policy of

nonintervention and self determination.

The civilian regimes of Adolfo Ruíz Cortines (1952-1958) and Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964) continued the process of reducing the military's corporate strength by reducing its resources and fragmenting its leadership. The military's share of federal expenditures dropped to an all-time low figure of 7% by 1956, where it was to remain throughout the sixties.³⁰ The number of military men serving as state governors declined throughout the period, but military participation in the national legislature and presidential cabinet (as Secretaries of Defense and Navy) remained constant.

In 1958, The **Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana** or **PARM** (Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution) was formed by revolutionary-era generals such as former **PRI** senator, General Jacinto B. Treviño, and future presidential candidate, General Juan Barragán. **PARM** was recognized by the **PRI** as a "loyal" opposition party, which supported the regime during presidential elections. Another **PARM** co-founder, General Raúl Madero, later received the **PRI** nomination for governor of Coahuila.³¹ The **PARM** was a clear example of a co-opted political movement formed as an outlet for ambitious general officers, who by challenging the system helped to bolster the system's legitimacy, and were themselves rewarded in

the process.³²

In the 50s and 60s, it was evident that the regime would take care of the military as long as the military would take care of the regime. A U.S. National Intelligence Estimate in 1957 noted the extent of loyalty of the military to the regime, and discounted the threat of a military coup any time soon. The Estimate did note, however, that the military's support during the process of presidential succession continued to be important for regime maintenance.

The army does not now take an active role in politics. Nevertheless, military leaders of revolutionary background occupy important government posts, including that of Secretary of Defense . . . PRI leadership, aware of the latent power of the army, probably would not select a presidential candidate not acceptable to the military.³³

Upon taking office in 1958, President López Mateos provided the military with a one-month bonus in pay, subsequently raising military pay 10% each year he was in office.³⁴ Material and political rewards, such as PRI nominations of military men to state and legislative offices, and better housing and education for soldiers' families, were made available to the military for their loyalty and obedience. The fact that such benefits were made public by the president was intended to commit the military to its benefactors.³⁵ Franklin Margiotta further

summarizes the reciprocal nature of the civil-military relationship that emerged in the 1950s.

The President knows that the reliable federal troops are available if they are required by the Mexican political situation. When the national leadership is determined to remove a local governor or political boss from power, federal troops supply the muscle for these inherently political actions.³⁶

Since a serious threat to the legitimacy of the regime did not occur in the 1950s, this relationship was not tested. The sixties, however, would provide a number of severe challenges to political authority in Mexico as the crisis of the regime began to develop. The Mexican military would be forced to take a stand in the political crisis, exposing to the Mexican people the extent of the military's co-optation by the regime and the military's limited ability to act as an independent power broker in Mexican politics and society.

C. The Sixties - The Crisis Begins

The tenor for the 1960s in Mexico was set in motion with the successful Cuban revolution in January 1959. Mexico soon began to feel the results of communist expansion in the hemisphere as numerous strikes were believed to have been instigated by communist sympathizers motivated by Castro's success. In March 1959, two Soviet

officials, 2nd Secretary Nicolai M. Remosov and military attache Nicolai V. Aksenov, were declared *persona non grata* and ousted from the Soviet Embassy in Mexico for their alleged involvement in nationwide railroad strikes. On December 9, 1959, a general strike was called in San Luis Potosí to protest the power of Governor Manuel Alvarez and his political machine, run by Colonel Gonzalo N. Santos, that had controlled local politics for 18 years. Over 3,000 soldiers were called in to oversee the December mayoral elections. In Chilpancingo, Guerrero, on December 30, 1960, federal troops fired on 2,000 demonstrators who were protesting the corrupt regime of Governor (General) Raúl Caballero Aburto. Thirteen demonstrators were killed and thirty-seven were wounded.³⁷

The military was now being called upon by the institutional governing party to keep order and maintain stability in Mexican society. This was not necessarily new in Mexico, but the scope of internal conflict was changing in response to new international forces, such as the Cuban Revolution and organized student movements worldwide. External forces were at work causing Mexicans to question the legitimacy of the post-Revolutionary regime. This new opposition to the regime would be tolerated, but within limits specified by the regime and not through violence or illegal protest actions initiated from below. The crisis

threshold appeared to be the degree to which instability impacted on Mexico's economic progress, along with the popular perception of the regime's ability to manage the conflict. Mexico's use of force to quell political unrest was justified as a legitimate exercise of the military's internal security role. The degree to which the military supported such action at this time is not fully understood, although the prevailing attitude expressed in the military was anticommunist and skeptical of the motivations of most labor movements, especially those supporting social unrest.³⁸

Reminiscent of earlier power struggles in Mexico, former military officers fomented some of the social unrest of the early sixties. On 15 September 1961, 224 "instigators" planning street riots in Mexico City were arrested in the home of General Celestino Gasca, who was linked to leftist labor movements. On the same day, Colonel Jenaro Coatla Gómez led 200 rebels in an assault on the Jatilpan Military Barracks in Veracruz. One soldier and one civilian were killed in the attack.³⁹

Within active duty army ranks, however, there were no reported incidents of soldiers failing to follow orders or defecting, en masse with their commander, to the rebel cause, as occurred in earlier Mexican history. Incidents of military complicity in rebel and labor movements in the

early 1960s appear to have been isolated actions by dissident officers who were retired, having their ideological roots in the radicalism of the Cárdenas era. Their ties to the active duty army were tenuous, at best. General Alfonso Corona del Rosal, serving as PRI president, summed up the military's responsibility to the government in a 1963 speech to the National PRI Convention.

Now the Army, born of the Revolution, is an institution which guards the internal order and leads force so that the government can maintain its rule and the rule of law and thus realize the true purpose of the state.⁴⁰

The "true purpose of the state" meant maintaining the political stability necessary to achieve economic growth and prosperity.

The "unwritten alliance" between the military and the regime was visibly displayed on 5 May 1963, at a ceremony celebrating the 101st anniversary of the Battle of Puebla. Over 58,000 soldiers gathered in the Plaza of the Constitution as President López Mateos raised the flag. The President was flanked on either side by the Secretary of National Defense, General Olachea Áviles, and Secretary of Marine, Admiral Manuel Zermano Araica. The President called on the soldiers to swear their allegiance to the flag, while General Olachea Áviles followed with the remark, "If thus you do (swear), let the nation reward you; and if you do not, may it call you to task."⁴¹

The regime did reward a number of loyal military officers during this period of unrest. General Aburto, mentioned earlier, was removed as governor of Guerrero, but appointed as military attache to El Salvador. General Humberto Mariles Cortes, an Olympic hero who shot and killed a laborer as a result of an argument during a traffic accident, was allowed to leave the country for Europe, with no disciplinary action taken. An army captain was "permitted" to capture and execute an agrarian leader in Morelos as retaliation for the deaths of soldiers suffered in earlier uprisings.⁴² The operational freedom given to the military in later counterinsurgency efforts further testified to the extent of agreement between the military and the regime.

In 1964, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz became the new Mexican President. He had served in the influential Secretariat of Government under Ruiz Cortines, later serving as head and cabinet-level minister under López Mateos. The beginning of his presidency was marked by public indifference to the military, evidenced in his inaugural address and first State of the Union Message.⁴³ Such action was out of character for the Mexican President, who normally offered a great deal of praise for the military in these important speeches. The fact the Díaz Ordaz did amend his ways by 1966 speaks of the illusion of influence,

if not actual power, of the military to make the Mexican President respect its need for public accolade (by the Chief Executive).

Events in the mid-sixties may have also dictated to President Díaz Ordaz that loyal military support for the regime was crucial in a crisis situation. In April 1965, the Communist Party Secretary, General Manuel Terrazas Guerrero, was arrested for conspiring against the government.⁴⁴ As a retired officer of the Cardenist era, Terrazas' influence with active duty personnel was marginal, yet the perception of an ex-military leader in opposition to the government raised the spectre of historical collusion. In 1967, the government announced that it had discovered a pro-Maoist plot to overthrow the PRI and replace it with a socialist regime. Army convoys carrying arms had been attacked by guerrillas suspected to be part of the conspiracy and financed by the People's Republic of China.⁴⁵ Knowing which convoys carried arms and ammunition suggested that the guerrillas either had good intelligence or possibly support from within the military. Either way, President Díaz Ordaz recognized that a loyal military was key to the continuing legitimacy and survival of the revolutionary regime.

For many observers of Mexico, the current regime crisis of the PRI evolved from the regime's economic

failures of 1982, and evidenced by the regime's poor showing in the latest presidential elections in 1988. Yet, most Mexican and U.S. political analysts recognize 1968 and the "student" riots as the harbinger of the regime crisis and a true watershed year in Mexican political and social life.⁴⁶ The year 1968 can also be viewed as a key indicator of military resolve to stand with the regime and support the PRI in a regime crisis. In this light, the 1968 riots served to confirm the beliefs of many Mexican citizens that the military was simply a pawn of the PRI (the Armed Party) and not an independent power broker, nor a vehicle for social change in the order of the Peruvian military of this era.

Prior to the October 1968 showdown at Tlatelolco between students and the government forces, both sides were consolidating their positions. University and high school students in Mexico began to strike, calling for reforms in higher education. The Mexican student movement followed the reports of an international student movement, occurring in the United States, France, and elsewhere, and were seen by many to be part of the international movement. However, in Mexico, the students were joined by intellectuals, opposition political parties, workers, Catholics, Marxists and communists who were opposed to the conservative PRI regime.⁴⁷ Since the mid 1960s, the

military had been moving to counter the regime's efforts to fragment its forces by developing a high degree of internal cohesion, such that by 1967 the military was being referred to within the regime as a **grupo de veto** (veto group)⁴⁸. The military had also implemented an operational plan, **GUARDIA 68**, aimed at preventing disturbances and altercations of public order.⁴⁹ A showdown appeared inevitable.

Initially, the student strikes were controlled by the **granaderos** (riot police). When they proved ineffective, the government called in armored federal troops. On July 30, 1968, over 3,000 students, armed with rocks and Molotov cocktails, attacked an army unit equipped with tanks and half-tracks. The army responded by blowing away the door to a high school which the students occupied. This action brought increased student support for the strikers since the military had violated the autonomy of the university system.⁵⁰ Since the military was perceived as a pawn of the **PRI**, the protestors and sympathizers vented their anger and retribution against the regime, further contributing to the crisis situation.

In August, students and strike organizers were able to mobilize many of those who had previously been spectators. Over 87,000 **UNAM** (National Autonomous University of Mexico) and 62,000 **IPN** (National Polytechnic Institute) students

joined in the strike. Yet the demands being made against the regime were becoming increasingly more political, going well beyond educational reforms, to include freeing all political prisoners, abrogating the government's right to arrest those subversive to public order, ousting Mexico City police chief Luis Cueto and his deputy, and eliminating the *granaderos*.⁵¹

In September, President Díaz Ordaz delivered his annual State of the Union address to Congress. In his speech, he promised to the nation that he would not let the students interrupt the opening of the Summer Olympic Games, to be held in Mexico City in October.⁵² Mexico's international prestige was on the line and it was essential that the nation portray itself favorably to the world. Therefore, on 18 September, 1300 army troops took over UNAM, arresting hundreds of protesting students and teachers. The army remained at UNAM until 30 September.⁵³ Unfortunately for the government, most members of the National Strike Committee did manage to escape.⁵⁴

The final showdown, however, did not occur until two weeks later, at Tlatelolco, where on the evening of October 2, 1968, federal troops again moved against protesting students and supporters. The encounter soon became violent, as soldiers opened fire on the crowd, claiming that sniper fire had occurred first.⁵⁵ Before

"La noche triste" (the sad night) ended, at least forty-nine people were dead and over five hundred wounded, many of whom were bystanders and not actual belligerents.⁵⁶ The army arrested over 1,000 people that evening for participating in the riots, claiming 363 of these were armed.⁵⁷ Two days later, organizers of the strikes announced an end to the protest. Two days after that, Mexico hosted the celebration of the world's youth, the Summer Olympic Games.

If the military paid a price for its role at Tlatelolco, the cost involved loss of prestige and further unravelling of its ties to the Mexican people. Yet, politically, the military gained greater respect (and fear) from the party, who owed its political survival to its armed protectors.⁵⁸ In gratitude, the military fared well economically. Construction costs for military projects tripled in 1969 over the previous year. The promotion rate for generals and colonels doubled.⁵⁹ The lessons of Tlatelolco were that loyalty has its price for both the military and the regime.⁶⁰

The events of 1968 would have a profound impact on Mexico in the next decade. The man who best symbolized Mexico's catharsis in the 1970s was the nation's new president, Luis Echeverría Alvarez. As the Minister of Government under Díaz Ordaz, Echeverría was responsible for

calling out the troops at Tlatelolco. He personally took the blame for the "massacre" and throughout his regime (1970-1976) sought to amend his ways with Mexico's political left. Yet, President Echeverría had limited success in healing the nation's political and economic wounds as Mexico faced a militant upsurge in the early seventies.

It wasn't until the end of the decade, under President José López Portillo y Pacheco, that Mexico found some breathing room from its problems. The relief came in the form of new discoveries of oil in the Gulf of Mexico. The politics of oil in Mexico in the seventies would have a profound impact, not only on the nation and its relations with the world, but specifically on the military, as well.

D. The Seventies - Insurgency and Oil

For the military, the 1970s began as a period of continued hostility, as many of the disenchanted radicals moved underground. The radicals were not simply considered as social bandits, reminiscent of Mexico's past. Rather, they were political terrorists who planned and executed a number of political kidnappings and guerrilla operations.⁶¹ The inability of the regime to control the guerrillas and the popular perception that the government often conceded

to terrorist demands created speculation that the military might intervene to oust Echeverría.⁶² Instead, the military cracked down, mounting a counterinsurgency campaign against guerilla forces throughout the countryside, while at the same time being called upon to continue to break strikes in the larger cities.⁶³

From 1971 to 1974, the Mexican military was involved in fighting a guerilla war on many fronts, the extent of which was not known or well publicized in the press. Probably the best organized of the guerilla forces was the **Movimiento de Acción Revolucionario** or **MAR** (Revolutionary Action Movement). The **MAR** had both urban and rural wings. The rural wing was headed by a school teacher, Genaro Vásquez Rojas, who frequently attacked military convoys as a source of weapons and supplies.⁶⁴ One of the most active guerilla organizations was the **Ejército de Liberación del Sur - ELS** (Southern Liberation Army). The Mexican Army achieved a successful intelligence operation against the **ELS**, running a network of informants who aided in the capture of a number of **ELS** base camps.⁶⁵ One fringe group, the **Frente Urbano Zapatista -FUZ** (Zapatist Urban Front), was credited with numerous attacks against the military, including two ambushes in Guerrero against weapons convoys, one on June 25, 1972, where 10 soldiers were killed, and another on August 23, 1972, where 17 soldiers were

killed.⁶⁶ The army's most successful effort against the guerrilla's came in 1974 with the killing of the rebel leader, Lucio Cabañas, a former school teacher who had eluded the authorities for seven years. Cabañas had led many successful guerrilla operations, including the abduction of the governor-elect of Guerrero, Rubén Figueroa.⁶⁷

The insurgency of the early 1970s confirmed much of the military's doctrine and training that had been taught in Mexican military schools since the 1950s, when the military turned away from territorial defense. Since this time period coincides with the Vietnam War, many analysts point out a connection between U.S. doctrine and the practice of militaries throughout Latin America.

The extent to which U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine penetrated the Mexican military is arguable. Between 1946 and 1973, only 240 Mexican military officers attended the U.S. Army's School of the Americas at Ft. Gulick, Panama-- long considered the center for indoctrination of Latin American militaries in the counterinsurgency lexicon. However, from 1964 to 1968, 304 Mexican officers did attend military schools in the United States, where they came in contact with U.S. military personnel with Vietnam- era experience. U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine was being espoused in the North American military classroom and

tested on the battlefields of Vietnam.⁶⁸ Yet, Mexican military officers simply would answer that they borrowed North American concepts and historical examples from Japan and Vietnam and applied them to their own unique situation.

During this time of insurgency, the military continued to carry out public works projects and other civic affairs missions to enhance its own and the regime's prestige with the local population.⁶⁹ Projects included providing health and sanitation to many isolated towns and villages that were believed to be logistically supporting guerrillas. The military also undertook a number of construction works, such as building roads and communications networks, which would enhance the military's ability to carry on counterinsurgency operations in the countryside.

The military is proud of its service to the nation in halting the spread of insurgency in the early seventies. Guerrillas were viewed as counterrevolutionaries, bent on destroying the nation and returning it to the extremism of the past, or else communists attempting to subvert the nation into the Soviet camp. Many soldiers of that era wear battle ribbons, distinguishing themselves as true veterans of combat. Many other soldiers paid the ultimate price in service with their lives. They are remembered today as a reminder to the Mexican people of the sacrifice of the military to the preservation of the nation and the

goals of the Mexican Revolution.

President Echeverría continued to support the military's economic and psychological need for recognition during his administration. He formed the SEDENA, an equivalent of the post exchange (PX), and also established the **Fondo de Vivienda Militar** to promote the study of military life and needs. Echeverría also approved the construction of a military vacation complex at Nayarit, built with funds previously earmarked for **ejiditarios** (government land grants for peasants).⁷⁰ Echeverría is also credited with helping to restore a strong nationalist sentiment with certain military factions, gaining support for his foreign policy efforts through **la línea tercermundista** (the Third World line).⁷¹

There was concern among more conservative officers in the military that the president might have moved too far to the left in his attempts to atone for the "Tlatelolco massacre." Echeverría's courtship with Eastern Bloc nations particularly struck raw nerves with those military officers who were U.S. trained and sensitive to communist support for Mexican insurgent forces. In 1971, an incident did occur which cast some doubt on military support for President Echeverría. On June 10th (Corpus Christi Day), a riot broke out in Mexico City where a group of right wing extremists, **Los Halcones** (Hawks), attacked student

protestors, killing 11 and wounding 160. The political left charged that the **Halcones** were recruited by the chief of police.⁷² Police and soldiers present at the riot did nothing to stop the violence. In fact, soldiers later commented that they were ordered not to interfere.⁷³ The investigation that followed the incident created a power struggle within the **PRI**, where conservative elements were charged with creating the incident to further discredit the Echeverría regime.⁷⁴

President Echeverría did, however, have considerable support in the military, even though much negative publicity was placed on the **Halcones** incident. Martin Needler argues that Echeverría's assault against the political right within the party only occurred after he had obtained the support of senior army officials by promising them free reign in their counterinsurgency efforts.⁷⁵ Echeverría recruited his support also among younger officers, particularly those of the **ESG**. The curriculum of the **ESG** in the early 1970s was heavily influenced by Echeverría's "economic nationalism." In 1972, a group of **ESG** students toured Baja California, noting the extent of foreign economic penetration of Mexico. Generals Mujica and Jara instructed students at the **ESG** and openly expressed their anti-imperialistic sentiments against those in Mexico who had sold-out to

foreign economic interests.⁷⁶

Echeverría feared the military. His efforts to factionalize the services were intended to prevent a coup, which he thought was not an impossibility. In 1973, the military overthrow of Allende in Chile taught the Mexican President that a "democratic" tradition alone did not safeguard against renewed militarism. Echeverría therefore employed those tactics that had historically worked so well in Mexico to garner support for the regime. In October 1973, the military received a 15% pay raise. Echeverría also stepped up his official rhetoric, praising the military's patriotism. Finally, he retired almost 500 revolutionary-era generals, allowing the mobility of a younger cadre more loyal to the president and dedicated to the principle of civilian rule.⁷⁷

Echeverría's actions suggest that the military may not have been a unified body when it came to political ideology and a shared understanding of the best course of action to solve Mexico's economic and political problems. The damage to the military's prestige suffered in 1968 remained fresh in the memory of those junior officers and soldiers directly involved in the riots, who had faced the decision to fire on their own countrymen. These officers were now progressing up the ranks and would soon be in a position to make their feelings more known.

The Echeverría era in Mexico raises some key questions, which will be addressed throughout the rest of this study. To what extent were disgruntled military officers co-opted back into the regime? Did the student riots of the 60s and 70s create support in the military for the political left outside of the regime? If so, where are these officers today? Did the regime's handling of Mexico's crises at this time cause the military to question the legitimacy of the PRI and suggest the possibility that the military could do better?

In 1976, Mexico's political crises were overshadowed by its economic ones. The choice of successor to Echeverría was an economist, José López Portillo y Pacheco. Given Mexico's economic problems caused by Echeverría's attack on big business and his personalistic foreign policy, such a choice appeared necessary to help heal the nation's wounds.⁷⁸ President López Portillo sought to reconcile the warring factions within the PRI, returning Mexico to a more conservative foreign and domestic line. He even brought back former president, Díaz Ordaz, to serve as ambassador to Spain, an action which would have been inconceivable under Echeverría.⁷⁹ Yet, it was in the realm of "oil politics" that López Portillo made his most lasting impact on the military.

From 1968 until 1974, Mexico was a net importer of oil. Discoveries of large hydrocarbon reserves in Tabasco and Campeche Sound propelled Mexico into the enviable position of becoming an exporter of oil to an energy-starved world.⁸⁰ By 1978, Mexico was reporting a 130 million barrel surplus and proven reserves of 20 billion barrels.⁸¹ Mexico's economic future suddenly looked bright. Oil prices rose from \$12.57 per barrel in 1976, to \$30.93 per barrel in 1980. Assuming a continued growth of 5 to 7 per cent annually, López Portillo planned for Mexico's economic growth and the expansion of the industrial sector to create 12.6 million jobs by 1990.⁸² Optimistically, the President borrowed heavily from eager bankers awash with "petrodollars," seeking outlets for investment. Mexico's political future looked bright also, for the main difference between this oil boom and that of the 1920s, was that the state would control the profits and not private enterprises owned by foreigners.⁸³ The president could therefore direct funds into those sectors of society which promised the greatest political gains. The military was one such sector.

Mexico's new-found position of being the world's fourth largest depository of oil and gas convinced President López Portillo that Mexico should have a military force commensurate with the nation's need for greater

international prestige. Secretary of National Defense, General Félix Galván López, was tasked with three goals: to increase the size of the armed forces, to improve education and training, and to upgrade military equipment.⁸⁴

Developments during the López Portillo regime attest to the fact that these were not idle goals for the military. Available figures for the size of the army alone show a growth of 50%, from 80,000 in 1970 to 120,000 by the early 1980s. Further modernization of education and training of officers included courses on resource and infrastructure management.⁸⁵ In 1981, a completely new military school was formed, El Colegio de Defensa Nacional - CDN (the National Defense College), to train colonels and higher not only in advanced military studies, but also politics, economics, and national security issues. The military also increased spending on equipment purchases, importing approximately \$70 million in arms from 1975 through 1979. Major suppliers were Great Britain (\$40 million), the United States (\$10 million), and France (\$10 million).⁸⁶ Mexico also improved its own indigenous arms producing capabilities under the General Directorate of Military Industry, producing uniforms, supplies, small arms, and ammunition. Also in the area of scientific and technical development, López Portillo reportedly earmarked one-third of all funds spent between 1978 and 1982 for

military application.⁸⁷

The modernization of the Mexican military during this period pales in comparison with what occurred under military regimes in Brazil, Peru, Argentina, or Chile. Yet, for the Mexican officer, who for a long time was forced to be satisfied with antiquated equipment, these acquisitions did much to boost moral and the military's prestige as a "modern" fighting force. In terms of budget outlays, the figures for the military did go up, but as a percentage of Gross National Product, they declined. López Portillo might have recalled President Obregón, who first achieved a similar phenomenon back when the military spending topped 60% of the total budget. The President must also have sensed the elation of Porfirio Díaz, with the promise of a continuing source of revenue to meet any rising expectations in the military.

In 1982, however, the bubble burst. The drop in oil prices with the world "glut" brought Mexico to the verge of economic collapse. The economic crisis caused Mexican Finance Minister, Jesús Silva Herzog, to travel to Washington after announcing in August that Mexico could no longer repay the interest on its foreign bank loans.⁸⁸ New commercial bank loans suddenly dried up, forcing López Portillo to take drastic measures to control inflation by devaluing the peso and halt capital flight by nationalizing

Mexico's banks. The regime crisis in Mexico had now become the world's crisis, as other Latin American nations followed suit.

For the military, the 1980s began with many promises left unfulfilled. Although modest improvements were made in updating equipment, many programs had to be put on hold as the economic situation worsened. For a nation's military that suddenly realized it had economic interests to protect in the Gulf of Mexico and a force incapable of the challenge, the regime crisis became a crisis of the armed forces as well.

From 1940 to 1982, Mexico emerged as a modern nation, facing many of the growing pains associated with political and economic development. The political regime matured, more clearly defining the rules by which change occurred in Mexico. The regime showed some flexibility in accommodating divergent political factions, as long as they accepted the rules and worked within the system. Those that did not were forced into the ranks of insurgency and severely dealt with by the military. Mexico valued peace and prosperity. The two were inseparable and the military played a key role throughout these forty-two years to ensure Mexico continued to progress economically.

The historical example of a "bought" military was still evident throughout this period. The military

supported the regime in a crisis, restoring equilibrium when the regime acted decisively against agitators. The military was rewarded handsomely for its support. During this period, the army remained "an armed branch of the political bureaucracy that governs the country, fully integrated into the channels of higher command."⁸⁹

Although the political regime continually sought to limit the military's unity and institutional cohesion, the political leaders recognized that such efforts may be counterproductive. A political crisis, such as the 1968 student riots, taught Mexico's leaders that military support was indispensable and that factionalization of the military had its limits. The model of analysis that emerged from the Revolution of the Armed Party was still accurate, since the nature of civil-military relations continued to be exercised within the political institutions and not without.

The thesis that the military has been "bought" and is loyal to the regime due to economic incentives assumes a source of income available to meet the needs of the military. Obregón's belief that unpaid generals were the primary source of revolutions would be tested in a recession, when all sources of income, foreign and domestic, were suddenly eliminated. The regime crisis that loomed in 1982 appeared to be the test of this thesis as

the well suddenly went dry. The next chapter will examine the extent of the economic argument and whether the resource drain may, in fact, have changed the model of analysis for civil-military relations in Mexico for the rest of the 1980s and 1990s.

E. Endnotes - Chapter II

¹ This represents the basic argument in Edwin Lieuwen's Mexican Militarism.

² Martin C. Needler, Politics and Society in Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1971) 6. Avila Camacho did have a regional base of power in Puebla.

³ Raymond Estep, United States Military Aid to Latin America (Maxwell AFB: Air University, September 1966) 207.

⁴ John Childs, Unequal Alliance: The Inter-American Military System 1938-1978 (Boulder: Westview, 1980) 37. The earlier German influence in the Mexican military during World War I reemerged in the form of Nazism in the 1930s and 1940s.

⁵ Childs, 56.

⁶ Estep, 112.

⁷ Childs, 57.

⁸ Estep, 209.

⁹ Estep, 211.

¹⁰ Childs, 58.

¹¹ Adrian J. English, Armed Forces of Latin America (London: Jane's, 1984) 318. Mexico 327. There exists a wide discrepancy between these two texts on the actual number of combat missions flown.

¹² Childs, 58.

¹³ Martin C. Needler, Mexican Politics: The Containment of Conflict (New York: Praeger, 1982) 29. Present at the ceremony were Calles, Portes Gil, Cárdenas, Rodríguez, Ortiz Rubio, and even Adolfo de la Huerta.

¹⁴ Parkes, 414.

¹⁵ David F. Ronfeldt, The Modern Mexican Military: Implications for Mexico's Stability and Security (Santa

Monica: Rand Corporation, February 1985) N-2288-FF/RC, 1.

¹⁶ Lieuwen, Militarism, 153.

¹⁷ Childs, 79.

¹⁸ Judith Adler Hellman, Mexico in Crisis (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1978) 51.

¹⁹ Dan Hofstadter, Mexico 1946 - 1973 (New York: Facts on File, 1974) 31. Hellman 99. Lieuwen contends that the military opposition was more inclined to support the PAN, rather than Castro or Calderón's party.

²⁰ Lieuwen, Militarism, 145.

²¹ English, 309.

²² Boils, 182. The three PRI presidents were General Gabríel Leyva Velázquez (1952-1956), General Agustín Olachea Áviles (1956-1958), and General Afonso Corona del Rosal (1958-1964).

²³ Franklin D. Margiotta, The Mexican Military: A Case Study in Nonintervention (Master's Thesis: Georgetown University, 1968) 118. Boils 179. Margiotta's figures reflect 15 governorships held by military men in 1948.

²⁴ Margiotta, Military, 123 and 126. Although not all were PRI candidates for office, they were all members of "loyal" opposition parties under the umbrella of the PRI. Since then, the numbers of military men serving as governors and national legislators has declined appreciably.

²⁵ Needler, Politics and Society, 11.

²⁶ Lozoya, Ejército, 119. Although the military was concerned with territorial defense during World War II, historically the military has more often placed a greater concern on internal security over territorial defense.

²⁷ Ronfeldt, Modern Military, 2.

²⁸ Hofstadter, 54. General Henríquez Guzmán's revolt was conducted as a political insider who thought he had paid his dues as a revolutionary leader, deserving of the dedazo (presidential appointment). Henríquez Guzmán represented intra-party rivalry, rather than resurgent militarism.

²⁹ Hofstadter, 44. Childs, 123. Signing the treaty became a major issue in the 1952 elections, where the opposition argued that such a decision would be a sellout to U.S. hegemony.

³⁰ Lieuwen, Militarism, 142.

³¹ Margiotta, Military 105.

³² Vincent L. Padgett, The Mexican Political System, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976) 98. On the UNAM campus, students will often compete for the role of leading student revolts, knowing that the PRI recruits heavily from UNAM. Since the party likes to co-opt those radicals it feels may later threaten the system, such actions often ensure these students will have jobs after graduation.

³³ John P. Glennon, ed. Foreign Relations of the United States, Vol. VI - 1955-1957, American Republics: Multilateral, Mexico, Caribbean (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1987) 75. National Intelligence Estimate 81-57, document #245, 13 August 1957.

³⁴ Mexico's booming economy allowed the president the ability to grant these annual increases in the military budget, while keeping the military percentage of the budget constant. López Mateos was clearly an observer of history, particularly the Obregón presidency.

³⁵ Margiotta, Military, 167.

³⁶ Margiotta, Military, 114.

³⁷ Hofstadter, 92-93.

³⁸ Lyle N. McAlister, Anthony P. Maingot, and Robert A. Potash, The Military in Latin American Sociopolitical Evolution (Washington: Center for Research in Social Systems, 1970) 232. For example, the Mexican military was much more opposed to Castro than the civilian government. The navy and air force actively sought a role in the naval blockade and aerial surveillance of Cuba.

³⁹ Hofstadter, 93.

⁴⁰ Ward M. Morton, "The Mexican Political 'Establishment' in Operation," The Caribbean: Mexico Today, ed. Curtis A. Wilgus (Gainesville: University of Florida, 1964) 24.

⁴¹ McAlister, 231.

⁴² McAlister, 234 and 209. The individual killed was Rubén Jaramillo, who was known as somewhat of a Mexican "Robin Hood." He was a very popular local figure. When the assassination occurred, his daughter fled to the home of ex-president Cárdenas for protection. Upon Jaramillo's assassination, Braulio Maldonado, founder of the MLA, called for an armed uprising of peasants against the national army, replacing it with a people's militia. Arthur K. Smith, Mexico and the Cuban Revolution: Foreign Policy Under President Adolfo López Mateos (PhD Dissertation: Cornell University, 1970) 205.

⁴³ Yet, Díaz Ordaz did give the military a "very nice raise" upon taking office. Margiotta, Military, 219 and 225.

⁴⁴ Hofstadter, 108-109.

⁴⁵ Hofstadter, 109.

⁴⁶ The magnitude of the 1968 student movement in Mexican political life and the failure of many analysts to anticipate the PRI response is well documented in Hellman, Mexico.

⁴⁷ Hofstadter, 111.

⁴⁸ Alberto Ciria, "Cuatro ejemplos de relaciones entre fuerzas armadas y poder político," Aportes 6 (octubre 1967) 41.

⁴⁹ Memoria de la Secretaría de la Defensa (septiembre 1967-agosto 1968) 59.

⁵⁰ In Mexico, the high schools are an ancillary part of the National University system. Hofstadter, 112.

⁵¹ Hofstadter 112.

⁵² The Olympic stadium and village were located near the grounds of the National University. The Mexican Government could not tolerate the disorder and chaotic appearance of the university so close to the actual events. If the Olympics had been held outside of Mexico City, the government may not have been pressed to clamp down so quickly and forcefully.

⁵³ "En medio del jubileo estudiantil, ayer fue desocupada la Ciudad Universitaria," El Universal 1 octubre 1968: 6.

⁵⁴ Hofstadter, 113.

⁵⁵ Hofstadter 114. This account was similar to the events of Kent State, where Ohio National Guardsmen claimed they heard sniper fire before they actually fired on students.

⁵⁶ Hofstadter, 114.

⁵⁷ "Parte de la S.D.N." El Universal 4 octubre 1968: 14.

⁵⁸ It is interesting to note that the Peoples' Liberation Army gained a greater share of political power after its involvement in the 1989 student movement in China, at the cost of popular support. See Daniel Southerland, "Chinese Army Gains Political Power But Loses Support of the People," Washington Post 1 October 1989: A22.

⁵⁹ These figures are based on a comparison of data contained in the Memorias, published annually by the Mexican Secretary of Defense for the years 1967-1968 and 1969-1970.

⁶⁰ Díaz Ordaz was reported to be out of town during the Tlatelolco incident. General Barragán, Secretary of Defense, took the initiative to move troops into the square before he was ordered to do so by Echeverría, who was acting on his authority from the president, in his absence. The officer-in-charge at Tlatelolco, General Ballesteros, refused to follow Echeverría's order to march on the students until he (Ballesteros) received the order directly from General Barragán. After the incident was over, General Barragán went to see President Díaz Ordaz, who was reportedly playing golf in Michoacán, reporting that "the situation was all clear." Díaz Ordaz was reported to have given Barragán an **abrazo** (hug) and have told him that he was a good soldier. Díaz Ordaz had been worried that Barragán would report that the army had taken control of the government and that he (Díaz Ordaz) was now under arrest. Michael J. Dziedzic, The Essence of Decision in a Hegemonic Regime: The Case of Mexico's Acquisition of a Supersonic Fighter (PhD Dissertation: University of Texas, 1986) 112-113.

⁶¹ Political kidnappings included the Governor-elect of Guerrero Rubén Figueroa, the leading Monterrey industrialist Eugenio Garza Sada (who was killed), and President Echeverría's father-in-law. Daniel Levy and

Gabriel Székely, Mexico: Paradoxes of Stability and Change (Boulder: Westview, 1983) 7.

⁶² Levy and Székely, 7.

⁶³ For example, a strike occurred in Durango on 20 January 1970 against the state government. Federal troops were called in to break up the strike and occupy the city. Hofstadter, 109-110.

⁶⁴ Boils 121. There is some contradiction between Mexican and North American sources on which guerrilla force Rojas led. Boils lists him as head of the Asociación Cívica Nacional Revolucionario or ACNR (National Revolutionary Civic Association).

⁶⁵ Hofstadter, 144-149.

⁶⁶ Hofstadter 148. Some believe the FUZ to be a right-wing group formed by Echeverría's conservative opposition who wished to discredit his regime. Again, the issue of intelligence and the success of the FUZ in targeting arms convoys suggests possible military complicity.

⁶⁷ Levy and Székely, 7.

⁶⁸ Boils, 123. These figures are extremely low when compared to those of other Latin American nations for the same period: Peru - 5785, Argentina - 3268, Brazil - 7578, and Chile - 4932. [Source: Military Assistance and Foreign Military Sales (Washington: US Department of Defense Security Assistance Agency, 1973) 13] Boils also points out that Mexico only received \$11 million in U.S. aid for civic action projects from 1962-1966, and none from 1967-1970, p. 155.

⁶⁹ Boils, 129.

⁷⁰ Kenneth F. Johnson, Mexican Democracy: A Critical View (New York: Praeger, 1978) 64. LTC Wager points out that in conversations with a retired Mexican general, Ruiz Cortines was credited with forming SADENA, and not Echeverría.

⁷¹ Boils, 84 and 101. Echeverría also commented in an interview published in Excelsior (2 abril 1976) that there would never be a Pinochet in Mexico; a clear indication that he would never alienate the military to the point of encouraging a coup.

⁷² Yoram Shapiro, Mexican Foreign Policy Under Echeverría (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1978) Washington Papers: 56, Vol VI, 36-37. The **Halcones** incident is also referred to some texts as the Corpus Christi Day Massacre.

⁷³ Shapiro, 36.

⁷⁴ Shapiro, 37. The **Halcones** were an irregular force formed under Díaz Ordaz and reportedly controlled by the Governor of the Federal District, General Alfonso Corona del Rosal. Corona del Rosal was a "right-winger" who desired the demise of Echeverría. The use of a substitute army to bring about the political downfall of Echeverría was the contemporary equivalent of pronouncing against his administration. The official results of the **Halcones** incident were never published, since it was considered an inside problem for the regime and family members never aired their "dirty laundry."

⁷⁵ Needler, Mexican Politics, 39.

⁷⁶ Boils, 101. Hofstadter, 129. Hofstadter makes an interesting case that Echeverría's support of the left was not so much to overcome his negative image in 1968 as it was to defeat the power of the northern economic interests within the PRI. Echeverría's backing of the students in Nuevo Leon helped to bring down a political adversary in Governor Eduardo Elizondo and his support amongst the private Monterrey steel and brewery industries.

⁷⁷ Hellman, 166. LTC Wager notes that 500 general officers sounds too high. Today there are only 323 active duty general officers.

⁷⁸ It was Mexico's vote in the United Nations in November 1975, siding with the Third World in condemning Israel (Zionism equals racism) which caused Mexico a severe drop in tourist revenues, approximately 25%. (Shapiro, 66.)

⁷⁹ Shapiro 76.

⁸⁰ George W. Grayson, Oil and Mexican Foreign Policy (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg, 1988) 26.

⁸¹ Victor L. Urquidi, "Economic and Social Development in Mexico," Mexico Today ed. Tommie Sue Montgomery (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1982) 85.

⁸² Grayson, 27.

⁸³ Urquidi, 85.

⁸⁴ Mexico, 317.

⁸⁵ Ronfeldt, Modern Military, v.

⁸⁶ Robert Wesson, ed. The Latin American Military Institution (New York: Praeger, 1986) 75.

⁸⁷ Mexico, 338.

⁸⁸ Pedro-Paul Kuczynski, Latin American Debt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1988) 83.

⁸⁹ Raul Sohr, Centroamérica en guerra: Las fuerzas armadas de Centroamérica y México (Mexico: Alianza Editorial Mexicana, 1988) 257.

CHAPTER III - THE REGIME CRISIS

A review of contemporary literature on Mexico in the 1980s would cast serious doubt on the ability of the political regime to solve the nation's problems and offer hope to its people. Titles such as Mexico in Crisis, The Mexican Time Bomb, and Mexico: Chaos at our Doorstep indicate that there are serious problems south of the U.S. border.¹ A distinct air of pessimism has hung over the academic and political centers in this country concerning Mexico's future. Only recently, with the new debt accords, have some analysts become more optimistic; especially those working for the U.S. government. In Mexico, however, pessimism is still openly expressed by the number of emigrants and amounts of capital that continue to leave the country.

Mexico has faced a significant degree of turmoil in the 1980s. In 1982, Mexico defaulted on its international loan obligations; in 1983, U.S. Southern Forces Commander Paul Gorman testified to Congress that Mexico would become the next great security concern for the U.S.; in 1984, radical students attempted to assassinate President de la Madrid;² in 1985, Mexico City suffered a severe earthquake;

in 1986, the second economic crisis occurred; and in 1988 the PRI carried the presidential elections with a mere 50.36% (official count) of the vote, its worst showing ever.

Defining what constitutes a political crisis for a particular regime involves a process of understanding and evaluating factors indigenous to the particular nation in question. For example, political dissent represented by student marches in Washington do not necessarily challenge the government's constitutional authority or its basic right to exist. Yet, a democratic student movement in Beijing directly challenges governmental authority and legitimacy, evidenced by the communist regime's crackdown in June 1989 to protect its continued existence. Also, for some regimes a political crisis can be compared to a medical crisis, where if the patient survives, he gets better. The alternative view of a crisis, as Judith Adler Hellman portrays in Mexico in Crisis, is that of a disease that continues to weaken the patient, taking a cumulative toll over a number of years.³

In this chapter the current regime crisis will be evaluated against the Armed Party model of civil-military relations that emerged in Mexico after the Revolution. The appropriateness of this model for understanding regime response and the larger issue of legitimacy and continued single-party rule as a result of the regime crisis will be

discussed. Mexico's political regime is best described as democratic authoritarianism, where political spoils have traditionally been handed out to the faithful and dissent is tolerated within accepted norms determined by the regime. When the norms are violated (most blatantly in 1968), a crackdown occurs, either overtly, or covertly, through the process of cooptation.

Since 1982, the norms in Mexican political life have become increasingly obscured. The political concessions granted in 1989 have caused a new battle within the regime between President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's "modernizers" and the old party leaders known as "dinosaurs." The questions of change and reform now being debated in the one-party state in Mexico are as equally volatile as those occurring in China and the East-bloc nations. As the old rules and norms of the system begin to lose their staying power, new forces emerge to exert their influence. In China, it was the People's Liberation Army that came to the rescue of the embattled communist party. In the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Europe, the military has also been called on to control dissent as communist regimes realize that as ideology fails, their ultimate strength lies in their control of arms (the Armed Party).

This chapter will examine four critical areas that constitute the current regime crisis in Mexico: debt, drugs, election fraud and corruption, and immigration and

population problems. Since this study links the notion of crisis with legitimacy, these areas can also be considered indicators of Mexico's ability to handle change and adversity in the next decade. If these problem areas are not dealt with effectively in the near term, Mexico might face what can only be termed a "megacrisis," such as civil war, or more likely, a renewed insurgency and massive strikes brought on by economic failure. Either way, the Mexican military will see its role in maintaining order and stability in Mexico as critical for the survival of the nation. Whether this means backing an embattled regime, or else ousting a weak and inefficient regime will be discussed in these remaining chapters. The current regime crisis is, thus, a truly national crisis in which the military has an important stake in the outcome.

A. The Debt Problem

Today, debt and the Third World are practically synonymous terms; especially in the case of the Latin American nations. Almost any U.S. news article dealing with a Latin American nation will mention its debt obligations to foreign banks, regardless of the subject matter. In a review of current U.S. press reports mentioning Mexico this past year, the economic issues (debt and trade) surpassed all other subject matter by a

margin of 3:1, with the lesser figure comprised primarily of those other areas to be discussed (elections and fraud, drugs, and emigration or population problems).⁴

Mexico's debt problem concerns the U.S., but in Mexico, debt it is the primary issue to be resolved in Mexico's economic and political crisis. President Salinas has made it known to the U.S. government that economic growth cannot occur in Mexico until debt servicing can be tied to a reasonable percentage of export earnings and the availability of new capital will not continue to create "structural overindebtedness."⁵ Mexico sought debt relief, and the U.S. government, through the efforts of current Secretary of the Treasury, Nicholas Brady, helped President Salinas to find a solution to the fiscal nightmare through successful debt negotiations with U.S. commercial banks.

To understand the nature of Latin American debt in general, and Mexico's in particular, a brief analysis of how the crisis has emerged is in order. From 1940 to 1970, Mexico experienced an "economic miracle," with growth averaging 6% annually. During these years, Mexico was on a par economically with such nations as South Korea and Taiwan, and postwar West Germany and Japan, while maintaining marginal inflation at 5%.⁶ Yet, Mexico's growth was capital-intensive, failing to meet rising job needs as Mexico's population boomed. The Echeverría government borrowed heavily in order to finance Mexico's

development and relieve stress caused by population growth and reduced revenues caused by a glut on the world oil market. Foreign debt was preferred to foreign investment in Mexico which, under President Echeverría's nationalist campaign, became an issue of sovereignty and independence for the Mexican government.⁷ In other words, foreign loans created less "dependency" than foreign investment.⁸ By the end of his term in 1976, Echeverría left the country with 100% annual inflation, a peso whose value had been cut in half, and a foreign debt that had quadrupled to \$29.9 billion during the *sexenio*.⁹

Concerning the cyclical nature of the economic crisis Mexico began to experience in the 1970s, Pedro Paul Kuczynski, in his book Latin American Debt, comments that "external borrowing made possible currency overvaluation, which in turn made necessary more borrowing, which made possible increasing budget deficits in most countries."¹⁰ By the late 1970s, Mexico's combination of overvalued exchange rates and high trade protectionism exhausted the nation's industrial expansion. Added to this was Mexico's continued expansion of the public sector and the increase of state controlled enterprises to handle the production and distribution of goods and services.

The growth of the public sector in Mexico is historically tied to idea of the corporate state. Kuczynski comments,

The inclination to rely on state intervention and enterprise for a wide variety of activities is partly the result of historical tendencies, especially in Spanish America. In these countries, the Spanish colonial tradition of special concessions and monopolies for particular enterprises has lasted in various forms for over four centuries, and the resulting tendency on the part of large areas of business is to look to the state for protection.¹¹

The tendency resulted in the doubling of the public sector outlay in Mexico as a percentage of GDP from 1970 to 1982 (21% to 48%). The public sector deficit as a percentage of GDP grew from 2% in 1970 to 17% in 1982. Thus, by 1985, Mexico had 677 state run enterprises which accounted for \$50.6 billion of the nation's \$97 billion foreign debt obligations.¹²

In terms of balance of payments, by 1981 Mexico was spending 51% of its export earnings just to pay the interest on its foreign loan obligations. Combined with rising international interest rates, a strengthened U.S. dollar, and falling oil revenues due to the international recession, Mexico's debt crisis came to a head in August of 1982. Secretary of the Treasury, Jesús Silva Herzog, upon his historic visit to Washington commented,

And, well, we told them in that day, Friday 20th of August, we had a level of reserves of about \$180 million in liquid reserves and for the following Monday we had to make payments to the financial community all over the world of close to \$300 million. So the situation was very clear. We had run out of money.¹³

U.S. Treasury Secretary James Baker attempted to defuse the crisis by engineering an emergency loan package for Mexico of \$3.85 billion. The package consisted of \$1 billion in Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) credit for the purchase of basic food stuffs, \$1 billion in oil purchases, and \$1.85 billion in new loans from U.S. and European banks.¹⁴ U.S. objectives were to avoid a major disruption to the international financial community, treating Mexico's crisis as merely a liquidity problem and not as a question of solvency.¹⁵

In 1982, outgoing President José López Portillo needed a scapegoat for Mexico's economic problems. López Portillo desired to deflect criticism from the PRI and his regime for the country's economic plight. Upon the advice of Carlos Tello and José Andrés de Oteyza, López Portillo nationalized the banks, blaming them for Mexico's troubles. Over \$12 billion in U.S. dollar accounts were converted to pesos and assets were frozen, preventing any additional "capital flight" to foreign banks. López Portillo sought to leave office on a positive note, ensuring his place in the history books, alongside Lázaro Cárdenas, who nationalized the foreign owned oil companies in Mexico. However, unlike Cárdenas, López Portillo's action did not produce a huge nationalistic surge of support for the embattled president. Instead, Mexicans received the bank nationalization as a self-serving gesture intended to

salvage López Portillo's political image. In the end, his action only exacerbated Mexico's economic problems even further.

The incoming President, Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, took steps to lessen the impact of López Portillo's actions. Although the nationalization could not be undone, de la Madrid responded by implementing a gradual reprivatization of banking assets, as well as a number of International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity measures to help bolster the Mexican economy and ensure a source of new loans. Mexico played the IMF game, becoming the example of a "model debtor," yet the economic costs at home were enormous. Food and commodity prices skyrocketed as the peso was devalued 400% and federal subsidies were removed from basic goods and services. Real wages for Mexican workers declined 30% between 1982 and 1984. By the time Mexico faced its second "liquidity" crisis in 1986, inflation was at 105%.¹⁶ Mexico's economy was not growing, and the situation was getting worse.

With the drop in world oil prices in 1986, Mexico again suffered a severe decline in GNP, 3.8%. Although Mexico earned \$20.4 billion in exports, \$8.3 billion in interests was still due. Mexico sought another emergency loan package from the U.S., again arranged by Federal Reserve Chief Paul Volcker. A package worth \$12 billion over two years was negotiated.¹⁷

The stock market crash of October 1987 shook the financial community on Wall Street, and the tremors reached worldwide proportions. In Mexico, inflation surged to 159% as the peso was again devalued.¹⁸ Confidence in the Mexican economy was further eroded and the success in attracting capital back into Mexico was negated by a resurgence in capital flight out of the country. A Citibank official commented, "We could easily more than repay the debt that Mexico owes us with the private banking assets we have in New York and Geneva from Mexicans."¹⁹

By the end of 1987, Mexico's cash reserves were estimated at \$15 billion. Yet, Mexico's fiscal policies were creating internal political strife for the PRI. Former PRI president, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, commented, "I think it's obvious that the current policies are radically wrong because they have been sacrificing the standard of living of the people in order to have fiscal health. What we see is the perfect government by a group of bankers."²⁰ Muñoz Ledo organized a nationalist revolt, leading many of the PRI's more radical members out of the party over the economic situation. Muñoz Ledo's revolt led to the rise of the opposition candidacy of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas for president in 1988. Infighting within the cabinet also brought the resignation of Jesús Silva Herzog, as then Budget Director, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, won a dispute over increasing public sector spending. Mexico's economic

crisis was producing a political crisis for the PRI and the nation.

Since his election in 1988, President Salinas has continued the economic policies he initiated under the de la Madrid administration. The fact that Mexico has not had a social explosion, as occurred in other Latin American nations over economic hardship (such as Brazil in 1983 or the Dominican Republic in 1984), assured Salinas that the PRI's economic and political tactics were working. In this regard, Salinas commented, "A great political job was done in confronting the crisis. Although there was a 50 percent fall in real wages there was no social upheaval. That was possible because of the great political job done by the de la Madrid administration."²¹

President Salinas staked the survival of the PRI (and in his eyes, Mexico) on his ability to get the Mexican economy growing again. He has taken unprecedented measures to again open up the Mexican economy to foreign investment. On May 17, 1989, President Salinas enacted the Regulation of the 1973 Law to Promote Mexican Investment and Regulate Foreign Investment (the "Regulation"). The purpose of the Regulation was to "simplify and clarify procedures and provide stable and transparent legal rules to attract much needed foreign investment. Although unavoidably intricate in form, the Regulation achieves this intent and, most importantly, drastically opens the Mexican economy to

foreign investment."²² The 1973 law had limited foreign ownership to 49% in many Mexican industries, such as tourism and steel production, and completely excluded foreign ownership of key sectors of the economy, such as petrochemicals, telecommunications, and fishing.²³

President Salinas also instituted a Mexican "perestroika," whereby many unprofitable state enterprises have either been shut down or privatized in order to increase their competitiveness in domestic and international markets.

These actions follow an agreement between Mexico and the IMF reached in April 1989, whereby Mexico gained \$3.65 billion in new loans without having to accept any new IMF mandated austerity measures. Riots in Venezuela in February 1989 over government imposed austerity measures (over 300 were killed) had a definite impact on the terms of the Mexican agreement. The IMF did not require any further devaluations of the peso as a means to increase exports. Instead, Mexico has been given the funds to enact its own growth strategies and curb the capital flight necessary for reinvestment in Mexican business and industry. Mexican Treasury Secretary Pedro Aspe commented that, "The agreement reached with the IMF constitutes a plain endorsement of the economic strategy of Mexico."²⁴

The U.S. government has supported Mexico's efforts, spearheading international programs to reduce the overall Third World debt. Under the Brady Plan (named for U.S.

Secretary of the Treasury, Nicholas F. Brady), announced in March 1989, the U.S. encouraged voluntary debt reduction by international banks, on a case-by-case basis. Options discussed included: exchanging old debt paper for new bonds guaranteed by the IMF and World Bank with interest set at 50% of the current rate or reducing the principal 50%; no reduction of principal or interest - instead providing sufficient new loans to cover obligations and stimulate growth; capitalization of the interest Mexico is unable to pay; and payment of all debt obligations in pesos.²⁵

In response to the Brady Plan, banks were reluctant to enter into new loan obligations, instead opting to salvage what they could from past obligations. An initial offer to Mexico by commercial banks to reduce \$54 billion in medium and long term debt by 15% was upped to 20% in June 1989.²⁶ This was still a far cry from the 55% reduction Mexico requested, but it was indicative that dialogue was occurring, and, as one State Department official commented in early July, "We're high on Mexico. The debt issue is going to be resolved soon. No doubt about it."²⁷

Throughout July, bankers and bureaucrats from the U.S. and Mexico met daily in a series of protracted negotiating sessions that often left all participants weary and frustrated. On 23 July, President Salinas appeared on national television, announcing to the Mexican people that an accord had been reached between Mexico and its creditor

banks. The agreement allowed the banks three options: a 35% reduction of the commercial debt; a 40% reduction of the interest rate Mexico must pay on its current obligations to the banks; or the extension of new four year loans at 25% of the total Mexican debt the bank holds, thus allowing Mexico to continue to make its interest payments on the outstanding loans.²⁸ Salinas emphasized the enormity of the concession gained by Mexico by noting that the 35% reduction equalled Mexico's total foreign debt from 1810 to 1976.²⁹

The announcement of the debt agreement was an extraordinary media event in Mexico. Full page advertisements in Mexico City newspapers hailed President Salinas as a national hero, able to accomplish in the negotiating room what Mexico could never do on the battlefield: defeat the *norteamericano* interventionists.³⁰ Salinas's perceived ability to beat the Americans at their own game through the art of negotiating provided a significant boost to the president's political stature.³¹ The media event also served a legitimizing role for the current regime which sought to play down any appearance of selling out to the United States, emphasizing the fact that "excesses" of the past (a reference to the López Portillo and Echeverría regimes) would never again be tolerated.³²

As bankers, economists, and bureaucrats continue to hammer out the final details of the debt agreement,

Mexicans continue to face hard times. Inflation in 1988 was at 180% annually. The cost of living (especially housing) in Mexico City escalates almost weekly. Thousands arrive daily to the largest city in the world seeking relief from the depressed rural areas, only to find unemployment, squalid living conditions, and health hazards due to severe air pollution and the lack of sanitation and potable water. Yet, Mexicans continue to cope, despite the odds and the prophets of doom who predicted a Mexican explosion in the early 1980s and who are still skeptical about Mexico's recovery.

Since relatively little urban or rural unrest has occurred over the economic crisis, the Mexican military has maintained a low profile throughout the 1980s. The early euphoria over Mexico's oil wealth and promises of modernization, professionalization, and growth of the armed forces, were left mostly unfulfilled. The projected growth of the armed forces to 220,000 by the end of the 1980s did not occur.³³ The National Defense College, established in 1981 to train senior officers (Colonel and higher), still remains, yet its scope and purpose have been narrowed considerably, as will be discussed in the next chapter. In terms of modernization, those commitments made by 1982 were fulfilled, including the purchase of 12 U.S. F-5 supersonic fighter aircraft, 55 Swiss Pilatus PC-7 trainer aircraft, 5 U.S. Boeing 727 transport aircraft, 40

French Panhard ERC-90 Lynx armored vehicles, 35 West German HWK-11 armored personnel carriers, and 6 Halcon class frigates from Spain.³⁴

In order to reduce dependency on foreign arms and equipment during the economic crisis, Mexico expanded the Dina Nacional truck factory's capability to produce light military transport trucks and the DN-III armored personnel carrier. Mexico also obtained rights from West Germany to produce the G3 automatic rifle. The importance of Mexico's domestic defense industry, the General Directorate of Military Industries (formed in the 1970s), also increased, evidenced by the desire of senior military officers to serve as head of the directorate.³⁵

Based on figures published in English-language sources, the military did experience a significant drop in expenditures between 1981 and 1984.³⁶ Yet, figures alone are misleading, since capital improvements and arms purchases are credited to different accounts and are not always reflected in defense spending statistics. Since 61% of the official military budget is earmarked for salaries, the military actually experienced annual raises that were slightly ahead of inflation. Compared to his counterpart in the private sector, the Mexican soldier did much better during the crisis.³⁷ The adage that the PRI takes care of the military and that the military takes care of the PRI was quite evident during these financial hard times.

Due to this arrangement, the military has been reluctant to take a public stand on Mexico's economic situation. The outspoken Secretary of Defense under President José López Portillo, General Félix Galván López, once commented, "Family members do not abandon one another or voluntarily disband because of financial reasons."³⁸ In the same context, Galván López commented that the nation should not look to the military for salvation from economic difficulties. He believed instead that the current economic crisis would only help to strengthen Mexico by the perseverance of the Mexican people. Personal comments by mid-level Mexican officers affirm the seriousness of the economic crisis and the realization that a stagnant economy poses the greatest security threat to Mexico. These officers expressed complete confidence in President Salinas's ability to deal with the crisis and have conceded that the military's needs for renewed growth and modernization stand secondary to the needs of the nation.³⁹

The political administration has sought to bring the military completely in line with its economic policies. Within Mexican military schools, there has been an increased emphasis on instruction in economics, to include 140 hours of instruction during the first two years of the ESG.⁴⁰ The de la Madrid/Salinas regimes recognized the importance of indoctrinating younger military officers in the regime's economic policies, just as Echeverría sought

to do with his economic nationalism in the 1970s. Economics is also taught at the National Defense College; however, the exact nature of the curriculum is not public knowledge. Given the need to ensure loyalty to the regime, one may infer that the subject matter would be in line with, rather than in opposition to, current policy.

The military's openness to U.S. economic influence reflects the degree to which the military has accepted the Salinas plan for restructuring the Mexican economy and opening it to foreign investment. One Mexican officer lauded the selection of James A. Baker III as the U.S. Secretary of State, clearly a reference to Baker's economic background and understanding of Mexico's financial problems.⁴¹ A U.S. officer who attended the ESG as an exchange student scored the highest in his class on the block of instruction concerning economics. It was the only time he was permitted to score higher than his peers.⁴² The message being communicated to young Mexican officers at the ESG appears to be that the U.S. has the answers to help Mexico out of its economic crisis.

The economic policies being espoused by the ESG in the late 1980s contrast sharply with those emphasized in the early 1970s under President Echeverría. Military students in the 1970s at the ESG were warned about the dangers of foreign economic penetration, and were raised instead on a strong dose of economic nationalism and protectionism.

Ironically, those officers that graduated from the ESG then would have advanced in rank and been eligible for selection to the National Defense College upon its establishment in 1981. What may have been publicized as a program of higher professionalization may simply have become another method of cooptation in the new economic thinking of the de la Madrid regime. Senior military officers desiring to advance to the highest levels of command recognized the need to "punch the ticket," by attending the National Defense College, where they would commit themselves to the new economic policies and further owe their loyalty to those who approved their selection.⁴³

President Salinas knows how serious events were in 1982 and how close the nation came to civil unrest. If his economic policies fail, and if Mexico faces an economic situation as severe as Venezuela's in 1989 or that of Brazil in 1983 or the Dominican Republic in 1984, Salinas realizes that the military's loyalty and support are crucial. Mexico's senior military officers also realize what is at stake in Mexico. If Salinas fails, the PRI will most likely fail to legitimately carry the next presidential election. The military will then be in the position either to enforce the popular will, or to bolster a discredited regime. The choice may not be easy.

B. Election Fraud

In July 1988, Mexico held presidential elections. The outcome was predictable. The PRI won. Yet, how it won was severely contested by Mexico's political opposition. The official vote tally gave the PRI 50.36%, PAN 17.07%, and the Cárdenist Front 31.12%.⁴⁴ The fact that the PRI admitted it carried such a slim majority vote testified that times were changing. The PRI actually lost the popular vote to Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in the states of Michoacán, México, Baja California Norte, Morelos, and the Federal District. The halcyon days for the PRI were over. The party would no longer espouse the belief that "a vote against the PRI is a vote for the system."⁴⁵ Future elections would no longer be treated as national celebrations, but rather as trench warfare: scrapping for each victory.

The question of whether or not election fraud occurs in Mexico is not contested: it is accepted as a fact of political life. The important matter, however, concerns the degree to which the PRI must resort to fraud in order to secure victory. In the past, the PRI won national elections, claiming over 80% of the popular vote. Fraud was necessary to achieve such large figures, but the degree was limited since the PRI enjoyed a significant margin of victory to begin with.⁴⁶

Empirical studies of political mobilization in Mexico show that from 1917 to 1971, voter participation in elections increased from 24.5% to 56%. Socioeconomic growth during the period also increased the propensity to vote for opposition parties, from 1.87% in 1934 to 13.9% in 1970.⁴⁷ Using available data in the 1960s, the established trend was that the more economically developed states (Baja California Norte, Chihuahua, and the Federal District) were tending to vote less for the PRI, while the PRI still held the poorest states (Chiapas, Oaxaca, Tlaxcala, Guerrero, and Hidalgo).⁴⁸

In 1976, the **Partido Acción Nacional** or **PAN** (National Action Party), traditionally Mexico's strongest opposition party, tried a new tactic to protest election fraud by not running a presidential candidate. Mexicans voiced their frustration by abstaining, an act of civil disobedience, since voting is mandatory in Mexico. Also in 1976, a popular political novel circulated in Mexico titled The Day the PRI Lost. The theme involved the rise of a charismatic **PAN** leader named Zapata (a relative of Emiliano's), who runs an anti-corruption and pro-nationalistic campaign, which gains nationwide support. In the book, the **PAN** also forms its own paramilitary organization called the **Guardia Tricolor** (three color guard, a reference to the defense of the Mexican flag) which initiates popular uprisings after the **PRI** claims

another overwhelming election victory in July 1988. The novel ends with Mexico degenerating into a state of civil war.⁴⁹

Although the prophecies contained in this novel did not come true in 1988, the author recognized the importance of a presidential candidate's identity with Mexico's revolutionary past. Clearly, the success of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas's **Frente Cardenista** lay with his name recognition as the son of Mexico's most popular president, Lázaro Cárdenas. If only he had been a more charismatic speaker, one could wonder if such a scenario might have developed. The **PAN** also recognized the value of name recognition when it ran Pablo Emilio Madero (grandson of Francisco) as its presidential candidate in 1982.

The use of "Revolutionary Family" progeny is an important means of gaining legitimacy for opposition parties and further contributed to the **PRI**'s willingness to produce electoral reforms since these parties could no longer be labelled as "counterrevolutionary." In 1978, the Mexican Chamber of Deputies was enlarged from 237 seats to 300, allowing for proportional representation from minority parties.⁵⁰ The **PRI** assured itself of a majority, yet it enlarged participation. In the 1980s, as the **PRI** vote fell, the Chamber recognized more diversity amongst its members. The Senate, however, experienced little change, only recently conceding opposition seats to Cárdenist candidates

in Cuauhtémoc's home state of Michoacán.⁵¹

At the local level, the PRI faced its most severe challenges from well organized opposition forces who the large state and national political machines did not intimidate. A political bomb shell exploded in the small town of Juchitán in the poor state of Oaxaca in 1980. After the PRI claimed victory in municipal elections, the townspeople rose up and occupied city hall. The army was called in to remove them by force. Yet, a second election was held and the leftist opposition party, COCEI (Student-Worker-Peasant Coalition of the Isthmus), candidate won. The PRI was concerned that a dangerous precedent had been set. In 1982, the PRI elected a popular local leader, Heladio Ramírez, as governor of Oaxaca. Ramírez was given the task to win back Juchitán. It was accomplished by running a popular local figure as the PRI candidate, Felipe Martínez, using army troops to patrol the streets during the election, and by flooding the small town with lots of money.⁵² In other words, the PRI employed a modified *pan o palo* approach to Mexican politics -- and it worked.

The shock waves of Juchitán reached as far north as the Mexican-U.S. border, where in 1983, the PAN won mayoral elections in key northern cities of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Durango, Hermosillo, Zacatecas, and Aguascalientes. The PRI refused to accept the losses for

long, reclaiming all mayoralties lost to PAN by the July 1985 elections. The PRI also claimed all seven governorships up for reelection and all but five congressional seats.⁵³ What hurt the PRI most was not that they claimed victory, but rather that they claimed it by such wide margins.

The north exploded. **Panistas** and **priistas** battled each other in the streets of Piedras Negras and Agua Prieta. Rioting so close to the U.S. border brought the attention of U.S. news media, and renewed warnings over the chaos that would soon be pouring into the U.S. from Mexico. Yet, the PRI controlled the conflict and was granted a reprieve until the July 1986 governor elections in Chihuahua. Again the PRI claimed victory, and PAN cried foul. U.S. media invited to cover the election were shown stuffed ballot boxes, fake registration cards, and phony ballots. The fraud was so evident that the Bishop of Chihuahua, Adalberto Almeida, broke normal Catholic Church practice, and speaking out publicly against the fraud: "The church intervened because we felt there had been a violation of human rights. The people were abused. They were lied to. There was no respect for the vote."⁵⁴

Since 1986, a trend for the political opposition parties to work together against the PRI has developed. In San Luis Potosí, the right and the left backed one opposition candidate to run against the PRI candidate in

mayoral elections. Cárdenas's **Frente Democrática Nacional - FDN** (National Democratic Front, or also called the **Frente Cardenista**) combined no less than seven different leftist political parties in its 1988 presidential bid.⁵⁵ Since the elections, however, the **Frente Cardenista** has factionalized considerably. Cárdenas formed his own party, the **PRD - Partido de la Revolución Democrática** (Democratic Revolution Party) and in so doing, broke with many of those who initially backed his candidacy, including the **PFCRN**, the **PPS**, and the **PARM**.⁵⁶ The **PFCRN** was chastised by Cárdenas for attempting a rapprochement with the **PRI** over the **PFCRN** leader Aguilar Talamantes' contention that national solidarity was needed to help Mexico overcome the economic crisis. Talamantes called Cárdenas a "Ku Klux Klansman in sandals" over Cárdenas's unwillingness to allow political dissent within his camp.⁵⁷ Cárdenas's response was, "we will not be with those who form alliances with the regime."⁵⁸

During the summer of 1989 rumors circulated about a possible coalition of the **PAN** and **PDS** in future elections. Ideologically, these two parties are worlds apart. Many students of Mexico dismiss the likelihood as ludicrous, comparing the likelihood of such union to that of a union between the Communist Party and the John Birch Society in the U.S. Yet, as Norman Cox notes in his article, "Changes in the Mexican Political System,"

The Mexican prefers to commit himself to a person, be he a powerful political patron or simply a friend, than to an abstract cause. This does not mean that one should write off ideology in Mexican politics, but it very often plays only a secondary role.⁵⁹

The PRD and the PAN did not make any attempts to field a joint candidate for the July 1989 elections in Baja California Norte or Michoacán. Representatives of each party did, however, appear together at rallies, protesting the election results in Michoacán. It is interesting to note that in Chile, General Pinochet banked on the belief that the opposition was too divided to demand his resignation. He lost the plebiscite this past year. The PRI has taken notice.

President Salinas has stated that the PRI can no longer expect to take **el carro completo** (the whole cart). In his inaugural address he commented that, "This expression of pluralism is proof of democratic progress in Mexico, and I acknowledge it. The age of what is practically a one-party system is over. We are at the beginning of a new political era."⁶⁰ With state elections for governor in Baja California Norte and congressional elections in Michoacán in July 1989 (two states in which the PRI acknowledged it lost the presidential vote in July 1988), the PRI was under fire to allow clean elections and accept the losses if they occurred.

The elections of July 1989 sent mixed signals to the Mexican people. In Baja California Norte, the PRI conceded defeat to the **panista** candidate, Ernesto Ruffo. This was the first state governor's election that the PRI had admittedly lost in sixty years. In Michoacán, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas's home state, the PRI claimed victory in twelve of eighteen congressional districts. The PRI's attempt was to deliver a fatal blow to the PRD, destroying the party's momentum from the start. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas appeared on national television, denouncing the PRI's use of "selective democracy."

Although the PRI was willing to allow some political concessions to the PAN, the regime recognized that a greater national threat came from a viable leftist opposition party. The PRI's intended to communicate to the Mexican people that the PRD was not a legitimate alternative to the PRI's control and that the rules for Mexican pluralism would be dictated from above, not from below. However, the political fall-out from the Michoacán vote has been a series of protests, large PRD rallies, and the closing of major roads throughout the state of Michoacán.

Thus far, the regime has weathered the storm and the PRD's future as a serious challenger to the regime is in question. The issue of a coalition with the PAN may again arise as Cárdenas attempts to salvage his party's

existence. The PAN may be content to accept its position as the only "serious" opposition party in Mexico and shun Cárdenas, gaining more minor concessions in exchange for its loyalty to the system. In Mexico (as the cast in Evita sings about the Argentine), politics can be called "the art of the possible."

The Mexican military continues to have a role in each election held in Mexico. Soldiers are routinely called out to provide order on election days and also safeguard the polling places. Over the years, the army has provided tacit consent to the political process in Mexico and is recognized by the Mexican people as an agent of PRI domination and state control when it performs this function.

The military also supports the PRI campaign effort prior to elections. Soldiers, dressed in civilian clothes, are often bussed to towns and cities for PRI rallies in order to boost the attendance record for the PRI candidate.⁶¹ Mexican officers, the same as their U.S. counterparts, are not allowed to publicly support or campaign for political causes. Officially, military officers will also state that no pressure to join the PRI exists, nor are they constrained from joining opposition parties.⁶² Yet, as one U.S. officer opined, "They are all PRI to the grave."⁶³

In July 1988, the military took to the streets as it

had never done before during a presidential election. There was honest concern within the office of the **Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional** or **SDN** (Secretary of National Defense) that the **PRI** could lose. The military was genuinely concerned with keeping order in the Federal District and throughout the countryside in the event electoral protests would spark civil unrest.

Evidence exists that if the **PRI** had lost, the opposition would have had help at the ballot boxes by the military, who did not support the **PRI** as unequivocally as expected.⁶⁴ Enlisted soldiers were believed to have supported Cárdenas in large numbers. Lower and middle-grade officers who voted for Cárdenas probably voted against the **PRI**, rather than for Cárdenas.⁶⁵ There were even rumors that some general officers voted Cárdenist. This does not surprise, considering Cárdenas's strong nationalist stand against foreign dependence inherent in the de la Madrid/Salinas economic program. These general officers would have been schooled during the Echeverría years, and would have still held strong nationalistic and protectionist views concerning economic development. Reports circulated that an analysis of precinct voting in Mexico City would show that Cárdenas carried many of those sectors of the city where military personnel were stationed and **colonias** (settlements) where family housing was located.⁶⁶ If soldiers themselves were not expressing

their displeasure with the current administration, then many of their family members were.

The fall-out from the apparent lack of support and unity on the part of the military for the PRI was communicated in harsh words within Salinas's cabinet. Rumors that the administration accused the military of being ungrateful for all the PRI has done for it over the years circulated, and the administration charged the military with disloyalty to the system.⁶⁷ Details on any purges are not yet known at this time, but evidently many military officers and enlisted men did not fear voicing their disagreements with the government at the ballot box.

Election fraud exists at the heart of a very deep and troubling problem in Mexico: government corruption. Each Mexican president comes into office promising to do something about it, only to leave six years later, much richer than when he entered office. There is a popular Mexico joke that states, "who says we are a poor nation? Every six years we turn out a completely new group of millionaires!" As Juan Miguel de Mora once said, "corruption is the cement holding the system together."⁶⁸

President Salinas has commented that, " Mexico must have absolute respect for free and clean elections. Unless we have free and clean elections, we won't be able to further build Mexican democracy."⁶⁹ Salinas has staked his

political reputation on tackling the election fraud issue, and in turn, promoted his party's legitimacy over the corrupt practice of election engineering. If de Mora is right, then Salinas's honest efforts to clean up corruption may in fact become the impetus that causes the system to unravel.

C. The Drug Problem

In Mexico, it is called **La Campaña Permanente** (the permanent campaign). In the U.S., it is considered a national security issue; literally a "war" that the United States and other nations in the west are losing. It is a multibillion dollar enterprise that literally spans the globe in its network of production, distribution, and money laundering schemes. Its profits are invested in new businesses and commercial enterprises that create thousands of new jobs and bring prosperity to the poorest regions of Latin America. It is a \$100 billion a year business in the United States alone. It is a business that literally "owns" regions of Peru and Colombia, such that government troops will not dare enter these strongholds. It is a business whose chief executive in Colombia offered to completely repay that nation's \$14.6 billion foreign debt in exchange for a peace treaty. "It" is drugs.

Next to Mexico's international debt and foreign trade

concerns, drug trafficking is currently the second most important issue in U.S.- Mexican bilateral relations. When the U.S.- Mexico Binational Commission met in January 1987, the entire agenda focussed on trade (debt) and drugs.⁷⁰ The U.S. has, at times, questioned the sincerity of Mexico's efforts to combat drug trafficking, leading to bitter accusations on both sides of the border. After the brutal death of U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) agent Enrique Camarena in Mexico in February 1985, the U.S. took the offensive while Mexico became very defensive. Mexican Defense Minister, General Juan Arévalo Gardoqui, commented that Mexico did not need U.S. help to fight drugs since Mexico employed 25,000 soldiers in the effort. U.S. Senator Paula Hawkins (Republican - Florida) suggested that Mexico's Most Favored Nation (MFN) status under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) be taken away until Mexico made progress in combating drugs.⁷¹ In 1986, an article appeared in a San Diego newspaper naming General Arévalo and 45 other high ranking Mexican government officials as under indictment for drug trafficking charges.⁷² As late as May 1989, U.S. Senator Jesse Helms (Republican - North Carolina) led an effort to reject U.S. certification of Mexico's anti-drug efforts, an action, which, if rejected, would have denied Mexico U.S. foreign aid.⁷³ (The U.S. Senate voted for certification.)

The extent of penetration of the Mexican government by

drug money and drug influence is unknown. Under the de la Madrid administration, charges flew as high as the Mexican Attorney General himself, as well as to relatives of President de la Madrid. When DEA agent Camarena was kidnapped, the notorious drug trafficker Rafael Caro Quintero and the head of the Mexican Federal Judicial Police, Miguel Ibarra Herrera, struck a deal, allowing Caro Quintero to avoid capture and questioning in the case.⁷⁴ Many U.S. government officials further questioned the "cleanliness" of the Salinas administration, noting that the new Mexican Attorney General, Enrique Alvarez del Castillo, was the governor of the state of Jalisco whose "corruption- riddled administration did little to restrain the drug lords during his five-year tenure, which included the kidnapping of Camarena by Jalisco state police."⁷⁵

Rafael Caro Quintero was eventually captured in 1985; however, not by Mexicans. Rather, the capture was made by Costa Rican commandos and U.S. DEA agents. Returned to Mexico, Caro Quintero was eventually sentenced in September 1988 to 34 years in jail. He recently resided in a federal detention center in Mexico City where he lived in a three-cell "suite," and enjoyed T.V., stereo, parties, and even conjugal visits, while continuing to operate his multimillion dollar drug running operation "behind bars." His partner, Ernesto Fonseca Carrillo (Don Nieto), was also captured, purely by accident, by soldiers in Puerto

Vallarta for his involvement in a drunken shootout.⁷⁶

Mexico's third member of this unholy trinity, the notorious drug lord Miguel Angel Félix Gallardo, was finally placed in custody in April 1989. In the early 1980s Félix Gallardo was "moving cocaine from South America on a scale previously accomplished only by the Medellin cartel in Colombia."⁷⁷ What made Félix Gallardo's arrest interesting was the successful cooperation between the military and federal judicial police (they are normally quite competitive when it comes to publicity over successful drug operations). The police arrested Félix Gallardo in Guadalajara, while, at the same time, the army assaulted his home town of Culiacán, capital of the state of Sinaloa, arresting every police officer on the city police force, along with the chief of the state police. Army troops also surrounded one of Félix Gallardo's businesses, Delia S.A. de C.V., while continuing to patrol the streets of Culiacán.⁷⁸

The Mexican military has been involved in the war against drugs since the early 1970s. Although the Attorney General's office has the overall responsibility for Mexico's drug control efforts, the military has cooperated in many joint operations since the beginning of the DN-PR-III Plan of 1972, a drug eradication effort targeting Chihuahua, Sinaloa, and Durango.⁷⁹ The army had little success. In 1977, the army launched "Task Force

Condor. "Condor" involved selected units, deployed on six month rotations in the countryside. Similar to U.S. military tactics in Vietnam, these units would set up base camps and then deploy reconnaissance patrols on search and destroy missions. The results, like those encountered in Vietnam, were negligible.⁸⁰

Since 1972, the military has also run Operation "CANADAR" (CAN, from cannabis and ADAR, from *adormidera* --sleep-induced, or poppy). This operation was carried out by military zone commanders throughout Mexico, who were responsible for initiating patrols within their geographic regions. The intent was to detach forces to areas where marijuana and heroin had been grown, thus preventing recultivation. During this time, the Western Sierra Madre became a haven for drug producers, primarily the states of Jalisco, Michoacán, Guerrero, and Oaxaca.⁸¹

In the 1980s, Secretary of Defense Arévalo implemented a number of special operations, seventeen in all, directed at selected border areas where drug traffickers were known to operate. Code names for these operations included Cougar, Panther, Lynx, Tiger, Hawk, Eagle, and Jaguar. These operations led to the formation of a new organization called "Task Force **Marte** (Iron)." "Marte" employed 5140 troops, headquartered in Durango in the 10th Military Zone. In 1987, "Task Force **Marte**" replaced "Task Force **Condor**" as the Mexican military's premier anti-narcotics unit.⁸²

Today, the Mexican military still maintains over 25,000 personnel, from all branches of service, employed full time in the drug control effort, to include 20 general officers, 120 field grade, and 1225 company grade officers. As of 1987, the military also reported that 405 casualties, including 103 deaths, have been suffered by the military in carrying out the war on drugs.⁸³ Mexican officers note, with pride, their service in the war. They express sorrow over their fallen comrades, many of whom they have known personally.⁸⁴

The Mexican military has compiled an impressive array of figures in order to argue the scope and success of their anti-drug efforts. From 1983 through 1987, they reported the destruction of 322,014 poppy plants and 197,521 marijuana plants covering an estimated 59,745 acres. Also, 2,569 vehicles, 54 aircraft, and 3,195 fire arms have been confiscated, along with the detention of 101 foreigners and 17,514 national drug traffickers.⁸⁵ During the first nine months of 1988, the navy alone reported capturing 98 narcotraffickers, 7 boats, 25 vehicles, and destroying 568,409 marijuana plants.⁸⁶ In 1989, the military continued to report large numbers of destroyed marijuana and poppy plants in Sinaloa and Guerrero. The army also reported the death of a regimental commander in a helicopter crash in Jalisco during a reconnaissance mission.⁸⁷ The strict cataloging of statistics in this war

reminds one of the "body counts" during Vietnam. As in the case of Vietnam, these figures are for public consumption, intended to show Washington that the war is being won and more funds are justified.

The military has been successful in identifying the methods drug traffickers use to transport their commodities to the market place. Water trucks carrying packed marijuana, domestic gas cylinders with double bottoms, shipping containers disguised as cold meats and cheeses, suitcases, stuffed dolls, camera lenses, refreshment containers, and rolls of film have all been used to move drugs around Mexico and out of the country.⁸⁸ Despite the successes reported by the Mexican military in their war on drugs, Mexico continues to be the primary single supplier of marijuana and heroin to the United States.⁸⁹ A third of all heroin, marijuana, and cocaine that enter the U.S. comes through Mexico.⁹⁰

Both Mexico and the U.S. continue to spend large sums of money in the war on drugs. The Mexican Attorney General's office spends one-half its budget fighting the drug war. The U.S alone provided Mexico \$81 million from 1976 to 1986 to help Mexico's eradication efforts.⁹¹ However, both governments cannot provide the financial incentives to the poor Mexican farmers who grow and harvest the crops, or the law enforcement officials to eradicate the crops that the drug barons can provide; for example, "A

pilot who is paid \$200 a month to spray poppy fields with herbicides may find it difficult to turn down an offer of \$20,000 to spray them with water."⁹²

The Mexican military is not immune from the financial incentives offered by drug traffickers in order to avoid capture. A U.S. officer noted a conversation he had with Mexican officers concerning one of their colleagues who had "turned his eyes" away from drug trafficking occurring in his rural jurisdiction in the south. The fact that this officer was now a wealthy man did not go unnoticed by his comrades.⁹³ Other U.S. officials admit that the military must protect drug traffickers in the countryside since the military is the only police force present in many remote areas of Mexico. One source intimated that Félix Gallardo's testimony alone must have implicated a number of senior military officers, yet no indictments or arrests have been made.⁹⁴

The Mexican military will continue to play a major role in Mexico's war on drugs as Mexican government officials recognize that drugs are a major domestic and foreign policy concern of the United States. Mexico must show good faith to Washington on its drug efforts in order to maintain good relations. And good relations with the United States are crucial for Mexico if they are to break the financial deadlock and get their economy moving again. Mexican government officials also recognize the impact

negative publicity over Mexico's drug problems has on the tourist industry. The economic arguments seem to be the best motivational factor in getting results in the Mexican drug war.

Félix Gallardo's arrest in April 1989 sent signals to Washington that Mexico is serious about drugs. The timing, a month before the Senate certification hearings, is clearly no accident. Whether Mexico continues its hard line on drugs remains to be seen. What cannot be hidden from the Mexican press, however, is the size and fire power of the arsenal seized when Félix Gallardo was arrested. Mexican military leaders and politicians fear the power of money these drug barons have amassed, as well as the paramilitary potential they can purchase. Akin to the regional chieftains of Mexico past with their private armies, the **narcotraficantes** (drug traffickers) pose a serious threat to Mexico's stability and the basic principles of their constitutional government. The additional threat of an unholy alliance between drug traffickers and future terrorists, such as the experience of Peru and Colombia with narcoterrorism, is a serious concern to Mexico's political and military leaders.

The Mexican military will continue to fight and suffer losses in **la campaña permanente**. However, the army's tactics appear to be changing as the assault on drug trafficking escalates to new levels of brutality. Using

counterinsurgency style tactics, the army assaults suspected drug trafficking centers and assassinates suspects in highly secretive operations.⁹⁵ Such tactics may indicate a frustration by the military in a war that may never end. The question arises of whether the patience of younger military officers may be wearing thin with corrupt administration officials and senior military officers whom the younger officers perceive as having prevented a possible victory in the drug war. Many of these younger men believe the last Secretary of Defense, Arévalo Gardoqui, sold out, taking his share of drug money with him. From the perspective of Mexican military analysts in the U.S. government the current Secretary of Defense, Riviello Bazán, is considered clean and doing an exemplary job of purging the corruption out of the military.⁹⁶

D. The Population Boom

Depending on what source one reads, Mexico City's population consists of from 18 to 22 million people, making it the largest urban center in the world.⁹⁷ About one-fourth of the nation's population lives there and it continues to grow by the thousands each day. One source estimated that by the year 2000, Mexico City may reach 30 million people.⁹⁸

The entire nation of Mexico has experienced enormous population growth over the past thirty years. In 1960, Mexico had 35 million inhabitants. By 1980, the figure had doubled.⁹⁹ Also in 1960, urbanization was estimated to be 50.7%. Today, Mexico's population is estimated to be 81.9 million (1986 estimate) and urbanization at 66% (1980 estimate).¹⁰⁰ In the 1970s, Mexico's birth rate averaged 3.6%, to which President Echeverría responded that "to govern is to populate" and "population growth is not a threat but a challenge."¹⁰¹ Today, Mexico boasts of its success in cutting that rate to 2.07% (1987 estimate)¹⁰²

Mexico's most troubling demographic statistic, however, is the fact that 56% of the population is under the age of 20.¹⁰³ This is a generation that has never known economic prosperity, and for whom Mexico's post- World War II industrial successes are merely textbook figures. They are also a generation who has not experienced the social upheaval of civil war and revolution. For them, the Mexican Revolution exists as a myth, and the power of its symbolism is fading rapidly.

In Mexico, the population boom heightens the economic crisis. Federal expenditures on health, education and other social services cannot keep up with the growing demand.¹⁰⁴ In the past, Mexican governments successively alternated **sexenios** between development and distribution policies. This changed under López Portillo, who thought

he could do both. Since the crash of 1982, Mexicans have seen their standard of living decline appreciably, by an average of almost 50%. The Mexican government balked on releasing the 1980 census figures since they showed little progress in improving the lot of the Mexican people.¹⁰⁵

Mexico's demographic growth also takes its toll on the labor force. Over one-third of Mexico's 16 million workers are either unemployed or underemployed. In order to eliminate the problem, the government must now create over one million new jobs annually.¹⁰⁶ This is a staggering statistic to a government that has faced zero or negative economic growth rates over the past few years. It is no wonder that President Salinas announced to Secretary of State Shultz, attending Salinas's inauguration in December 1988, that his government will place growth as a higher priority than debt repayment.¹⁰⁷

Mexico's population problems would be much worse were it not for the "safety valve" of the United States border. Prior to 1986, estimates placed the number of illegal border crossings from Mexico into the U.S. at one million people annually. While most Mexicans did return home, 10 to 20% would remain, adding to the conservative figures of two to four million illegal aliens already residing in the United States.¹⁰⁸

For Mexico, emigration not only relieves demographic stress, it also creates remittances. Mexicans working in

the U.S. send back billions of dollars annually to family members in Mexico. The loss of this income would be staggering for the Mexican economy. One can easily understand, therefore, Mexico's traditional opposition to any U.S. legislation which would attempt to constrain the flow of illegal aliens into the United States.

For the U.S., immigration control is an emotional issue that, for decades, has not been addressed adequately due to the political repercussions. Many U.S. citizens, supported by organized labor, believe enough is enough. They blame immigrants for taking jobs away from Americans, since immigrants are willing to work for lower wages than U.S. workers. Americans also accuse immigrants of overloading the social service systems in cities such as Los Angeles, New York, Miami, San Francisco, Chicago, Houston, and San Antonio.¹⁰⁹ Mexicans, such as Jorge Bustamante, however, argue that illegal aliens in the U.S. pay federal, state, and social security tax, rarely taking full advantage of the benefits since most are temporary workers. He also notes that U.S. reaction to Mexican immigration always occurs in periods of high unemployment in the United States, dating back to World War I, and includes racist solutions, such as "Operation Wetback" in 1954.¹¹⁰

Responding to public pressures, the U.S. Congress created, and President Reagan signed, the Immigration and

Reform Act of 1986. The Act (also referred to as the Simpson-Rodino Act) went into effect in May 1987. Similar in vein to the change in U.S. drug control efforts to target users, the Reagan administration decided to go after the users of illegal aliens, levying stiffer fines on employers, along with possible jail sentences if they persist in hiring illegals.¹¹¹ Along with the "stick," the U.S. offered the "carrot" of amnesty for those aliens who could prove permanent residence in the U.S. since 1982.

In the two years since the legislation went into effect, the verdict is still out on its success. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) claims that 1.3 million aliens crossed into the U.S. from Mexico between 1986 and 1988, but that without the new legislation the numbers would have been closer to 2 million.¹¹² In the United States, however, aliens have also been hesitant to come forward and claim amnesty, fearing it is only a ruse to draw them out for deportation. Still, as one Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) official commented, "the legislation bought time for everyone and made the problem more manageable for awhile . . . It seems, however that time has passed more quickly than expected."¹¹³

Mexico's southern border with Guatemala offers Mexico's political leaders similar challenges that their U.S. counterparts face with illegal aliens. Mexico has been a transit route for thousands of South and Central

Americans heading north to the United States. Many of these immigrants, however, decide to remain in Mexico, adding to a work force already too numerous in the depressed economic regions of Mexico's south. Anywhere from 60,000 to 100,000 Central Americans reside in Tapachula, Chiapas at any one time. Salvadorans comprise over one half of these illegal immigrants and are often willing to work for less than half of what Mexican workers earn.¹¹⁴ Mexican immigration officials estimate that there are over 200,000 Central Americans living in Mexico City alone.¹¹⁵

These demographic facts have caused Mexico's leaders to reassess their immigration policy of an open border in the south. Mexico now has attempted to close the border and repatriate undocumented workers. This year alone, Mexico has returned over 46,000 Guatemalans, a figure three times greater than the previous three years.¹¹⁶ Mexico is beginning to view their "soft" border in the south as a national security concern. Interior Secretary Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios has echoed similar sentiments about the influx of "undesirables" that U.S. Congressmen raise about the threat to the U.S. southwest.¹¹⁷ In this light, Mexican and U.S. officials are beginning to reach some common ground on a very difficult and politically sensitive issue.

Demographic stress will continue to present President Salinas with many tough choices. Harold Lasswell once

commented that politics is quite simply who gets what, when and how. For Salinas, the "who" is growing and the "what" is diminishing. The "when" and "how" will challenge his political acumen and the PRI's legitimacy throughout the **sexenio**. For example, one U.S. State Department official called the French RU 486 (morning after) abortion pill, "Mexico's salvation" for its population problems.¹¹⁸ Yet, strong Catholic Church opposition to birth control in general, and particularly the use of a self-induced abortion technique as a "legitimate" birth control method, may further polarize the Mexican people.

The social fabric of the Mexican military is a reflection of the demographic changes that have been occurring in Mexico. The revolutionary military leaders of the early twentieth century were predominantly Northerners. Today, 70% of Mexico's general officer corps comes from the central states, with 47% of those born since 1930 from the Federal District alone. Over 75% of the senior officer corps come from urban backgrounds, similar to their political counterparts. The significant difference, however, is that the military move often, serving in the countryside, whereas a political leader may spend his entire career in Mexico City.¹¹⁹

The military is also a self-perpetuating institution. The largest single source (19%) of recruits for the officer corps is the corps itself, with fathers encouraging their

sons to follow their careers. There appears to be little cross-fertilization across political and military elites, the latter considered a lower class by the former. What has in fact occurred in the military is an **apertura** (opening) to the lower classes, perpetuating the historical role of the military as a means of social advancement. Today, 27% of all attendees of the Heroic Military College (Mexico's West Point) come from the lower class and 50% of general officers claim a working class background.¹²⁰

As Mexico's population grows and fewer job opportunities are available, the military becomes a more attractive alternative to unemployment and underemployment. Job security, regular promotions, and lucrative benefits enhance the military's recruitment of the nation's unemployed. However, a presidential cap on the size of the active duty force limits the military's ability to absorb many new personnel. Any significant increase in the size of the armed forces would create a greater fear within the regime of renewed militarism. The military continues to be more representative of the nation's social diversity than do the country's political leaders; a fact that could enhance the military's legitimacy during a crisis of national identity for the political regime. In this light, a large and heterogeneous military institution that has popular support would constitute a threat to the regime.

The military has also experienced changing life styles

due to Mexico's population control efforts. The traditional evidence of Mexican **machismo** (manliness) was prolific offspring. The government no longer encourages large families, instead offering incentives to keep the numbers down. For the military, this translates into smaller living quarters and other inducements, such as limiting travel reimbursements for official transfers to cover only a family of four.

In the countryside, the military has to take up the slack when it comes to social programs and the availability of basic services, such as health and education. The Mexican military has traditionally had a strong civil affairs program, being involved in many rural development projects, such as road construction, irrigation works, running health clinics, and even schools.¹²¹ The military further believes that it serves as the nation's largest job training service, equipping many poor and illiterate recruits with valuable skills and language training necessary in order to compete in the market place. Military-run farms are often self-sufficient, producing food stuffs for local garrisons. These farms have often responded to shortages of local producers by offering goods for sale in local markets.¹²²

The Mexican military views its role in the countryside as a "technology transfer mechanism" for regional growth and development, where the local people "will achieve

physical, social, and psychological mobility through military education training programs."¹²³ The military views its "rural trainer program" as complimentary to the national training program of the federal government, targeting those states with the lowest literacy rates, such as Guerrero, Chiapas, and Oaxaca.¹²⁴ The military believes increased literacy will strengthen national identification in remote areas and help to alleviate some of the socioeconomic stress being experienced throughout the nation. As one Mexican officer put it, "The socioeconomic situation of the country does not require the purchase of sophisticated weaponry, but with the training plan the human resources will be ready, and in the case of emergency it will be necessary only to add the equipment."¹²⁵

This chapter has examined the nature of the current regime crisis in Mexico. The areas of debt, election fraud, drugs, and population growth have been examined as sources of conflict for Mexico which bear directly on the legitimacy of the Mexican government. The military's role in each of these areas has also been explored and insights have been offered on cooperation and potential conflict in civil-military affairs.

In conclusion, it is easy to recognize that all these crisis areas are interrelated. U.S. policy toward Mexico has always been to treat issues separately and seek solutions on a piecemeal basis. For Mexico, however, these

issues are systemic, part of "el carro completo." Mexico's problems are developmental and the legitimacy of the regime depends on making adequate progress in all the areas that have been examined, and others. Unfortunately for Mexico, as is the case throughout Latin America, political instability often forces policy makers to "spend scarce resources to attain legitimacy or at least survival rather than their developmental objectives."¹²⁶

Mexico's current problems stem from its corporate infrastructure which has inhibited economic growth and development. The complex relationships between the state, state monopolies, and private business in Mexico have created barriers to change and progress that are hard, if not impossible, to overcome. Much has been said about President Salinas's efforts to reform Mexico's economy and loosen state control over critical sectors of the economy. Yet, as Daniel James notes, "[O]nly 149 public companies have been sold (but not necessarily privatized), out of a grand total of 1,213. Another 260 were simply folded ... They represent only 10 percent of the total value of all state-owned assets in the economy. In other words 90 percent of the state sector of the economy remains in state hands."¹²⁷ Change in Mexico will not occur until the critical "strategic enterprises," such as petroleum, banking, electricity, telephones, and railroads are privatized.¹²⁸ Although mechanisms exist to work around

restrictions in strategic enterprises, such as through trusts owned by Mexican banks, Mexico's problems remain with the corporatist economic structure that still operates through concessions.¹²⁹ Serious changes in Mexico's economic infrastructure may never occur. The political costs may be just too high.

While the corporate state may act to inhibit economic growth, it does serve a critical function in Latin America nations. For one thing, it helps foster a strong sense of cultural nationalism. In Mexico, development of the corporate state was crucial in ending the chaos of the Revolution and providing a systematic means for the orderly transfer of political power through the evolution of the PRI. As Howard J. Wiarda notes in Corporatism and National Development in Latin America the corporate state also helps,

maintain the traditional structure while concurrently providing for limited change through the cooptation of new social and political units into the administrative apparatus of the state system... The corporate framework helps preserve the status quo but also provides for the gradualist, incremental accommodation to newer currents. It helps keep the pressures for change in check by minimizing the possibilities for disruption and full-scale revolution.¹³⁰

The greatest question Mexico faces today is whether or not the model of corporatism and single-party rule is truly outdated or has simply failed.¹³¹ Although as

President-elect, Salinas called 1988 the end of a political era in Mexico, he in no way intimated that PRI has been a failure. In fact, he attributes Mexico's peaceful transference of power over the last fifty years to the success of the party. "That is why I want to bring this system more in tune with Mexico's new reality, not to do away with the system, but to modernize it and make it responsive to the new social, economic structures, and political realities that exist in Mexico."¹³² The PRI's concessions during the 1989 elections, the use of "selective democracy," are Salinas's way of slowly allowing political diversity in Mexico, hoping to buy time for economic success.

The PRI will continue to practice the centuries old methods of control and dominance that have worked to maintain political power in Mexico: cooptation, economic concessions, and physical repression. As long as the United States, Japan, and Western Europe continue to bankroll the Mexican government, settling for small "concessions" of foreign investment, structural change in Mexico will not occur, nor should it. Yet, the failure of Salinas to get Mexico growing, a continuing decline of living standards, and a nationalist outcry against the "selling off" of Mexico to foreigners could precipitate a crisis event that may bring a "Beijing Spring" to the Zócalo (Mexico City's main square) in 1994. One can be

assured that Mexico's military leaders have been watching the events in China of 1989, and the faring of the PLA, with great interest.

E. Endnotes - Chapter III

¹ Hellman, Mexico in Crisis, Norman A. Bailey and Richard Cohen, The Mexican Time Bomb (New York: Priority Press, 1987), and Sol W. Sanders, Mexico: Chaos on Our Doorstep (Lanham, Maryland: Madison Books, 1986).

² Sanders, 4.

³ See Hellman, Mexico in Crisis.

⁴ By no means a scientific survey, this data was compiled using as a sample case, Charlottesville, VA's Daily Progress, which represents a typical small town newspaper. The figures were supported by comparing them with the Washington Post, a nationally circulated daily newspaper.

⁵ The term "structural overindebtedness" is used by Baily and Cohen, The Mexican Time Bomb.

⁶ Sanders, 7.

⁷ Sanders, 8.

⁸ Kuczynski, 35.

⁹ MEXICO (Boston: WGBH Transcripts, 1988), Part II, 10. MEXICO originally aired as a Public Broadcasting System documentary on 16 November 1988; hereafter referred to as MEXICO - PBS. James F. Petras, Latin America: Bankers, Generals, and The Struggle for Social Justice (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1986) 45.

¹⁰ Kuczynski, 27. Although such an analysis obviously omits many intermediate steps, it does emphasize how foreign loans created a need for new loans in a cyclical process that does end not unless there is real economic growth for a nation.

¹¹ Kuczynski, 53-54. For a good discussion of Spanish mercantilism and the contemporary problems that Latin American nations face breaking this historical legacy, see Carlos Rangel, The Latin Americans: Their Love - Hate Relationship with the United States (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction, 1987).

¹² Kuczynski, 54 and 62. Latin American Regional Report: Mexico and Central America RM 88-09 (27 October 1988) 4.

¹³ MEXICO - PBS, Part II, 14.

¹⁴ Kuczynski, 83.

¹⁵ Kuczynski, 86.

¹⁶ Latin American Report RM 88-09, 4.

¹⁷ Kuczynski, 99 and 170.

¹⁸ Latin American Report RM 88-09, 4.

¹⁹ James S. Henry, "Poor Man's Debt, Rich Man's Loot," Washington Post 11 Dec. 1988: C2.

²⁰ MEXICO - PBS, Part III, 12.

²¹ MEXICO - PBS, Part III, 4. Salinas did not specify what he meant. The inference is that as long as chaos was avoided, the PRI had done well and the party's legitimacy was still in tact.

²² Laffan, Mues y Kaye Memorandum, The Regulation of the Mexican Foreign Investment Law (26 May 1989) 1.

²³ "Mexico Liberalizes Regulations on Foreign Investment," Daily Progress 16 May 1989: A7.

²⁴ "Mexico Signs Agreement To Fight Debt," Daily Progress 12 April 1989: A5.

²⁵ Latin American Regional Reports: Mexico and Central America RM 89-04 (4 May 1989) 5.

²⁶ Paul Blustein, "World Bank Pledges \$10 Billion To Support Debt-Reduction Plan," Washington Post 2 June 1989: F3.

²⁷ Interview with Mr. Drew Olyton, Mexican Desk Officer, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 1 June 1989. At this time, Mexico was seeking to reduce its debt servicing from 6% to 2% of the GDP.

²⁸ Daniel Adler, "Salinas Announces Agreement Between Mexico, Creditor Banks," The News 24 July 1989: 1.

²⁹ Carlos Acosta, "Al comunicar el arreglo, Salinas se anticipó a su conclusión y magnificó los logros," Proceso 665 (31 July 1989) 7.

³⁰ The most visible advertisements were offered by those labor unions that were members of the CTM (Confederation of Mexican Workers), led by the faithful PRI supporter, Fidel Velázquez.

³¹ One article noted how Mexico's negotiators, José Angel Gurría (Harvard), Pedro Aspe (MIT), and Luis Tellez Kinzler (MIT) had all "read the book" produced by Harvard, entitled, Obtaining the Yes. The Art of Negotiating Without Conceding. "Los negociadores mexicanos y su catecismo: El proyecto de negociación de Harvard, fracaso con ellos," Proceso 665 (31 July 1989).

³² Acosta 7.

³³ Edward J. Williams, "Mexico's Central America Policy: National Security Considerations," Rift and Revolution: The Central American Imbroglia, ed. Howard J. Wiarda (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984) 309.

³⁴ Mexico 339.

³⁵ Interview with U.S. Department of the Defense official (I-1), Washington D.C. 31 May 1989. Hereafter this source is only listed as I-1. The current Secretary of Defense, General Antonio Riviello Bazán, is reported to have held this assignment during his career.

³⁶ KCWD/Kaleidoscope, Lexis-Nexis Mexico, (ABC-Clio Inc., 1988). English 298. These sources show a difference of \$1.4 billion in 1981 to \$581 million in 1984. One other source stated that the figure for 1985 had returned to \$1 billion. LTC Hugh Scruggs, National Security Policy: Mexico (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, April 1986) 7.

³⁷ Vicente Ernesto Pérez Mendoza, The Role of the Armed Forces in the Mexican Economy of the 1980s Report # NPS-54-81-006 (Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, June 1981) 24. One source (U-10) noted that the military received an aguinaldo (bonus) every December. The amount was equal to three months salary. When I asked Mexican workers if they too received an annual bonus, they replied yes, but most in the private sector received the equivalent of two weeks to one month's pay. These workers were aware of the fact that certain government sectors, such as the military, police, and communications workers,

did receive such large bonuses since these were the sectors the government relied on most on for support.

³⁸ Ronfeldt, Modern Military 23. Galván López's remarks were a reference to the belief that "tough times don't last, but tough people do."

³⁹ Interviews with Mexican military officers (M-1, M-2). Hereafter these interviews will be noted as simply M-1 and M-2.

⁴⁰ Escuela Superior de Guerra: Misión general, organizacin, y cursos (Mexico: Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, undated) 27.

⁴¹ Interview M-1.

⁴² Interview with U.S. military officer (U-3). Hereafter all interviews with U.S. military officers will be simply listed as U-1, etc.

⁴³ One Mexican officer used the term compromiso when describing the selection of officers to the CDN. This word translates as obligation or commitment, a reference to that officer's "obligation" to the regime who nominates him to attend the school.

⁴⁴ Latin American Regional Report: Mexico and Central America RM 88-07 (18 Aug. 1988) 4.

⁴⁵ Moya Palencia, former home secretary, quoted by Rafael Segovia, "Elites, Masses, and Parties," in Montgomery, Mexico Today 69.

⁴⁶ The PRI carried presidential elections with the following totals: 1964 - 87.82%; 1970 - 83.32%; 1976 - 86.89%. In 1982, the PRI claimed 64.43%, while opposition parties tallied 27.10%. Latin American Reports, RM 88-07, 4. During the 1964 and 1970 presidential elections, "whole cemeteries" were credited with voting for the PRI. Kenneth F. Johnson, "Opposition Politics and the Future of Mexico," The Future of Mexico, ed. Lawrence E. Koslow (Tempe: Center for Latin American Studies, 1977) 108.

⁴⁷ José Luis Reyna, An Empirical Analysis of Political Mobilization: The Case of Mexico (PhD Dissertation: Cornell University, 1971) 112.

⁴⁸ Reyna, 121.

⁴⁹ Johnson, "Opposition Politics" 101.

⁵⁰ "Background on Mexico," Department of State Bulletin Vol 86, no 2108 (March 1986) 5.

⁵¹ Latin American Reports RM 88-07, 4.

⁵² MEXICO - PBS, Part III, 5,6.

⁵³ KCWD/Kaleidoscope.

⁵⁴ MEXICO - PBS, Part III, 11.

⁵⁵ The **Frente Cardenista** included the **PPS**, **PARM**, **PSUM/PMS**, **PST/PFCRN**, and the **PRT**. Latin American Reports RM 88-07, 4.

⁵⁶ Latin American Reports RM 89-04, 6.

⁵⁷ Matt Moffett, "Fortunes Fade for Leader of Mexican Left" Wall Street Journal 10 April 1989: A11.

⁵⁸ Latin American Reports RM 89-04, 7.

⁵⁹ Norman E. Cox, "Changes in the Mexican Political System" Politics in Mexico ed. George Philip (London: Croom, Helm, 1985) 31.

⁶⁰ MEXICO - PBS, Part III, 15.

⁶¹ Interview U-2.

⁶² Interview M-1.

⁶³ Interview U-2.

⁶⁴ Interview U-4.

⁶⁵ Interview U-7. Some Mexican officers who initially indicated a desire to vote for Cárdenas changed their minds, stating that as bad as the **PRI** is, at least it is a known quantity. Cárdenas would have set a completely new precedent, the ramifications for the military of which were unknown.

⁶⁶ Interview I-1.

⁶⁷ Interview I-1.

⁶⁸ Johnson, "Opposition Politics," 112. This theme of corruption also is central to Alan Riding's book Distant Neighbors.

⁶⁹ MEXICO - PBS, Part III, 13.

⁷⁰ "U.S. Mexican Bilateral Commission Meets"
Department of State Bulletin Vol. 87, No. 2121 (April 1987)
54.

⁷¹ "Angry Mexicans Are Challenging Activity of
American Drug Agents," New York Times 25 Aug. 1986: A1.

⁷² "Mexico is Protesting Article on Drug Traffic," New
York Times 22 Sep. 1986: A7.

⁷³ William Branigin, "Allegations of Corruption Rile
Mexican," Washington Post 19 March 1989: A29.

⁷⁴ Ibarra apparently gave the orders to M.F.J.P.
officer Pavón Reyes to allow Caro Quintero to leave
Guadalajara. Caro Quintero reportedly promised Reyes 60
million pesos (\$270,000) during the transaction. Elaine
Shannon, "Desperados," Time 7 November 1988: 86.

⁷⁵ William Branigin, "Mexican Drug Kingpins Recovering
From Crackdown After DEA Killing," Washington Post 18 Dec.
1988: A29.

⁷⁶ Branigin, "Drug Kingpins," A34. Caro Quintero's
special treatment in jail is reminiscent of that of General
Bernardo Reyes and General Félix Díaz after the fall of the
Porfirio Díaz. In July 1989, Caro Quintero and Fonseca
were transferred to new high security cells as the new
prison administrator, Alfonso Morales Cabrera, sought to
clean up much of the graft and corruption in the prison
system carried out under the previous administration. Kim
Lopez, "Prison Chief Outlines Woes With Lap of Luxury
Inmates," The News 19 July 1989: 2.

⁷⁷ Shannon, 87. Félix Gallardo's net worth is
estimated to be in excess of \$3 billion.

⁷⁸ "Reputed Drug Lord Arrested," Daily Progress 10
April 1989: A6.

⁷⁹ LTC Salvador Cienfuegos Zepeda, "The Mexican Army
and Air Force in the Campaign Against Drug Trafficking,"
Symposium Proceedings - How Military Training Enhances
Democratic Growth (Ft. Benning: USA School of the Americas,
16-20 March 1987) 3.

⁸⁰ Cienfuegos, 4. Owing to the ability of the Mexican
military to change tactics, the use of air and ground
reconnaissance was later employed with the doctrine of
converging forces. While these efforts also produced few
results, they did offer the Mexican military the
opportunity to train in Low Intensity Conflict (LIC)

terrain, utilize communications networks, practice LIC tactics, and train in joint operations between the army and air force.

⁸¹ Cienfuegos, 4.

⁸² Cienfuegos, 5.

⁸³ Cienfuegos, 6.

⁸⁴ Interview M-2.

⁸⁵ Cienfuegos, 6. The exact numbers of poppy and marijuana plants are interesting statistics. One pictures the poor Mexican **cabos** (privates) counting stalks before they are presumably burned.

⁸⁶ Revista de la Secretaría de Marina, año 8 no. 46 (nov-dic 1988) 8.

⁸⁷ "Duros golpes al narcotráfico en la campaña contra enervantes," Revista del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos tomo xiii época xxvii-iii (marzo 1989): XV.

⁸⁸ Cienfuegos, 7.

⁸⁹ "Illicit Drugs and National Security: The Threat and a Rational Response," a briefing packet prepared by the Army/Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict, Langley AFB, VA, undated.

⁹⁰ "Mexico and the United States: Ambivalent Allies," Great Decisions 1988 (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1988) 23.

⁹¹ "Mexico," Great Decisions 1988, 23.

⁹² "Mexico," Great Decisions 1988, 23.

⁹³ Interview U-3.

⁹⁴ William Branigin, "Mexico's Crackdown," cites charges in a San Diego court against Major General Juan Poblano Silva, former commander of the 25th Military Zone of Puebla, and his executive officer LTC Salvador de la Vega for their involvement in protecting drug shipments within their military zone. Efforts by the U.S. Attorney General's Office to investigate these charges have been hampered by the SDN, who refuses to discuss the case. In the meantime, a number of military zone commanders have been rotated, but none purged. One Mexican officer noted

that Poblano Silva is "under observation . . . He was brought back among us to that we can watch him." (A14)

⁹⁵ For an account of one such military operation, see John Ross, "Operation Escalation," Mexico Journal Vol. 1, No. 35, 13 June 1988: 23-26. In this article, a source is quoted as saying "The people of Sonora don't like the drug traffickers at all, but they are much more afraid of the Army." (26)

⁹⁶ Interview U-2.

⁹⁷ Riding, 368. Official Mexican government census reports of 1984 list Mexico City's population at 17 million. U.S. government figures for 1985 list it at 18 million. Department of State Bulletin Vol. 88, No. 2134 (May 1988) 7.

⁹⁸ John W. Sloan, Public Policy in Latin America: A Study of Comparative Public Policy (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg, 1984) 15.

⁹⁹ Sloan, 12.

¹⁰⁰ KCWD/Kaleidoscope.

¹⁰¹ Riding, 325. Echeverría did change his mind later in his *sexenio*, attempting to implement various birth control programs.

¹⁰² "President's Visit to Mexico," Department of State Bulletin Vol. 88, No. 2134 (May 1988) 7.

¹⁰³ Riding, 317.

¹⁰⁴ Riding, 317.

¹⁰⁵ Riding, 323.

¹⁰⁶ Sloan, 14 and 40. Interview with Mr. Clark Cook Casten, Economic Officer, U.S. Department of State, Mexico City, 18 July 1989.

¹⁰⁷ "Secretary of State Shultz headed U.S. delegation to inauguration of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, 1 December 1988," Department of State Bulletin Vol. 89, No. 2143 (February 1989) 71.

¹⁰⁸ Daniel B. Levine, Kenneth Hill, and Robert Warren, ed. Immigration Statistics: A Study of Neglect (Washington: National Academy, 1985) 87,246. More recent sources quote figures from six to twelve million, owing to the large

influx of Central American refugees in the last decade. "Mexico," Great Decisions 1988. 21. "Immigration Laws Fail To Slow Flow," Daily Progress 19 June 1989: A5.

¹⁰⁹ "Mexico," Great Decisions 1988, 21. "Hispanic Immigrants One-Fourth of Growth," Daily Progress 21 June 1989: A3. 90% of all Hispanics immigrate to metropolitan areas, with over one-half living in these cities. In Los Angeles county alone, 71% of all recorded births at county hospitals are attributed to illegal aliens.

¹¹⁰ Jorge Bustamente, "Facts, Perceptions, and the Issue of Undocumented Immigration," in Montgomery, Mexico Today 116-117.

¹¹¹ General T.R. Milton, "Our Distant Neighbor," Air Force Magazine Vol. 70, No. 8 (August 1987) 64.

¹¹² "Report Shows New Law in U.S. Curbing Illegal Aliens," The News 9 Aug. 1989: 6.

¹¹³ "Immigration Laws," Daily Progress, A5.

¹¹⁴ Laurie Krauth, "The Other Border," Mexico Journal Vol. II, No. 45 (21 August 1989) 23.

¹¹⁵ William Branigin, "Mexico Fights to Stop Passage of Illegal Migrants en Route to U.S.," Washington Post 29 August 1989: A15.

¹¹⁶ Branigin, "Mexico Fights," A15.

¹¹⁷ Interview Mr. E.M. Trominski, District Director, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Mexico City, 25 July 1989.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Mr. Olyton, Department of State.

¹¹⁹ Roderic A. Camp, "Generals and Politicians in Mexico: A Preliminary Comparison," The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment, ed. David F. Ronfeldt (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, 1984) 111-112. Roderic Camp has compiled the biographic data and the demographic studies that are used by practically all researchers of the Mexican military. His work has been the standard reference on Mexican biographic studies, much as Edwin Lieuwin has been on the Mexican military through 1960.

¹²⁰ Camp, "Generals and Politicians," 115. An interesting statistic that Camp has compiled in his data was the fact that one-fourth of those general officers with working class backgrounds were "mustangs" (enlisted

soldiers who had moved up through the ranks). One of these mustangs, General Marco Antonio Guerrero Mendoza, joined the army in 1938 as a private and advanced as high as Undersecretary of Defense during the de la Madrid administration.

¹²¹ Pérez Mendoza, 27.

¹²² Pérez Mendoza, 43.

¹²³ Pérez Mendoza, 55.

¹²⁴ Pérez Mendoza, 63-64. These three states have the lowest literacy rates in the country, below 60% (The national average is 83.9%). These are also the states with the largest Indian populations, close to the Guatemalan border.

¹²⁵ Pérez Mendoza, 77.

¹²⁶ Sloan, 19.

¹²⁷ "The 'new' Mexico," Washington Times 1 June 1989: F2.

¹²⁸ "The 'new' Mexico," F2.

¹²⁹ Interview Mr. Clark Cook Casten.

¹³⁰ Howard J. Wiarda, Corporatism and National Development in Latin America (Boulder: Westview, 1981) 63.

¹³¹ Many western analysts today "mourn" the death of communism and the end of the cold war. The parallels between what is now occurring in the East bloc and the regime crisis of the PRI are examined further in the next chapter and conclusion to this text.

¹³² MEXICO - PBS Part III, 14.

CHAPTER IV - CONTEMPORARY PERIOD 1982-PRESENT

In 1984, the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at the University of San Diego published a book titled: The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment.¹ David Ronfeldt of the Rand Corporation edited this book, which was the result of a seminar which brought together experts from the U.S. and Mexico to discuss the new role of the military in Mexican society. The premise of this study is that events since 1982 produced changes in Mexico that invalidated old theories. As Ronfeldt states,

Instead, it appears as though the top political (and military) leaders of the transformed political system have recognized an increasing need for stronger military support in performing a broad range of domestic and foreign policy activities. The military is thus more visibly active as an instrument and symbol of the state's authority and, behind the scenes, as an information gatherer for policymakers.²

The last two chapters of this study are concerned with the changes that have occurred in Mexico since 1982. Without question, the regime crisis has had a profound impact on the military and civil-military relations in general. Yet, the changes appear to be more a matter of

degree than a transformation. The military has been more apt to take an increasingly visible role during a crisis situation, as evidenced in 1968 and after. Since the legitimacy of the regime is often questioned in a crisis, the military acts in its traditional role to reestablish an equilibrium to the political process. The military does not function as an independent actor in this process. Rather, the military serves the party/regime, taking its orders directly from the president. As one analyst notes, "The armed forces, therefore, are an integral and political part of the hegemonic regime that is Mexico."³

The change of degree that occurred in the early 1980s was a desire on the part of senior military leaders to become more active in the policy-making role and not simply to be "an information gatherer." The Central American crisis produced legitimate security concerns in Mexico, leading to the discussion, for the first time, of the development of a Mexican national security doctrine. Military leaders claimed a voice in this new dialogue. They also wanted to ensure that the modernization programs begun under President López Portillo would continue. This military action was not a matter of the military flexing its muscle, as some analysts contend, simply because the military did not have much muscle to flex. Instead, it was a reassertion of the military within the Armed Party to assume a more active role at a time when the social

equilibrium was disturbed by legitimate national security concerns.

This chapter will examine where the modern Mexican military is today, seven years after the crisis came to a head in 1982. The modernization program will be examined in detail to determine its lasting effects, including a further look at the National Defense College and its impact on national policy-making. National security doctrine since 1982, and the role the military plays in its formulation will also be discussed. U.S.-Mexican relations will also be considered for their impact on the Mexican military today. Finally, contemporary civil-military relations in Mexico will be discussed, reassessing the validity of the Armed Party model in light of the impact of political and economic events since 1982.

A. The Modernization Program

Although the military did not begin to acquire significant amounts of new equipment until 1980, the desire to modernize began soon after the "Tlatelolco massacre" in 1968. The internal security threat posed by those who went underground in the 1970s, along with the growing drug trade, increased the military's and the government's desire to modernize the force.⁴ Yet, it took a successful guerrilla movement in Nicaragua and the threat of another

in Guatemala to provide the impetus to follow through on earlier commitments.

The example of the Mexican Air Force modernization program, which included the purchase of 12 F-5E supersonic fighter aircraft from the United States, provides an interesting case study of Mexico's difficulty in making such a commitment. LTC Dziedzic's analysis of protracted negotiation, mixed messages, and the intricacies of the patron-client relationship in Mexico gives a unique insight into how Mexican governmental decision-making impacts on the military.⁵ LTC Dziedzic's conclusion to this study emphasizes the importance of the patron-client relationship between the President and the Secretary of Defense in order to understand the hierarchy of decision-making power within the Mexican government. The same relationship extends downward from the Secretary of Defense to his subordinate commanders, including the Chief of the Air Force. The patron-client relationship shows that the choice of the F-5 lay ultimately with General Galván López; however, the decision to buy was the president's alone.

This example of the patron-client relationship between the Commander-in-Chief and his top military officer is crucial in understanding how civil supremacy is maintained over the military and how major decisions, such as the F-5 purchase, reflect this fact of Mexican political life. Once the president selects a Secretary of Defense, the

message communicated to the nation's senior military officer is "your equipo (team) is my equipo."⁶

The F-5 decision further emphasizes the clear subordination of the Mexican Air Force to the Mexican Army. The Air Force commandant works for the Secretary of Defense, and the relationship of the two services closely resembles an Army Air Corps, rather than a separate service. Although the Air Force may desire to exist as a stand-alone secretariat, the army will ensure this never happens, as such an action would diffuse the power base of the Secretary of Defense.

Although the Mexican Navy does exist under a separate secretariat, the navy is considered a less forceful service than the army. The navy was included in the modernization program, and upgraded its fleet of patrol boats. Yet, the modernization program does not appear to have significantly increased the navy's power or prestige within the cabinet. The navy enjoys its relative autonomy and naval leaders are content to serve a secondary role to the army within the administration. Inter-service rivalries do exist, but are not serious enough to threaten the army's major role in defining the military role within the regime.

In addition to the arms purchases mentioned in earlier chapters, the military undertook a program of modernizing its educational system. The most significant development in this area was the formation of the Colegio de Defensa

Nacional or CDN (National Defense College, referred to as the Mexican War College). Formed in September 1981, the CDN produced its first graduating class (12) a year later. Those officers selected to attend the course were full colonels and general officers from all branches of military service, although the army provided the most (80%). Civilians were also permitted to attend the CDN, as well as instruct courses that pertained to governmental operations of which the military had little knowledge. As one analyst notes, "The new school represented efforts to prepare military officers for increased responsibilities and involvement in national life."⁷

General Félix Galván López's purpose for the CDN accorded with his vision for a military more "engaged" in the policy-making arena. The curriculum included national security issues similar to those discussed in Brazil's War College (ESG) and Peru's Center for Higher Military Studies (CAEM). At one time, students actually mapped out the possibility of military intervention in the government, discussing how they would control key sectors of the economy and other cabinet-level functions. President López Portillo confronted General Galván López over such exercises and courses which discussed the higher functions of public administration. Galván López reportedly responded, "the higher plans that the army has, with the object to serve all the major parts of the country

in case of a danger that by fortune, are only hypothetical, but for professional reasons, ought to be discussed."⁸

The man given the mission of creating the CDN was General Vinicio Santoyo Feria. General Santoyo Feria served as Chief of the Committee of Creation of the CDN in 1980, and later as its first director, from 1981-1982. He was responsible for developing many of the general staff manuals and instructional materials used at the school, including those on operations in the countryside and regular warfare. His model for the CDN was that of Brazil's ESG, having served as military attaché in Brazil from 1978-1980.⁹ Santoyo Feria also served as an instructor and administrator at the Mexican Command and General Staff College (ESG) during the years 1968-1972. During this time the ESG curriculum was strongly nationalistic and protectionist, and the so-called **penencilinos** (those who administer penicillin, i.e. the shot in the arm the nation may need) emerged. If such a group existed, and Santoyo Feria was a member, he was now in a position of rank and authority capable of moving the Mexican military in an extremist direction.¹⁰

Yet, what occurred with the CDN appears to be another example of cooptation by the regime to control and limit the school's influence. The government scaled back its participation by providing fewer civilian participants and less competent instructors. The military has replaced

virtually all civilian instructors with military ones, feeling their personnel are more capable than those provided by the administration. For its part, however, the military has failed to invest the resources necessary to improve the professional education of its officer corps by ignoring the need to develop a qualified educational staff to meet the administrative requirements of the CDN.¹¹ What began as an ambitious project to increase the ability of senior military leaders to assume more visible roles in the civil bureaucracy simply has not occurred.

The CDN appears to have become a higher level Mexican ESG, where senior officers are recruited and rewarded for their loyalty to the system. Those selected for attendance have had successful unit or ship commands, are ESG graduates, and have the Mexican equivalent of a Bachelor of Science degree. The CDN provides another opportunity to reinforce their institutional loyalty. In fact, the school's motto is "Institutional Loyalty as a Principle, National Security as an Objective."¹²

Although it has existed for eight years, the CDN remains an enigma. The curriculum is treated as a state secret, with foreign dissemination not permitted. Although Mexico provides an exchange officer to the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, a U.S. officer has not been permitted to attend the CDN.¹³ Almost two hundred army, air force, and navy officers have graduated

from this course and have moved on to higher offices. One U.S. military expert on Mexico offered the following comment,

The influence of that college will probably not be manifested for another generation of officers; but, its inauguration promises higher standards of military professionalism and a clearer understanding among senior military officers of the nation's more serious problems and how the military can help resolve them. Some experts even suggest that the National Defense College will ultimately enhance the military's role in the decision-making process at the national level.¹⁴

Although it may be years before we see the true impact of the CDN, its current record suggests that the civilian regime is wary of its success, and will inhibit senior military leaders from achieving what LTC Wager projects. As the CDN becomes more isolated from the civil bureaucracy, its potential to foster an independent caste of military bureaucrats increases. In this light, as another U.S. officer opined, its potential to become another Brazilian ESG cannot be ruled out entirely.¹⁵

As Secretary of Defense in 1982, General Galván López recognized the Mexican military's shortcomings as a professional fighting force and as an institution capable of managing the affairs of state in an emergency. Edward Williams, in his article "The Evolution of the Mexican Military and Its Implications for Civil-Military Relations," echoes this sentiment, stating, "the military

elites are sensitive to their inferiority . Unlike their Brazilian and Peruvian counterparts, the Mexican armed forces are quite incapable of managing the nation's sophisticated economic and political systems."¹⁶

In accepting the president's charge to modernize the military, Galván López sought to correct those shortcomings that he felt characterized the Mexican military's ineptitude. What he did not count on was the degree of hostility he would encounter within the party where his programs were regarded as a direct threat to the hegemony of the regime.

In light of this analysis, an examination of where the modernization program stands today, and what has occurred in the military since Galván López initiated the program is in order. Galván López once commented that "the strong are respected more than the weak."¹⁷ Is the Mexican military stronger today and therefore more respected? If so, by whom? These questions will be addressed throughout the remaining sections of this chapter.

One of the three pillars of the modernization program was the commitment to increase the size of the armed forces. In 1982, active duty strength was estimated to be approximately 120,000 with a projected goal of 220,000 by 1988. The military did grow by 10,000 in 1982, where it leveled off for the next three years. By 1985, it reached an end strength of 140,000. Today, the figure is about the

same, give or take 10%.¹⁸ Such numbers cannot be more precise because the centuries-old practice of padding rolls continues at the unit level in order to receive additional supplies and funds.

In terms of the national budget, the military did not fare much differently during the lean years of the economic crisis than it did in the past. U.S. government figures show that the military continued to increase its expenditures annually, accounting for approximately .5% of the Gross National Product (GNP). As a percent of the federal budget, however, the military portion declined from 2.3% in 1981 to 1.5% in 1982. By 1985, the figure jumped to 4.4%, where it was in 1975.¹⁹ Official Mexican government figures, however, show a steady decline in the military budget since 1985, reaching an all time low of 1.0% in 1988.²⁰ Yet, in absolute numbers, the amount of money spent on the military increases annually, as it does for every sector of the government.

The contemporary situation is similar to Obregón's maneuvering to reduce military influence by continuing to grant annual increases, while actually reducing the military's percentage of the federal budget. The government has bankrolled these annual increases by running up a considerable domestic debt. As mentioned earlier, officially published figures of military expense in Mexico are misleading, since discretionary funds exist for major

purchases. In terms of salaries, the budget keeps up with inflation, although many junior officers and enlisted soldiers find themselves pinched financially. Most officers continue the practice of supplementing their income, selling everything from tires to radios on the side.²¹ Enlisted soldiers mentioned that most of their spouses needed to work in order to make ends meet. It is only when an officer reaches higher rank and key assignments that loyalty pays better dividends. Today, the government continues to buy the loyalty of the military by meeting its needs for personal aggrandizement, ignoring the most costly operational improvements necessary to truly modernize and professionalize the armed forces.

In Mexico wealth equals power, and the military's declining percentage of the federal budget reflects a conscious effort by the regime to continue to limit the military's influence within the upper echelons of the administration. An example involves the military's war on drugs. Although Secretary of Defense Arévalo Gardoqui made drugs the central issue of his tenure under President de la Madrid, pressing for a greater military role in the administration, the funds continued to flow to the Mexican Attorney General's Office, which retained primacy in Mexico's drug wars. Today, the military continues to push hard for a more active drug enforcement role recognizing that (literally) that is where the money is.

A second pillar of the modernization program involved equipment upgrades. As previously mentioned, the military followed through on those contracts entered into by 1981, which involved the purchase of the F-5s, Pilatus trainer aircraft, and the Panhard ERC-90 armored fighting vehicles. After 1982, new major equipment purchases were severely curtailed. The military turned its attention to upgrading indigenously produced military hardware, including Dina Nacional's DN-III light tank and the Navy's Azteca and Olmeca class patrol craft. In 1987, the Secretary of Defense announced new equipment acquisitions to include 6 transport vehicles, 12 Bell helicopters, 30 "reaction" aircraft, and assorted radio communications equipment.²² Recent major equipment purchases through the U.S. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program to Mexico include 30 T-33 trainer aircraft (1986), 9 C-130 transport aircraft (1987), 6 105mm howitzers and 9 T-33 trainer aircraft (1988), and an agreement signed this year to purchase 60 HMMWV high mobility vehicles.²³

Since the successful debt negotiation talks with U.S. banks, the Mexican military has pursued the possibility of new major arms purchases. Inquiries have been made into the cost and availability of purchasing twelve more F-5s along with two C-130s. The Mexican Navy has also expressed interest in purchasing A-7 fighter aircraft and the Mexican Air Force is pursuing the completion of its coastal radar

defense system.²⁴ The promise of new wealth has caused the military to dust off their old "wish lists."

President Salinas includes military modernization as an element of his six-year National Development Plan. He states that, "the commitment and necessity to modernize the country politically and economically makes it indispensable to modernize the military."²⁵ Tying military modernization to the success of his economic policy creates a vested interest in the military to see the Salinas regime succeed. Loyalty, however, is assured when the spoils are distributed evenly among the clients. Salinas has yet to see any spoils. It remains to be seen whether economic success will translate into a greater slice of the pie when next year's budget figures are announced.

The last pillar of the modernization program involved education and training. The role of the CDN has already been discussed; however, lower level schools and training and operations are also of interest. For years, the ESG was the senior military school. Attendance and graduation from the ESG assured a successful career, as well as enhanced pay and privileges. The modernization program appears to have had little impact on the function of the ESG, which continues to be the springboard for advancement. Discussions with U.S. military officers who have attended, or taught at the school during the 1980s, reveal a consistency in curriculum and purpose throughout the

decade.²⁶ The ESG continues to stress the importance of civilian rule and the military's role supporting the regime in maintaining peace and order in society.

To foster this role, institutional loyalty and unquestioning adherence to the orders of superior officers are the principles preached in the military educational system. Doctrine is to be memorized, not applied, and always accepted as infallible. If one of the traits of a professionally competent military is the ability to think and reason through tactical scenarios, then the Mexican military's modernization program has failed to achieve its goal. However, if the purpose of the program is to create a greater sense of institutional knowledge and to perpetuate the revolutionary myths and subordination to civil authority, then the program has been very successful. In this sense, the modernization program cannot be called revolutionary, but rather a product of a historical process in Mexico, which emphasizes a remaining in the barracks instead of a return to arms.

In terms of operations and training, the modernization program was meant to counter the increased threat of a Central American revolutionary spillover through Guatemala. The application of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) doctrine appeared in the Mexican military's use of the term **Guerra Irregular** (Irregular Warfare). Yet, as a new concept, **Guerra Irregular** had been taught in the military schools

for years, applied in the hills of Guerrero in the early 1970s, and practiced throughout Mexico in the 1980s in the nation's drug wars. Classes on **Guerra Irregular** have been off-limits to U.S. students for years, with Mexican instructors insisting that the Americans have already seen everything that would be presented.²⁷

Operationally, the military did create a new military zone in Chiapas, as well as create a rapid reaction force capable of being inserted into a hot spot much more quickly than conventional reinforcements. The military also undertook a number of training missions aimed at protecting the nation's oil fields and assuming operational control of the pipelines and electrical facilities in case of a national emergency.²⁸ These actions were intended to show Mexico's resolve to protect its vulnerable southern flank.

If the perceived external threat from Central America drove the Mexican military modernization program, the results do not reflect this concern. The equipment purchases are more applicable to internal security missions than to the defense of the nation's territorial borders.²⁹ In this regard, the regime has used the modernization program to further enhance the military's ability to quell internal subversion and dissent, rather than to protect the nation from a Central American revolutionary spillover. With the exception of the new military zone in Chiapas, the current locations of military garrisons throughout the

country support deployment for an internal threat rather than an external one. The Presidential Guards Brigade, garrisoned in Mexico City (with the mission to protect the president and national political institutions), remains the nation's elite fighting force, with new equipment first appearing at **Campo Militar #1**, rather than in the 36th Military Zone. Even the F-5s, the only true military asset with a territorial defense capability, are mostly grounded, unable to fly due to a lack of trained mechanics and pilots.³⁰

Compared to the historical development of the Mexican military since World War II, the modernization program of the 1980s does stand out as a significant event. As a harbinger of a new military assertiveness and a return to arms, it is not as ominous as initially perceived. Although the intentions may have lent themselves to such developments, the regime has successfully defused the threat. In fact, the regime has succeeded in creating a greater dependency of the military to maintain stability and ensure the regime's success. The modernization program bolsters the military's support for the government's economic program by creating a vested interest in its successful outcome. As long as the results of the modernization program enhance regime maintenance (rather than threaten it) the military and the regime will enjoy a symbiotic, rather than a confrontational relationship in

the process.

Raul Sohr has postulated (a theory) that there are two currents of thought in the government on how to deal with the military. One is the belief that the military represents a significant threat and should thus be isolated by giving it specific works outside the policy-making arena. The other supports the Lázaro Cárdenas thesis that the military must be incorporated into the responsibilities of the government and have a direct stake in the survival of the system.³¹

The Mexican political regimes of the 1980s have lent credence to Sohr's theory. Under López Portillo, the military modernization program was initially incorporated into the regime's international posture, reflecting Mexico's concern with the Central American threat. Later, the military was isolated when Galván López appeared to be moving too far and too fast, raising the fears of many in the regime of renewed militarism. The two subsequent administrations of de la Madrid and Salinas have taken a more accommodationist stance, recognizing the need for military support in a crisis situation. If the economic good times return for Salinas, it will be interesting to see if the military is rewarded for its loyalty and patience, or whether it will again be isolated as the crisis abates.

B. National Security Doctrine

One area in which the military sought a greater voice in the decision-making arena concerned the question of national security doctrine. Mexico has traditionally avoided the use of "national security" language in its foreign affairs. Mexico relates such language to the negative images associated with U.S. national security doctrine and the legacy of U.S. military intervention in Latin America during the last two decades when U.S. "national security" was threatened.³² However, the Central American imbroglio brought Mexico's leaders to the realization that their security concerns were real and that the military desired a voice in the dialogue.

Mexico's foreign policy is rooted in the tenets of nonintervention and self-determination. Through this policy, Mexico sought to buy protection against an externally supported revolutionary movement emerging within its borders. The success Mexico had in eliminating domestic terrorism in the early 1970s owes much to the fact that the movement in Mexico was indigenous with little outside support offered by Cuba or the East Bloc nations. In light of this success, Mexico's unwritten agreement with Cuba paid dividends and Mexico's leaders have felt obligated to return the favor.³³

Since 1979, Mexico has applied the "new realities" to

its foreign policy in Central America: the old order cannot be maintained; revolutionary change is necessary and inevitable; and it is Mexico's duty to align with nationalist, "progressive" forces seeking change. Thus Mexico was one of the first nations to recognize the Sandinistas as well as the Communist insurgents (FMLN) in El Salvador. The exception is Guatemala, which Mexico treats as both a foreign policy concern and as an extension of its domestic policy.³⁴

Mexico's relations with Guatemala are of importance in understanding the ongoing national security debate in Mexico. Historically, Mexico's southern boundary with Guatemala is in dispute. The state of Chiapas was once a part of the Captaincy General of Guatemala. In 1823, when Iturbide abdicated, Central America claimed independence as the United Provinces of Central America, which included Guatemala. The state of Chiapas, however, opted to remain with Mexico.³⁵ To this day, Guatemala insists that Mexico "took" Chiapas from them.³⁶

The state of Chiapas is a very mountainous region of heavy forestation and poor road networks. Historically, the state has been removed from the mainstream of Mexican political life, as one author notes, "It remained a kind of internal colony within Mexico, characterized by backwardness and neglect."³⁷ Of the native population of 2.5 million, over 1 million are Indian. The border itself

is quite fluid, with over 20-30,000 legal border crossings each year involving Guatemalan migrant workers who come north to pick crops. Each Christmas alone, over 100,000 Guatemalans cross the border to shop. Economically, there is a great deal of interdependence between Chiapas and Guatemala, as many families literally straddle the border.³⁸ It is, in many cases, a classic Low Intensity Conflict environment.

Guatemala is very sensitive to the threat an unsecured border with Mexico poses. In 1972, the **Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres** or **EGP** (Guerrilla Army of the Poor) came from Mexico, maintaining its base operations and supply networks in Mexico. In the 1980s, guerrillas in Guatemala continued to use Mexico as a safe haven as the Guatemalan military pushed them to the border. The Guatemalan strategy was to cause Mexico to militarize the border and cut off the rebels' support networks.³⁹ Mexico responded by opening the region to refugee camps, an action which infuriated Guatemala.

Mexico's handling of the Central American refugee problem has attracted a great deal of domestic and international attention. Thus far, Mexico has been able to isolate the refugees from their own population as well as from international control by the United Nations. In June 1984, the Mexican military relocated 50,000 Guatemalan refugees by force 300 kilometers north to Campeche along

the Gulf coast.⁴⁰ This action helped to defuse the tension on the border as Guatemala argued that the refugee camps served as training bases for the rebels.

In response to the Guatemalan insurgency, the Mexican military increased its visibility in the south. Troop presence in the state of Chiapas increased from 3,000 to 8,000, as the military formed two infantry battalions to augment current deployments. As previously mentioned, the army established a new military zone, the 36th, at Tapachula, thus making Chiapas the only state other than Guerrero and Veracruz to have two military zones. The troops in the south have been employed in numerous civic action projects intended to bolster Indian support for the Mexican government.⁴¹

The Mexican military has avoided a militarization of the border, intentionally staying clear of the "hot spots" in order not to provoke a confrontation with the Guatemalan military.⁴² In fact, the Mexican military was charged with collaborating with the Guatemalan military by allowing incursions across the border to attack refugee camps. One such incursion preceded the 1984 refugee relocation to the interior. The Catholic Church also charged the Mexican military with attacking two refugee camps in order to force their movement.⁴³

Thus, while the official Mexican government policy has been to support Central American revolutionary movements,

Guatemala is treated as a buffer state. Even though official rhetoric condemned the brutality of the Guatemalan regime, the Mexican military supported their efforts and was relieved by their success. Today, Guatemalan officers continue to attend Mexican military schools and Mexican officers frequently travel to Guatemala on "fact finding" missions.⁴⁴ Yet, Mexican military leaders refuse to admit any special relationship with their southern neighbors, relegating Guatemalan military attaches to the same status as U.S. military attaches when it comes to access to military facilities and information.⁴⁵

As the concern over Guatemala's security has abated, so too the national security debate has changed its focus. When the national security debate first emerged, General Galván López offered the following comments concerning what he thought national security doctrine involved, "It is my definition and excuse me if it is not the most appropriate: I understand for national security the social equilibrium, economic and political, guaranteed by the armed forces of a country."⁴⁶ Galván López went on to describe Mexico's indigenous arms producing capabilities and the need for a greater role for the nation in meeting its defense needs internally and not being dependent on external sources. He even went as far as to say that Mexico would need to someday produce its own tanks and heavy armor systems.⁴⁷

The nature of General Galván López's remarks and the

international environment of the early 1980s suggest a genuine concern by the Mexican military over an external threat. When asked why they needed the F-5s, the Mexicans said "Cuba." Yet, Mexico's air defense radars pointed south, rather than east.⁴⁸ It is doubtful that the Mexican military feared a Cuban assault, but they may have sensed that the unwritten alliance would not protect Mexico against a revolutionary surge from the south. Nicaragua had fallen, and many Mexicans believed El Salvador was sure to follow. Honduras and Guatemala were also expected to succumb to revolutionary movements in due time. In light of this threat of continuing instability, Mexico's active involvement in the Contadora peace process for Central America was of little wonder.

Since the mid 1980s, Mexico's external fears have subsided and the national security dialogue has shifted to internal security matters. President de la Madrid's National Development Plan cautiously defined national security as "ensuring peace and justice internationally and the integral development of the nation internally."⁴⁹ Mexico's continuing debt problems, record inflation, and unemployment were breeding discontent, creating an environment that might foster civil unrest and insurgency. The leading voices in the national security debate were those who identified Mexico's economic problems as the major threat to the nation. The nation's national security

needs were to resolve the country's socioeconomic problems which create insurgencies. Thus the problem was best handled in the economic cabinet and foreign ministry and not by the military.⁵⁰

The tendency among academics studying civil-military relations in Mexico is to view the national security debate as a showdown between the military and the civilian regime, with the civilians "winning" the argument.⁵¹ These analysts might attempt to draw an analogy between this contemporary issue and what occurred in the OAS debates in the 1940s. However, political ascendancy was not in question this time, as it was in the 1940s. The military was not in a power-play with the regime over presidential authority. Again, it was more a matter of degree rather than a transformation of the military role vis-a-vis the party/regime structure. Military leaders were seeking a greater role in a decision-making process in which they felt they had a direct stake. As Galván López stated, "we think we can do more for the country."⁵²

There is speculation that Mexico just recently formed a National Security Council. Which cabinet members are involved and which government organization provides the supporting staff are still unknown.⁵³ Its agenda is still in its infancy, along with that of the Salinas regime, and will take time to fully develop. The fact that such an organization exists suggests that Mexico's security

concerns have not abated. In fact, in Salinas's National Development Plan, the armed forces are given due recognition for their role in contributing to Mexico's national security and development.⁵⁴ In this context, the modernization of the military is still an issue recognized by the regime as important to the national security debate. If, however, the Central American situation does not take a turn for the worse (e.g. El Salvador's fall) and Mexico's economic recovery does occur, then we may see less emphasis placed on maintaining the National Security Council, in which case it could turn into an ad hoc body formed only during crisis events. Such a development would be a key indicator that the regime might return to isolation tactics and deny the military a minor concession in the decision-making process within the regime.

The modern Mexican military is keenly aware of economic issues and accepts the arguments advanced that tie the nation's security to development. As one analyst notes,

In the mind of the new military officer, the lack of economic development is the most significant national weakness because it 'invites' economic aggression by more developed states and subversion by leftist guerillas. The conditions associated with underdevelopment are threats to national security and are therefore on increasing concern to military officers.⁵⁵

These are also the lessons that came out of the Brazilian ESG and Peru's CAEM in the late 1960s. The results of these studies were military interventions caused by the frustration of military officers with civilians who could not get the country moving economically and who could not deal effectively with leftist challenges. In this regard, it is little wonder that the PRI moved so quickly to defuse the Cardenist Front after the last presidential election.

C. U.S.-Mexican Relations

A recurring theme in much of the literature on the military in Latin America of the 1970s is the thesis that U.S. military doctrine, training, and military aid are responsible for creating military regimes. This thesis argues that the U.S. government prefers Latin American military dictatorships to Marxist regimes and uses its own military to encourage Latin American militaries to intervene in politics. In Central America, where the stakes are much higher, the U.S. simply uses its own military, or surrogates to accomplish its goals.⁵⁶ This thesis has its merits on a case-by-case basis. The close ties that emerged after World War II between the U.S. and Brazilian militaries, along with the special relationship between U.S. Defense Attache General Vernon Walters and coup leader General Castelo Branco, give credibility to the

thesis; however, Chile and Argentina clearly do not since their militaries have had a much greater European, rather than U.S. military influence. With Mexico, history speaks for itself. The U.S. has intervened militarily in Mexico in the past, and many in this country and Mexico believe the U.S. will dust off the "Green Plan" (the U.S. contingency plan during World War II for a U.S. occupation of Mexico if it was necessary to protect the U.S. southern flank) and do so again if the stakes are high enough.

The history of U.S.-Mexican relations still defines the extent and nature of bilateral military relations today. The premise of Jorge Casteñeda and Robert Pastor's book Limits to Friendship, that cultural differences and painful historical events will continue to keep the U.S. and Mexico distant, seems accurate for military-to-military contacts as well. We won't see the type of military cooperation that exists with our NATO allies occurring south of the border. As one U.S. military attache to Mexico commented, "we can only get so close."⁵⁷

The extent of U.S.-Mexican military contact is strictly dependent on the political climate and official Washington-Mexico City ties. During the post-World War II years, while political relations were still good, the Mexican military was a participant in the U.S. Security Assistance Program (SAP, later changed to MAP - Military Assistance Program), which included Foreign Military Sales

(FMS), military aid, economic support funds, and International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds.⁵⁸ From 1950 to 1969, Mexico received approximately \$6 million in military aid from the U.S. During the Echeverria presidency, Mexican foreign policy took a strongly anti-U.S. turn, involving a strong nationalist agenda. The result was a significant drop in U.S. military aid to Mexico, amounting to less than \$600,000 from 1970-1976. In 1973 alone, Mexican military students trained under the IMET program reached an all time low of four, compared to a yearly average of 39 for the past 32 years.⁵⁹ In 1975, Mexico refused any further MAP funding for the FMS program, continuing to receive IMET funding as the only form of direct U.S. military aid.⁶⁰

Mexico's military modernization program of the early 1980s and the improved political relations under the early President Reagan administration brought the U.S. and Mexican militaries closer together. The purchase of the F-5s (code named Peace Aztec) increased technical cooperation for maintenance, pilot training, and operational support. In 1981, the U.S. established a Military Liaison Office (MLO) in Mexico City to coordinate Peace Aztec functions. The MLO remains today to coordinate additional FMS programs undertaken since 1981, totaling over \$150 million. The MLO also handles all IMET funding requests, which have increased significantly within the

last few years. Since 1984, IMET allocations for Mexico have increased from \$160,000 to \$250,000 per year. The number of Mexican personnel trained under IMET has also increased significantly from 33 in 1984 to 106 in 1987. During the last three years, Mexico has requested a doubling of IMET funds to over \$500,000 per year, projecting over 200 participants if more funds are made available.⁶¹

Although the increased numbers point to more U.S.-Mexican military cooperation since the early 1980s, it remains a relationship of convenience, rather than shared strategic interests. The F-5 purchase was only made after protracted negotiation and a number of trips to Europe and Israel by General Galván López to view alternatives.⁶² Mexico continues to refuse FMS credits, paying for everything in cash in order to avoid any outstanding obligations. IMET is used by the Mexicans as a system of perks and rewards for senior officers, rather than sending junior officers who would benefit most from the training. Cooperation is further complicated by the lack of decision-making authority in the Mexican military at any rank below general officer. With decision-making concentrated at the top, there is also a failure to do any long range planning and budgeting. Mexican officers also refuse to work with senior U.S. enlisted soldiers, further complicating operational and training decisions.⁶³

There have been other signs, though, of improved military-to-military relations. In June 1987, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Mexican Navy cooperated in a program called Checkmate/Blue Pennant, where U.S. Coast Guard vessels utilized Mexican ports and airfields for refueling and medical support during search and rescue operations. Since that time, the U.S. has maintained a Coast Guard attache at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City who continues to foster better operational cooperation between the services.⁶⁴ The U.S. has also sponsored a number of visits by Mexican military personnel to U.S. military installations, including senior army visits to Ft. Hood, Texas, navy cadets to Pensacola, Florida, and marine cadets to Camp LeJeune, North Carolina.⁶⁵

Overall U.S.-Mexican relations have improved significantly under the Salinas and Bush administrations. The successful debt negotiations in August 1989, followed by the seventh Mexico-U.S. Binational Commission gathering in Mexico City, included key decision-makers from both administrations. The theme of the meetings was to continue "The Spirit of Houston," a reference to the November 1988 meeting (in Houston) of presidents-elect Salinas and Bush where, "a common will for understanding and cooperation prevailed."⁶⁶ The key issues of debt, drugs, immigration and trade were still on the table, but the atmosphere of this recent gathering involved a "will" to deal with the

issues as equally responsible partners, rather than accusatory competitors. For example, concerning drugs, Mexican Attorney General Enrique Alvarez del Castillo noted, "The doctrinaire question of whether it's the consumers' fault or the producers' fault no longer exists. This has fundamentally changed the relation into one of coordination and collaboration."⁶⁷

It is also in the area of drugs that future U.S.-Mexican military relations will be determined. The Mexican military realizes that it will only gain a greater share of the budget if it expands its role in the drug war. Increased military visibility could lead to more military-to-military contact as the U.S. government expands the role of its own armed forces in the international drug arena. U.S. military equipment with its accompanying MAAG (Military Assistance and Advisory Group) has been present in Bolivia for some time, and arrived in Colombia in September 1989. Such an arrangement with Peru is also possible in the near term, and preliminary discussions with Mexico have also occurred.⁶⁸

A problem for Mexico's leaders lies in the danger of moving too close to the U.S. on drug cooperation and enforcement. Mexican nationalists stand ready to blast any Mexican administration that appears to be exchanging Mexican sovereignty for U.S. concessions, especially in the highly publicized drug wars. Mexico's Assistant Attorney General

Javier Coello Trejo takes his job seriously and enjoys his role as the "Iron Prosecutor."⁶⁹ Yet, in this role, Coello Trejo has received his share of criticism from Mexico's left and others who accuse him of being too friendly with U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency officials. Nonetheless, Coello Trejo has expressed an interest in using U.S. military equipment, such as Blackhawk helicopters, to assist in his very secretive operations. Yet, it is the inability of the U.S. to conduct such "secret" operations with a Latin American neighbor without a leak to the U.S. press, and the domestic fall-out that would occur over public knowledge of such collaboration, that prevents Coello Trejo from risking the venture.⁷⁰

Much discretion ought to be involved in any significant changes to U.S.-Mexican military cooperation. U.S. government officials always needs to keep the historical relationship in perspective when it comes to making policy decisions with Mexico. As Mexicans will note, most *norteamericanos* often have short memories, and lack an understanding of the sensitivity over the record of U.S. intervention in Mexico.

The Mexican military enjoys a reputation as a strongly nationalistic institution and generally carries favor with the masses for its contemporary history and record of nonalignment with foreign militaries, especially the U.S.⁷¹ Mexico is proud of the fact that it has not accepted

military missions, even limiting the extent of U.S. military presence on Mexican soil during World War II. Any significant changes in this record will only fuel the fire of the Mexican left against the military, as well as the regime, renewing the charges of **vendepatria** (selling out the nation) by Mexican nationalists.

For its part, the Mexican military will not seek to significantly change the relationship, unless pushed by the regime. Future arms and equipment purchases from the U.S. will be made only after all other options have been explored and the U.S. deal is the best for cost and serviceability. The reason IMET exchanges increased after 1984 is not so much due to warming relations as it is to the fact that the Secretary of Defense, General Arévalo Gardoqui, had previously not known about the program and suddenly realized an untapped source of free funds.⁷² Also, if asked what assignments Mexican officers desire most, they will respond **agregado militar** (military attaché) to the United States, not out of love for that country, but rather for the lucrative cash incentives that come with assignment to the U.S.⁷³

A new challenge to U.S.-Mexican relations for the 1990s will be the issue of North American economic integration. The competition for world markets with the emergence of the Far East nations and the formation of the European Community (EC) has forced the U.S. to seek greater

economic strength in its regional market. The recently negotiated Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement may bolster the collective economic power of these two nations in international markets; however, the political fallout in Canada almost brought down the current regime which was charged with "selling out" Canadian economic sovereignty to the U.S.

Mexico must also expand in an international direction and regional economic integration would undoubtedly boost Mexico's economic potential. The problem remains the historical linkages that would threaten the legitimacy of any regime that attempted such an integration with the United States. Also, both nations would have serious national security concerns over economic integration that have not been fully considered.⁷⁴ In Europe, the dismantling of trade barriers between the EC nations will make borders more fluid and less secure. The implications for the U.S.-Mexican border are immense.

Geopolitical considerations dictate that the U.S. and Mexico have strategic interests in the hemisphere and always will. While the U.S. continues to look outward for the threat, Mexico continues to look inward. Future U.S.-Mexican military relations will benefit most by remembering this significant difference in perspective. Assigning U.S. military personnel to Mexico who possess a good understanding of the language and the historical

relations of these two countries will also enhance future working relationships and foster better ties between these two nations. Yet, even with improved Washington-Mexico City relationships and a visible warming between these two nations, military-to-military contact ought to remain cool, yet cordial.

D. Civil-Military Relations Today

Many writers in the U.S. and in Mexico have postulated theories about the unique relationship that exists between civil government and the military in Mexico. Briefly summarizing the more salient of these theories as they pertain to the themes of crisis and legitimacy examined in this study will further the evaluation of civil-military relations in Mexico in 1989 and the appropriateness of the Armed Party model today.

In the early 1960s, Edwin Lieuwen had an "academic stranglehold" on the subject of the civil-military relations in Mexico. Most subsequent works have deferred to his expertise, accepting the thesis that the military was "depoliticized" (or became "apolitical") during the process of the Mexican Revolution through professionalization and socialization to accept civilian rule within the "Revolutionary Family."⁷⁵ In the late 1960s and early 1970s, some writers began to challenge

Lieuwen, by arguing that the military was not completely "depoliticized" or "apolitical," but rather had been "coopted" through a system of payoffs (lesser political offices, official public praise, and financial incentives) in order to secure their loyalty.⁷⁶ In the mid 1980s, responding to the modernization program and the national security debate, many authors saw a change occurring in traditional civil-military relations, advocating concepts of "residual" political roles, such as an interest group analogy, and the idea of the "institutional" versus "revolutionary" family relationship.⁷⁷

All of these studies have one basic purpose, which is to explain why the Mexican military has not intervened directly in politics for the past sixty years. In other words, why has Mexico been the exception in the Latin American historical and cultural tradition that continues to produce military coups in modern, industrialized nations? One analyst recently offered his insight into this question by stating that the Mexican military is more closely aligned to a constitutionalist model, such as the U.S. military, rather than its Latin American counterparts, which place *patria* (fatherland) over constitutional law and institutions.⁷⁸ The thesis offered in this study is that of the Armed Party where the military serves an integral role in the preservation of the hegemonic regime that rules Mexico.

The Mexican military prides itself on the fact that it has not intervened in politics, stressing its loyalty to the president and civil authority. Elaborate ceremonies mark the beginning of each presidential term of office where the military swears its allegiance to the new president. The day after each presidential *informe de gobierno* (State of the Union address to Congress) the president attends a breakfast with Mexico's top military leaders at the Heroic Military College.⁷⁹ On June 1st, Navy Day, naval personnel take over the guard posts at the National Palace from the army, symbolizing the military's unity and resolve to protect national institutions.⁸⁰ A military aide accompanies the president on all official trips and stands behind the president during all speeches: an action which symbolizes the military "standing behind" the president, always faithful.⁸¹

In December 1988, President Salinas received the second largest military parade in history (the first being for President Obregón), where over 12,600 military personnel participated in the ceremony.⁸² Although Salinas did not offer the military effusive praise in his election address to Congress, he did not forget them, and has made himself available to attend many key military ceremonial events. Such traditions continue as the *Cuerpo de Guardias Presidenciales* (Presidential Guard) recently celebrated 42 years of loyalty, directly serving the nation's

president.⁸³

Contemporary civil-military relations in Mexico are the product of a historic process that has given the "myth" of the Mexican Revolution its staying power and conviction within the Mexican military. The images and the words are not simply for show: they are accepted as truth and perpetuated generation after generation. Since the third grade, future soldiers are taught that "the Mexican Army is the guarantee of security, peace, order, and liberty for the country."⁸⁴ And, as Gladys Delmas notes, "There is no country in Latin America where a higher value is placed in civil peace, both as a good in itself and as a prerequisite for progress."⁸⁵

From the Heroic Military College through the National Defense College, officers are schooled in the principles of civil authority and unquestioning loyalty to their superiors. Although the CDN began as an institution that appeared to break the mold, the evidence today suggests that these same themes are communicated with minor variation. The patron-client relationships dictate that advancement can only be achieved within the system and by accepting its doctrine. Mavericks are not encouraged. Loyalty is rewarded by promotion, plum assignments, and financial incentives unmatched in most other Western military organizations. The message is clear: loyalty pays, the current system works, and the alternatives are

untested and therefore too risky to attempt.

In offering an explanation of why the system continues to work as it does, the themes of crisis and legitimacy have been suggested in this study as indicators of change that serve to define the relationship. It is when the legitimacy of the regime is threatened that the military responds to the crisis to restore the proper equilibrium within the political process. The military does not act as a usurper, but rather an enforcer which acts on the orders of its civilian superiors. The case of General Barragán and the October 1968 riots is a very clear example of the use of the military to restore order at the request of the civil regime. The military holds General Barragán up as an example of loyalty and humility, who had control of the government in a crisis and returned it to civil authority after the crisis had passed and legitimacy had been restored to the regime.

As a result of the foregoing analysis, the Armed Party model remains an appropriate method of analysis for civil-military relations in Mexico today. Modern Mexico emerged from a violent revolution with a strongly corporatist ideology. Victorious military leaders created a political party and gave it the power, authority, and ideology to create form out of chaos and bring peace to a nation devastated by years of strife and militarism. The party the military leaders formed eventually replaced the

military as the dominant political institution, giving way to civilian, rather than military presidents. As in China and the Soviet Union, a military victory eventually gave way to a political party and an ideology that perpetuates the "myth" that the Mexican Revolution brought social justice, along with peace and order to the Mexican nation.

The "Revolutionary Family" in Mexico mirrors the perpetuation of the Russian *oprichnina* under Soviet socialism. Within the PRI, military and civil bureaucrats shared the privileges of power and prestige, as well as family ties through marriage and schooling. As the military's political role became less pronounced, so too the family ties began to wither as class differences began to keep the two societies from socializing with each other. Today, the career paths, including education, are so distinct that the military and civilian elites have few interoperable skills that allow them to move horizontally across bureaucratic lines.⁸⁶ Yet, party affiliation still supports military success as an indicator of loyalty to the system and officers are still required to produce their PRI membership cards at unit formations.⁸⁷

A similar process occurred in the Soviet and Chinese armies. As revolutionary leaders were replaced by party bosses, the military assumed a lesser role in the nation's political life, yet continued to enjoy the power and prestige of party membership in a one-party state. The

Soviet and Chinese militaries found outlets in the form of exporting revolution and building up large forces and military industrial complexes. Yet, Communist ideology perpetuated the revolutionary myth, placing a high degree of importance on the role of the military as guarantor of the peace and order of the Communist state. Respect and fear of the armed forces characterize the Communist state in China and the Soviet Union, creating a need by these regimes to ensure military loyalty in order to protect the state from internal subversion, as well as external threats.

Respect and fear of the military also characterize the Mexican state, explaining why personal loyalty remains important to Mexico's political leaders. Military parades are more than symbolic: they are essential for the maintenance of the system -- one that places personalism over ideas.⁸⁸ The president needs to know that in a crisis he can depend on the military to curb social unrest, keep the highways clear, or ensure peaceful elections. The military needs to see appreciation and reward for its efforts. These themes are not new. They were discussed in the 1960s, and contemporary political events bear out the significance of this analysis today.

During interviews with U.S. military and diplomatic personnel who have worked with their Mexican counterparts since the 1970s, a consistent response emerged to questions

concerning the possibility of a coup or a change of government: simply, it will not happen. Neither do these individuals see the military usurping civil authority, nor do they see the PRI giving up the reins of government. If, however, the PRI conceded defeat, most respondents believed that the military would respect the vote and pledge their loyalty to an opposition party winner. The consensus within the U.S. diplomatic community is clearly that the military would accept constitutionally mandated change that responded to a popular will respected by the PRI.

Although the importance of loyalty is key to understanding contemporary civil-military relations in Mexico, another factor missing from the equation is trust. Military leaders do not trust politicians, and vice-versa. Occasionally, military officers will make off-the-cuff comments about the military's ability to do a better job governing the country than civilians. They might also criticize the PRI for its handling of the election process. Yet, such discussions usually take place privately, and seldom publicly.⁸⁹

The organization and command structure of the military also reflects an institutionalized effort to thwart any attempts at creating a coherent force capable of taking control of the country. Zone and unit commanders continue to be rotated every two or three years to prevent their building a popular base of support. Enlisted soldiers

normally serve with the same unit their entire career, thus never developing an esprit-de-corps or loyalties beyond their immediate unit. Operational units only maintain three days of fuel, limiting their ability to mobilize for a coup. The national command structure also prevents a rapid mobilization of the military on a national scale, constraining such actions to a sectorial scale.⁹⁰ Zone commanders take their orders from state governors, not the Secretary of Defense. The Presidential Guards Brigade, stationed in Mexico City, responds to the President's orders directly. As one analyst notes, this lack of trust of the military requires the civil regime to keep the military, "cooptible, manipulable, and controllable."⁹¹

Mexican civil-military relations can best be summarized by the belief in a reciprocal formula: peace = prosperity and prosperity = peace. The military believes it plays the key role in maintaining the peace which allows the nation to prosper.⁹² What made the 1980s a crisis for the regime was that the nation was not prospering, even though it was peaceful. The legitimacy of the regime remains staked to the promise of economic growth. The military will do its part to ensure domestic peace and move quickly to head off any internal dissent created by worsening economic conditions.⁹³ The regime, however, must do its part to convince the military that the crisis is only temporary and fulfill its part of the equation. This

is where the challenges for President Salinas and for Mexico lie in the 1990s.

During May 1989, the Chinese government faced a severe challenge to the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist state in the form of a student-led pro-democracy movement. As the world watched, many China hands were called on to offer their analysis of what the Chinese military might do. Would the People's Liberation Army march on the students? Would there be rebellion in the ranks? Would the crisis lead to civil war, as military units chose sides? For a while it was anyone's guess; however, by June the results were known; thousands died and a nation exposed to the world the darkness of a totalitarian police state.

In 1989, many younger Mexican officers viewed the events in China with fascination and disbelief that the Communist regime allowed the student movement to last as long as it did. The legitimacy of the regime was an issue. Mexican officers viewed the Chinese indecision as a lack of political will on the part of the political regime to act decisively in a crisis.⁹⁴ After 1968, Mexican military officers involved in the "Tlatelolco massacre" intimated that never again would the military kill Mexicans for the sake of maintaining a regime viewed as corrupt and detrimental to the nation.⁹⁵ The differences between 1968 and 1989 are striking. To the Mexican military in 1989, a student-led movement in China aimed at changing the

political regime was an illegitimate form of political expression in that country. A popular movement in Mexico in 1994 over an obvious PRI electoral defeat and the refusal of the regime to relinquish control of the nation would most likely be viewed similarly.

This chapter has explored the Mexican military in the contemporary period since 1982. The foci of this chapter have been those key issues that have characterized the development of the military since 1982, including the modernization program, national security issues, U.S.-Mexican military ties, and current civil-military relations. The issues of the 1990s may be completely different. For example, two areas that have been neglected in this study which may have greater significance in the future are the roles of labor and the Catholic Church in Mexican politics and society.

As a key pillar of the PRI, organized labor continues to have much more political influence than the the military simply due to the number of workers involved and the ability of Fidel Velázquez to keep them loyal to the regime. With Velázquez's age (80+) and failing health, the organizational unity of the CTM may crumble, creating a factionalized labor movement that may align with a number of opposition parties.

President Salinas has gone after a number of the more corrupt and powerful labor leaders, such as oil workers'

union boss Joaquín Hernández Galicia (La Quina) and the head of the education workers' union, Carlos Jonguitud Barrios. These actions have brought Salinas praise from the military, which is no friend of labor. Cárdenas used the strength of organized labor as a counterweight to the military in the 1930s. Since then, the military has confronted labor a number of times, putting down strikes and keeping labor rallies peaceful. If labor organizations become more assertive in the 1990s, it is highly likely that the military will be called on to keep renegade unions and their leaders in line and subservient to the PRI's loyal union bosses.

The Church-State controversy has resurfaced again in Mexico in the form of new challenges to the regime. In fact, one senior U.S. State Department official noted that the Church-State issue in Mexico may be the next greatest domestic problem for the Salinas regime.⁸⁶ In May 1990, Pope John Paul II will return to Mexico in the midst of a renewed effort on the part of the Catholic Church to eliminate the strongly anticlerical language from the Mexican Constitution. There has also been discussion of the possibility of Mexico offering political recognition of the Vatican, a move that may come during the Pope's visit.

A revitalized Church could offer the regime new problems in the form of a nationalist outcry against the abandonment of the goals and principles of the Revolution.

As defender of the Constitution, the military has embraced the anticlerical tenets, maintaining an official distance from the Church. Military officers rarely attend mass and are forbidden to wear their uniforms to any Church service or function. As with labor, there is little interaction between Church and military leaders. If the Church-State controversy leads to a division of lines within Mexico, the military would most likely side against the Church. Asked if such an alignment of forces would cause problems for soldiers with their wives and families, one source noted, "the PRI puts food on our tables; the Church does not."⁹⁷

Mexico in the 1990s will be a nation experiencing significant change. Civil-military relations in Mexico will not be immune to these changes; however, the historical record suggests that the old patterns will persist. The Armed Party survives in Mexico and will survive in the near term. Rising political and economic expectations will create new pressures and challenges for the regime from below, yet the military will continue to provide the counterweight against any significant change to the system imposed from outside of the regime.

E. Endnotes - Chapter IV

¹ David F. Ronfeldt, ed., The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment (San Diego: Center of U.S.-Mexican Studies - University of San Diego, 1984) Monograph Series #15.

² Ronfeldt, Modern Military: Reassessment, 11.

³ Dziedzic, 116.

⁴ Ronfeldt, Modern Military: Reassessment, 1.

⁵ The first cost and availability information requested by Mexico on the F-5s, occurred in 1971 (Dziedzic 127). The contract today still remains open as some of the agreements have yet to be finalized. One source quoted in this study reported that at one point General Galván López confronted President López Portillo stating, "if you want our continued support, we must have our needs taken care of. We are just a joke" (Dziedzic 138).

⁶ Dziedzic, 318.

⁷ The Influence of the Military in the Mexican Political System: Final Report (McLean, VA: Defense Systems Inc., Jan 1987) 6.

⁸ Sohr, 204.

⁹ Quinto informe de gobierno: Cuadernos de filosofía política #57, José López Portillo (Mexico: Secretaría de Evaluación, Director General de Documentación y Análisis, sept 1981) 73.

¹⁰ Other than the information provided by Kenneth Johnson cited earlier, I have been unable to confirm the existence of such a group. In fact, not one U.S. military expert on Mexico had ever heard of such a group. Yet, none could completely rule out the possibility of its existence. LTC Wager emphasized the fact that the military during the 1970s was not as divided as many analysts believe. Wager argues that if such a group existed, it probably was snuffed out very quickly. (Interview with LTC Stephen Wager, Mexico City, 15 August 1989).

¹¹ The Influence of the Military, 11.

¹² Interview U-7. The highlight of the yearlong course appears to be the opportunity it provides for a trip to visit U.S. military installations and shop at the post exchanges.

¹³ Interview U-7. One source was able to obtain a listing of total conferences sponsored by the CDN which included the following breakdown:

- 39 - national/international situations
- 13 - national policy
- 10 - national security
- 15 - administration of the SDN and SN
- 12 - high level staff studies

LTC Alden M. Cunningham, "Mexico's National Security in the 1980s - 1990s," in Ronfeldt, Modern Military Reassessment, 170.

¹⁴ Stephen J. Wager, "Basic Characteristics of the Modern Mexican Military," in Ronfeldt, Modern Military: Reassessment, 104.

¹⁵ Interview U-7.

¹⁶ Edward J. Williams, "The Evaluation of the Mexican Military and Its Implications for Civil-Military Relations," Mexico's Political Stability: The Next Five Years, ed. Roderic A. Camp (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986) 155.

¹⁷ Williams, "Mexico's Central American Policy," 312.

¹⁸ Daniel Galik, ed. World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers: 1987 (Washington: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, March 1988) 69.

¹⁹ Galik, 69.

²⁰ Sexto informe de gobierno que rinde ante El H. Congreso de la Unión Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado Presidente Constitucional: Estadístico (Mexico: Secretaría de Programación y Presupuesto, agosto 1988) 55. The Mexican figures differ from U.S. sources by approximately .3% (on the low side). A significant difference appears in the 1985 figures (4.4% U.S. and 2.2% Mexican). This discrepancy may make those figures available since 1985 circumspect as well.

²¹ Interview U-10. Military pay is included under the title Plans, Operations, and Maintenance of Land Forces, which accounts for 80% of the total budget for both Secretaries of Defense and Navy. The 60% figure quoted

earlier in this text is provided by Mexican military sources. This may actually be a low figure since most training and supply funds are routinely skimmed for personal use at all levels of the chain-of-command.

²² Sexto informe de gobierno (same series cited above, except this volume was named "Política del Estado Mexicano") 96.

²³ Interview U-12.

²⁴ Interview U-12.

²⁵ Plan Nacional de Desarrollo: 1989-1994 (Mexico: Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1989) 33.

²⁶ One source noted that lesson plans were passed down year after year, often containing errors, which were never challenged by instructors or students (U-3). The selectivity of the ESG is also noteworthy. Approximately 50-80 students are accepted each year after an extensive examination process; yet, only half will eventually graduate. The key to success in the ESG is having "the right attitude." Today, only 7% of the officer corps are ESG graduates (1.5% are now CDN graduates as well). The ESG is truly an exclusive club. William Stanley Ackroyd, Descendants of the Revolution: Civil-Military Relations in Mexico (PhD Dissertation: University of Arizona, 1988) 122.

²⁷ Interview U-4. One area of training that did change was the shift of responsibility for training conscripts inducted under the National Military Service Plan away from special units commanded by semi-retirees to active duty units commanded by younger battalion and regimental commanders. (Cunningham, 170.)

²⁸ Roberto Vizcaino, "La seguridad del país, fin primordial del Estado," Proceso año 203 (22 sept. 1980) 7.

²⁹ For example, the military lacks a true off-road capability to transport a large number of troops or equipment. Also, the Pilatus aircraft and T-33 trainers serve a greater counterinsurgency role than that of either a fighter or interceptor aircraft.

³⁰ Interview U-9. As of this date, only 2 of 12 aircraft are operationally ready. As one source noted concerning the purchase of the F-5s, what the Mexicans really wanted was simply an aircraft that would go "WOOSH" at air shows. (Dziedzic, 223).

³¹ Sohr, 264.

³² Ronfeldt, Modern Military: Reassessment, 19.

³³ The idea of an unwritten alliance stems from Mexico's quick recognition of Castro's government and Mexico's unswerving support for the dictator against U.S. pressure in the OAS in the early 1960s. Castro received much of his training and financial support from Mexico in the 1950s and his policy to spread revolution throughout Latin American nations has never included Mexico as a target. In fact, Mexico has provided asylum for suspected terrorists, as well as front offices for the Sandinistas during their revolution and the FMLN today. For more on this, see Sol Sanders, Mexico: Chaos on Our Doorstep, and Howard F. Cline, Mexico: Revolution to Evolution (New York: Oxford University, 1962).

³⁴ Caesar D. Sereseres, "The Mexican Military Looks South," in Ronfeldt, Modern Military: Reassessment 201-202.

³⁵ Ralph Lee Woodward, Central America: A Nation Divided (New York: Oxford University, 1985) 91.

³⁶ Sereseres, 204.

³⁷ John Rettie, "Mexico's Southern Border" in Philip, Politics in Mexico 199.

³⁸ Sereseres, 202-203.

³⁹ Sereseres, 205. In 1982, the Guatemalan military implemented Plan Victoria, an offensive which pushed 30-35,000 refugees in to Mexico. (Cunningham 165.)

⁴⁰ Rettie, 203-204. One of Mexico's concerns was the United Nation's COMAR (Commission for Aid to Refugees) involvement in the region. COMAR would have forced the Mexican government to provide better care for the Guatemalans than Mexicans living in Chiapas normally receive.

⁴¹ In 1986, the PRI imposed the former commander of the 31st Military Zone in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, General Absolon Castellanos Domínguez, as the new governor of Chiapas. His nickname is "the Bikini" since no one knows what supports him. (The Influence of the Military, 14.) General Cervantes was assigned as the new commander of the 36th Military Zone. Cervantes had LIC experience in Guerrero in the early 1970s against Lucio Cabañas. (Cunningham, 176.)

⁴² Scruggs, 18.

⁴³ Rettie, 202-204.

⁴⁴ Ronfeldt, Modern Military: Reassessment, 22.

⁴⁵ Interview U-7.

⁴⁶ Vizcaíno, 6.

⁴⁷ Vizcaíno, 7.

⁴⁸ Dziedzic, 223.

⁴⁹ Cunningham, 159.

⁵⁰ Ronfeldt, Modern Military: Reassessment, 19-21.

⁵¹ An example of this argument can be found in Olga Pellicer de Brody, "La Seguridad Nacional en México," Cuadernos Políticos 27 (enero-marzo 1981).

⁵² Otto Granados Roldán, "Ejército: Regreso a las armas?," Nexos 50 (feb. 1982) 26.

⁵³ Interviews U-7 and U-9. Earlier sources which mentioned the possible formation of a gabinete político suggested that council participation would include the Secretaries of Defense, Navy, Interior, Foreign Relations, Programming and Budget, and the Attorney General. (Ronfeldt, Modern Military, 19.) There was also mention of an organization that emerged in the mid 1980s called the Dirección General de Investigación y Seguridad Nacional (General Directorate of Investigation and National Security). This organization existed under the Secretary of the Interior and was headed by Pedro Vásquez Colmenares, a PRI insider with no military background. Its existence under Interior caused speculation that the regime was trying to downplay the military's role in the national security debate. (The Influence of the Military, 18.)

⁵⁴ Plan Nacional de Desarrollo, 33.

⁵⁵ Sloan, 173.

⁵⁶ An example is Walter LaFeber, Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984). Also see José Luis Piñeyro Piñeyro, El profesional ejército mexicano y la asistencia militar de Estados Unidos: 1965-1975 (Mexico: El Colegio de México. 1976) for a Mexican perspective on the influence of U.S. military aid to Mexico.

⁵⁷ Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Casteñeda, Limits to Friendship: The United States And Mexico (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1988). One attaché also noted that Mexican officers must be granted permission by the SDN or SN before accepting dinner invitations from U.S. military attachés. One Mexican officer who did not, commented that he would be "in serious trouble" if his supervisors found out.

⁵⁸ CPT Gary L. Arnold, "IMET in Latin America," Military Review vol LXVII no 2 (Feb. 1987) 33.

⁵⁹ James W. Wilkie and Adam Derkal, Statistical Abstract of Latin America vol 23 (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1984) 210.

⁶⁰ Interview U-12.

⁶¹ Interview U-12.

⁶² General Galván López was reported to have commented after one trip to Israel to view the KFIR fighter aircraft, "It's a long way to go for a screw." (Dziedzic, 142.)

⁶³ Interview U-13. A senior U.S. noncommissioned officer having visited Defensa (Mexico's Pentagon) noted the separation of officers and enlisted in the Mexican military, including separate rest rooms and elevators.

⁶⁴ Interview U-4.

⁶⁵ Interview U-12.

⁶⁶ Talli Nauman, "The Spirit of Houston," Mexico Journal vol II no 45 (21 Aug. 1989) 16.

⁶⁷ Nauman, 17.

⁶⁸ Interview D-1. U.S.-Mexican military cooperation on drug enforcement may be hampered by the unwillingness of the Mexican army to share narcotics intelligence information with U.S. government agencies, including the U.S. army. Clark Reynolds and Stephen Wager, U.S.-Mexican Economic Integration: Implications for the Security of Mexico and the United States (Stanford: Stanford University America's Program, undated) 17.

⁶⁹ See Cindy Anders, "Caiga quien caiga," Mexico Journal vol II no 28 (24 April 1989).

⁷⁰ Interview D-1.

⁷¹ One U.S. officer noted that it was "the kiss of

death" for any Mexican officer to become too friendly with an American military officer. (Interview U-7.)

⁷² Interview U-12.

⁷³ Interviews U-7, U-8, U-12. Figures quoted for Mexican military attaches assigned to the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C. ranged from \$17,000 to \$34,000 per month.

⁷⁴ See Reynolds and Wager for a more thorough analysis of the national security issues involved with U.S.-Mexican economic integration.

⁷⁵ See Lieuwen, Mexican Militarism, and Edwin Lieuwen, "Depoliticization of the Mexican Revolutionary Army 1915-1940," in Ronfeldt Modern Military: Reassessment. For contemporary works which support Lieuwen's thesis, see Gloria Fuentes, El ejército mexicano (Mexico: Editorial Grijalbo, 1983), Jorge Lozoya, El ejército mexicano, Alfonso Corona del Rosal, La guerra, el imperialismo, el ejército mexicano (Mexico: Editorial Grijalbo, 1989), William Stanley Ackroyd, Descendants of the Revolution: Civil-Military Relations in Mexico, and José Luis Pineyro Pineyro, Ejército y sociedad en México: Pasado y presente (Puebla: Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 1985).

⁷⁶ See Franklin D. Margiotta, The Mexican Military: A Case Study in Nonintervention, Franklin D. Margiotta, "Civilian Control and the Mexican Military: Changing Patterns of Political Influence," Civilian Control of the Military: Theory and Cases from Developing Countries ed. Claude E. Welch Jr. (Albany, New York: State University of New York, 1976) and Lyle N. McAllister, Anthony P. Maingut, and Robert A. Potash, The Military in Latin American Sociopolitical Evolution.

⁷⁷ See David Ronfeldt, The Modern Mexican Military: Implications for Mexico's Stability and Security, David Ronfeldt, The Mexican Army and Political Order since 1940 (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1973), David Ronfeldt (ed), The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment. Stephen J. Wager and Alden Cunningham, whose works appear in Ronfeldt's latest work, also echo this thesis.

⁷⁸ Interview U-7.

⁷⁹ Interview U-5.

⁸⁰ Norman Maynard Smith, The Role of the Armed Forces in Contemporary Mexican Politics (MA thesis: University of Florida, 1966) 40.

⁸¹ Interview U-4.

⁸² "Ejército y armada expresaron su lealtad al Presidente Salinas de Gortari," El Universal 2 dic. 1988: 14.

⁸³ "Siete presidentes: 42 años de lealtad," Revista del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos tomo XIII, época XVI (V mayo 1989) 10.

⁸⁴ Smith, The Role of the Armed Forces, 59.

⁸⁵ Smith, The Role of the Armed Forces, 22.

⁸⁶ Roderic A. Camp, The Making of a Government: Political Leaders in Modern Mexico (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1984) 161.

⁸⁷ Interviews U-11, U-5.

⁸⁸ Roderic A. Camp, Mexico's Leaders: Their Education and Recruitment (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1980) 10.

⁸⁹ In 1974, a zone commander was removed from command for publicly criticizing the government. (Camp, Making of a Government, 153.)

⁹⁰ Francisco J. Suárez Farías, Notas para una historia de las relaciones políticas entre gobierno y ejército mexicanos (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 1978/1979) 31.

⁹¹ Suárez Farías, Notas, 31.

⁹² In 1969, an article in the Revista del Ejército included this comment, "The Mexican Army collaborated with a high patriotic sense and singular enthusiasm maintained the peace and tranquility in the Republic, the only formula that permits progress." Mayor Agustín Garfias Talancon, "Cinco años de gobierno," Revista del Ejército tomo XXIV, época XII (dic. 1969) 10.

⁹³ In 1982, Secretary of Defense General Arévalo Gardoqui pledged the military's support to President de la Madrid stating, "We are ready to cooperate in your program of government and we know that for all powerful tasks to be executed with efficiency require a climate of peace." Eduardo Arvizu, "Ratifica De la Madrid la política pacifista de nuestro país al recibir a la total subordinación de las Fuerzas Armadas," El Universal 5 dic 1982: 5.

⁹⁴ Interview U-6.

⁹⁵ Ackroyd, 254.

⁹⁶ Interview with Mr. Andrew Thoms, Chief Political Officer, U.S. Embassy Mexico City, 18 July 1989.

⁹⁷ Interview U-10.

CONCLUSION

As Mexico's leaders face the 1990s, the pace at which economic and political reform occurs will be contested from within the regime and without by those factions which will argue that change is occurring either too fast or too slow. The means by which Mexico's political regime responds to these divergent viewpoints will determine the course of Mexican politics for the rest of the twentieth century. The Salinas approach has been cautious and calculated, reflecting a tendency toward pragmatic solutions over rhetoric and dogmatic party lines. Salinas is also a young man, who will be forty-six when his presidential term expires in 1994. He will surely desire a future in his nation and not go into self-imposed exile, as most former Mexican presidents have done.

As President Salinas leads Mexico towards the next century, his "Baedeker's Guide" may be the record of the Communist reformers who also seek to modernize their single-party regimes, revise antiquated economic practices and dismantle inefficient state monopolies, allow for more political diversity, and attempt to manage change in their

societies so that the old order is not completely overthrown in the process.

Newspaper headlines throughout the end of this decade herald unprecedented change in the Eastern Bloc nations. In Poland the outlawed Solidarity movement now enjoys a limited power-sharing condominium with the Communist Party. In Hungary, the Iron Curtain has come down as thousands of East Germans have used the open border with Austria as an escape route to the West. Hungary has also formed a new government, the Republic of Hungary, announcing the end of the "Peoples' Republic" and Communist Party rule. In the Soviet Union, massive labor strikes immobilized the nation's economy. Separatist movements in the Baltic states and the geopolitically sensitive southern states threaten to undo the Soviet Empire from within. In Draconian East Germany, hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets demanding democracy and political reform, and in November 1989 they scaled the Berlin Wall as the East German government announced an open border with the west.

The impetus for political change in the East is the pressure to modernize stagnant socialist economies that are failing to grow. Communist nations that once relished their economic isolation now feel the strain of decades of centralized planning that produced large military industrial complexes and long bread lines. Mikhail Gorbachev's openings to the West seeking new capital and

his attempts to restructure the state-controlled economy have produced an outpouring of pent-up frustration on the part of East bloc nationals who have suffered years of consumer neglect, living without the goods and services they have come to associate with Western democracies.

China's political openings to the West in the late 1970s were also a response to the need for Western capital and markets to modernize the Chinese economy. Many China hands may still recall Mao Tse-tung's characterization of Deng Xiaoping as "the dirty little man who talked about cats."¹ The lesson China teaches those who follow change in totalitarian societies is that economic openings to Western democratic states expose those involved in the export/import business, along with university students involved in studying the West, to new patterns of social responsibility and new definitions of political authority and legitimacy. The desire for political reform goes hand-in-hand with economic reform.

The success of the reform movements in the East is tied to the degree of support of the military for the process of change and the recognition of senior military officers that the economic equation is not simply guns or butter. If the military in the Soviet Union or East Germany perceive that the nation's security is threatened by severe cuts in the defense budget, open borders, and a significant dismantling of the nation's strategic and

tactical forces, then a crackdown by Communist Party hard-liners will have military support over the reformers. If, on the other hand, the reformers are able to sway the senior military leaders to see that the military is best served by the economic benefits that can be achieved by the reforms, then the military will have a stake in the success of these policies. Mikhail Gorbachev's choice of Mikhail Moiseyev as the new Chief of Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces reflects the Soviet regime's recognition of this fact, by selecting a younger man who echoes the Soviet leader's political and economic philosophy.

A problem Soviet military leaders face is with a younger cadre of officers who may desire more rapid change. These officers may become frustrated over the inability of the regime to proceed fast enough, supporting instead a political maverick like Boris Yeltsin. Recently, a group of 100 active duty and retired Soviet army officers formed a labor union, *Shchit* (Shield), against the orders of the Soviet Defense Ministry. These officers have voiced their disgust over the continuing conservatism of the General Staff, with its corruption, nepotism, and hazing practices in the armed forces.² They are also concerned that a crackdown is inevitable and wish to protect the army against its use by the regime in enforcing public order. As one member noted, "The task of the army is to ensure a reliable defense of a nation and its territory. The army

must never be used against defenseless people."³

This lengthy discourse was necessary to point out how nations other than Mexico that have evolved an Armed Party model of civil-military relations have reacted to political and economic change occurring in their societies. The military response in these nations is instructive when evaluating civil-military relations in contemporary Mexico. The relationship between the military and the political regime in an Armed Party model such as the Soviet Union also has historical precedent which makes the Mexican connection a fascinating study. For example,

Throughout his reign, Stalin, it appears, looked upon the military as a giant on the Party's leash. Hemmed in on all sides by secret police, political organs, and Party and Komsomol organizations, the military's freedom of action was severely circumscribed. Whenever there was an acute external threat, or when the Party was internally divided, the Party would slacken the leash and toss scraps to the military in the form of concessions and freedom to articulate grievances. When the crisis had passed, the leash was tightened again, and many of these recently won privileges were rescinded.⁴

Granted, the dissimilarities between Mexico and the Soviet Union (and especially China) are greater than the similarities. Yet, the parallels are interesting and worthy of consideration for anticipating regime responses to crises and the role of the military in this process. The historical example from the Stalinist era supports this role of the military in Mexican politics and society is a

fascinating study, simply because in Latin America there is no other nation that resembles the patterns and processes that produced the Mexican political regime. The instructional value of looking outside the region aids in the analysis of Mexico by providing contemporary examples of other Armed Party regimes in transition. This methodology of using regime structures for analysis, rather than a regional focus, may better our understanding of civil-military relations in Mexico. The year 1994 will provide a significant test for the thesis that has been advanced in this work. Observing regime actions and military response in China and the Soviet Union may provide key indicators of continuity or change that will help further our understanding of similar processes in Mexico in the decade ahead.

Endnotes - Conclusion

¹ The reference is to Deng's having once commented that it didn't matter whether a cat was black or white, as long as it catches mice. The context was Deng's critique of Maoist ideological rigidity that was leaving China in the economic dark ages. Deng was not challenging the authority of the Communist regime, simply its methodology.

² Michael Dobbs, "Soviet Army Officers Form Union," Washington Post 22 October 1989: A37.

³ Dobbs, A39.

⁴ Roman Kolkowicz, The Soviet Military and the Communist Party (Princeton: Princeton University, 1967) 344. Porfirio Díaz referred to the military as **mi caballada** (my tamed herd). The perceptions of these two military/political leaders are interesting.

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