

# 10 THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

## INTRODUCTION

The Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), along with the Chinese (1911) and Russian (1917) revolutions, was one of the first of the twentieth century. Lasting nearly ten years, it cost the lives of two million Mexicans and caused widespread damages. The Mexican economy did not recover to its 1910 levels for perhaps two decades.

The Revolution ended the long rule of dictator-president Porfirio Díaz, who had taken power in 1876 and ruled until 1911. The revolutionaries comprised a rare multi-class coalition that included workers rendered unemployed by the depression of 1907, village peasants whose communal lands had been stolen by landed estate owners and politicians, discontented middle class citizens excluded from access to political office and treated unfairly by governments at all levels, and disaffected upper class members dislodged from political power in their regions by Díaz and his henchmen. In 1910 Francisco I. Madero emerged as a charismatic leader in opposition to Díaz and unified the various discontented groups. Díaz went into exile in May 1911, when his army was unable to quell the scattered rebellions that had broken out, most notably in Chihuahua and Morelos. Madero subsequently became president. The coalition soon broke apart, however, with the first defection led by Emiliano Zapata, whose followers sought land reform that Madero was unwilling to rush. In 1913 Victoriano Huerta, then serving as Madero's commanding general, overthrew and assassinated him. Former adherents to Madero, headed by Venustiano Carranza, the governor of the state of Coahuila, opposed Huerta, and civil war ensued. Carranza defeated Huerta through the efforts of two generals, Pancho Villa and Alvaro Obregón. Villa, joining with Zapata, then broke with Carranza and the civil war resumed. Ultimately, Carranza and Obregón prevailed. Obregón and Carranza fought in 1920 with the former winning out. By 1923 Zapata, Villa, and Carranza had died at the hands of their enemies. In 1917 the revolutionaries adopted a new constitution that incorporated the most radical provisions of any such document anywhere.

The decade-long civil wars took an enormous toll. It was a wonder how the combatants continued on through their disappointments and disillusionment and the enormous destruction. Mexico would never be the same as a result. The excerpts that follow illustrate the reasons men and women rebelled, why they continued to fight on in the long struggle, and what life was like in this terrible war.

## WHY DID MEXICANS REBEL?

*A broad cross-class coalition ousted Porfirio Díaz in 1911. The Liberal Party, led by the Flores Magón brothers, was one of the first organized protest groups. The three brothers, Jesús (1871–1930), Ricardo (1874–1922), and Enrique (1877–1954), began their political activities against the dictatorship in 1900, when Ricardo founded the newspaper Regeneración. Exiled in the United States for a number of years, they continued their agitation. The Liberal Party had an underground following among middle and working class Mexicans, particularly along the northern border. The Program of the Liberal Party was published in 1906.*

## PROGRAM OF THE LIBERAL PARTY 1906

Every political party that struggles to acquire effective influence in the direction of the public affairs of its country is obliged to declare to the people, in a clear and precise form, the ideals for which it fights and the program that it proposes to put into practice if it is favored by victory. This duty might even be considered an advantage to honorable parties, for their objectives, being just and beneficent, will undoubtedly win the sympathy of many citizens, who will adhere to the party inspired by such objectives in order to attain them.

The Liberal Party, dispersed by the persecution of the Dictatorship, weak, and nearly moribund for a long time, has succeeded in healing its wounds and is now in the process of organizing itself. The Liberal Party is struggling against the despotism that today rules our country and, sure as it is of finally triumphing over the Dictatorship, believes that it is time solemnly to declare to the Mexican people in detail the desires it proposes to realize once it obtains the influence it seeks in the orientation of our national destinies. . . .

Since all the amendments that have been made to the constitution of 1857 by the Government of Porfirio Díaz are considered illegal, it may seem unnecessary to call for the reduction of the presidential term to four years and a ban on re-election. However, these points are so important and were proposed with such unanimity and forcefulness that it has been deemed fitting to include them explicitly in the Program. The advantages of the alternation of power and of not surrendering it to one man for an excessively long time do not have to be proven. . . .

Compulsory military service is one of the most odious of tyrannies, incompatible with the rights of the citizen of a free country. This tyranny will be suppressed. In the future, when the national Government will not sustain it, all those who are forced to bear arms today will be free, and only those who wish to will remain in the army. . . .

The education of children ought to receive very special attention from a Government which truly desires the advancement of the country. The basis of the greatness of a people lies in the primary school, and the best institutions are of little value and run the risk of being destroyed if alongside them there do not exist thousands of well-equipped schools where the citizens who will safeguard those institutions may be formed. . . . The need to create as many new schools as are required by the

country's school-age population will be immediately acknowledged by everyone who is not an enemy of progress. . . .

It is pointless to declare in the Program that the Mexican should be given preference over the foreigner, other conditions being equal, for this is already part of our constitution. As a means of effectively avoiding foreign domination and guaranteeing our territorial integrity, no measure seems more fitting than to consider all foreigners who acquire real estate as Mexican citizens. . . .

The Catholic clergy, exceeding the bounds of its religious mission, has always attempted to make itself a political power and has brought great evils upon the country, either as co-ruler of the state with conservative governments or as a rebel against liberal governments. This attitude of the clergy, inspired by its savage hatred of democratic institutions, produces a similar attitude in honorable governments which will not permit religious encroachments on civil power nor patiently tolerate the continuous rebelliousness of clericalism. If the Mexican clergy would emulate the conduct of its counterparts in other countries, such as England and the United States . . . no government would disturb it or take the trouble to keep it under surveillance. . . . The aggressive attitude of the clergy toward the liberal state compels the state to make itself respected energetically. If the Mexican clergy, like that of other countries, always remained within the religious sphere, political changes would not affect it. But since it is at the head of a militant party—the conservative party—it must resign itself to suffer the consequences of its conduct. . . .

A government that is interested in the effective welfare of the entire people cannot remain indifferent toward the very important question of labor. Thanks to the Dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, which puts its power at the service of all the exploiters of the people, the Mexican worker has been reduced to the most wretched conditions; wherever he lends his services, he is obliged to work long and hard for a daily wage of a few cents. The sovereign capitalist imposes, without appeal, the conditions of labor, which are always disastrous for the worker, who has to accept them for two reasons: because poverty forces him to work at any price or because the bayonets of the Dictatorship take care of subduing him if he rebels against the abuses of the rich. Therefore, the Mexican worker accepts jobs of twelve or more hours a day for salaries of less than seventy-five cents, and finds himself obliged to endure discounts from his miserable wage for medical services, religion, civil or religious holidays, and other things, in addition to the fines that are imposed on any pretext.

The rural worker is in an even more deplorable situation than the industrial worker, for he is a veritable serf of the modern feudal lords. In general, these workers are supposedly given a daily wage of twenty-five cents or less, but they do not even receive this meager sum in cash. Since the masters have taken pains to burden the peons with more or less nebulous debts, the former collect the latter's wages as interest and provide them with some corn and beans only to keep them from dying of hunger. . . .

A work day of eight hours and a minimum daily wage of one *peso* is the least that can be sought so that the worker will at least be rescued from poverty, so that fatigue will not drain him of all his energy, and so that he may have the time and

desire to seek education and diversion after his work. . . . What is being sought now is to uproot the abuses of which the worker is a victim and to put him in a position to struggle against capital. . . . If the worker were left in his present situation, he would barely manage to improve, for the black poverty in which he lives would continue to oblige him to accept all the conditions of the exploiter. On the other hand, if he is guaranteed fewer hours of work and a higher salary . . . his yoke will be lightened, and he will be able to fight for greater gains, to unite and organize and strengthen himself in order to wrest new and better concessions from capital. . . .

The improvement of working conditions on the one hand and, on the other, the equitable distribution of land, with facilities for cultivating and developing it without restrictions, would produce inestimable advance for the nation. Not only would the classes, directly benefitted be saved from destitution and acquire certain comforts, but there would be great development of our agriculture and industry and all the sources of public wealth, which are today stagnant because of our widespread poverty. In effect, when the people are too poor, when their resources are enough only to eat badly, they consume only articles of prime necessity, and on a small scale at that. How can industries be established, how can textiles, furniture, and similar objects be produced in a country in which the majority of the people cannot obtain any of the comforts of life? . . . But if these starvelings get enough to eat, if they are in a position to satisfy their normal needs, in a word, if their labor is well or at least adequately remunerated, they will consume an infinity of articles of which they are today deprived, and large-scale production of these articles will become necessary. When the millions of pariahs that today vegetate in hunger and nakedness eat less badly, use clothing and shoes, and no longer have mats as their sole furniture, the now insignificant demand for thousands of objects will increase in colossal proportions, and industry, agriculture, and commerce will all be impelled to develop on a scale which will never be reached so long as the present conditions of general poverty continue. . . .

Mexicans: Make a choice between what despotism offers you and what the Program of the Liberal Party offers! If you prefer shackles, poverty, humiliation before the foreigner, the gray life of the debased pariah, support the Dictatorship that gives you all this. If you prefer liberty, economic betterment, the dignity of Mexican citizenship, the proud life of the man who is his own master, come to the Liberal Party, which fraternizes with all worthy and virile men. Unite your efforts with those of all who fight for justice, in order to hasten that glorious day on which the tyranny shall fall forever and the long awaited democracy shall rise with all the splendors of a star that shall never cease to shine in the serene horizon of the fatherland.

**Source:** From Jesús Silva Herzog, *Breve Historia de la Revolución Mexicana* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960. Transl. in Lewis Hanke, ed. *History of Latin American Civilization*, Vol. 2. Boston: Little, Brown, 1973.

*Just having obtained release from prison after his unsuccessful run for president against Díaz in 1910, Francisco I. Madero went briefly into exile in the United States and issued his Plan de San Luis Potosí, explaining why he was taking up arms. He appealed to Mexicans shut out of the Díaz system. Madero wanted to restore democratic government.*

## PLAN DE SAN LUIS POTOSÍ

Abusing the law of vacant lands, numerous small property owners, in the majority Indian, have been dispossessed of their lands by acts of the Ministry of Development or by judgments of the courts of the Republic. It being totally just to restitute arbitrarily dispossessed lands to their former owners, such acts and judgments are declared subject to revision, and those that acquired land by such immoral methods, or their heirs, will be required to return those lands . . . and also to pay an indemnity for damages incurred.

In addition to the Constitution [of 1857] and laws in force, the principle of NO RE-ELECCIÓN . . . is declared the Supreme Law of the Republic.

I assume the character of provisional President of the United Mexican States with all necessary powers to fight the usurper government of General Díaz.

Fellow Citizens: If I call upon you to take arms and to overthrow the government of General Díaz, it is not only as a consequence of the excesses that he committed during the last elections, but also in order to save the nation from the somber future that awaits it if it continues under his dictatorship and under the government of the nefarious oligarchy of *científicos* who are unscrupulously absorbing and destroying the national wealth at that speed. If we allow them to remain in power, they will carry out their plans within a very short term: they will lead the people into ignominy and debasement; they will suck out all their wealth and leave them in the most absolute misery; they will cause the bankruptcy of our weak, impoverished, and handcuffed nation, which will be incapable of defending its borders, its honor, and its institutions.

As far as I am concerned, I have a clear conscience and no one can accuse me of promoting the Revolution for personal gains, for the nation is aware that I did everything possible to arrive at a peaceful settlement, and I was determined even to withdraw my candidacy, provided that general Díaz had let the nation choose at least the Vice President of the Republic. But, dominated by enigmatic pride and incredible arrogance, he refused to listen to the voice of the nation, and he preferred to precipitate Revolution rather than to give an inch, rather than to return to the people a particle of their rights.

He himself justified the present Revolution when he said [in 1876]: "That citizens may not impose and perpetuate themselves in the exercise of power, and this shall be the last revolution."

If the interests of the nation had weighed more in general Díaz's spirit than his own sordid interests and those of his advisers, he would have prevented this Revolution by making a few concessions to the people.

But, because he did not do so, so much the better! Change will come faster and shall be more radical, because the Mexican people, instead of lamenting like cowards, will accept the challenge like brave men. And because General Díaz intends to rely on brute force to impose an ignominious yoke on the people, they will have to resort to this same force in order to get rid of that yoke, to overthrow that doleful man from power, and to re-conquer their liberty.

**Source:** Pp. 37-39, "Plan de San Luis Postal" from *Revolution in Mexico: Years of Upheaval, 1910-1940* ed. by James W. Wilkie and Albert L. Michaels. Copyright © 1984 by The Arizona Board of Regents. Reprinted by permission of the University of Arizona Press.

*In the south central state of Morelos, peasants despoiled of their lands by the expansion of the sugar plantations rose up in rebellion at the same time Madero led his revolt in the north. Emiliano Zapata, a village leader from Anencuilco, emerged as the head of the movement. The Plan de Ayala reflected the desire of country people to own their own land, and their discontent about the unfairness of the dictatorship. Zapata proclaimed the Plan on November 28, 1911, just days after Madero took office as president. It was a warning that the country people in the south would continue to fight until they recovered their lost lands.*

## PLAN DE AYALA

We, the undersigned, constituted as a Revolutionary Junta, in order to support and fulfill the promises made by the Revolution of November 20, 1910, solemnly proclaim in the face of the civilized world that is judging us . . . the following plan:

. . . we declare the said Francisco I. Madero unfit to realize the promises of the Revolution of which he is the author, because he is a traitor to the principles . . . which enabled him to climb to power . . . and because, in order to please the *científicos*, *hacendados*, and *caciques* who enslave us, he has crushed with fire and blood those Mexicans who seek liberties.

The Revolutionary Junta of the State of Morelos will not sanction any transactions or compromises until it secures the downfall of the dictatorial elements of Porfirio Díaz and Francisco I. Madero, because the nation is tired of traitors and false liberators who make promises and forget them when they rise to power . . . as tyrants.

As an additional part of the plan that we proclaim, be it known: that the lands, woods, and water usurped by the *hacendados*, *científicos*, or *caciques*, under the cover of tyranny and venal justice, henceforth belong to the towns or citizens in possession of the deeds concerning these properties of which they were despoiled through the devious action of our oppressors. The possession of said properties shall be kept at all costs, arms in hand. The usurpers who think they have a right to said goods may state their claims before special tribunals to be established upon the triumph of the Revolution.

. . . the immense majority of Mexico's villages and citizens own only the ground on which they stand. They suffer the horrors of poverty without being able to better their social status in any respect, or without being able to dedicate themselves to industry or agriculture due to the fact that the lands, woods, and water are monopolized by a few. For this reason, through prior compensation, one-third of such monopolies will be expropriated from their powerful owners in order that the villages and citizens of Mexico may obtain *ejidos*, colonies, town sites, and rural properties for sowing or tilling, and in order that the welfare and prosperity of the Mexican people will be promoted in every way.

The property of those *hacendados*, *científicos*, or *caciques* who directly or indirectly oppose the present plan shall be nationalized, and two-thirds of their remaining property shall be designated for war indemnities—pensions for the widows and orphans of the victims that succumb in the struggle for this plan.

Source: Pp. 45–46, "Plan de Ayala" from *Revolution in Mexico: Years of Upheaval, 1910–1940* ed. by James W. Wilkie and Albert L. Michaels. Copyright © 1984 by The Arizona Board of Regents. Reprinted by permission of the University of Arizona Press.

*Francisco "Pancho" Villa was the most controversial leader of the Revolution. Historians once dismissed him as a bandit who had a meteoric career as a military leader and who lacked any social agenda. Thanks to the research of Friedrich Katz, however, we have learned that Villa was a complex man who had deep feelings about everyday Mexicans. The excerpt that follows comes from an unpublished portion of his memoirs. Villa, like Zapata, had a vision of land for the people.*

## VILLA'S MEMOIRS

And I see that orderly grouping of little houses in which soldiers/farmers live: clean and white, smiling and hygienic, the homes for which one really fights with courage and for whose defense one would die.

I see these luxurious fruit orchards, these abundant vegetable gardens, these sown fields, these corn fields, these alfalfa fields which not only a large *landowner harvests* and *accrues* benefits from but rather an entire family *cultivates* and *gathers, cares for, and harvests*.

And I see that the school is the tallest building in the hamlet and the teacher is the most respected man; and that the one who studies and knows the most is the most appreciated youth; and that the happiest father is he who will leave his land, animals, and house to his learned, good, and honest child, so that new, healthy, learned, good, hard-working children will arise from this sanctified home, who will dignify the country and honor the race.

Oh, if life will only permit me to live long enough to see this dream realized! . . . The true army of the people, which I loved so much, dispersed through the entire land, plowing the soil, making it respectable and respected! Fifteen years! twenty years, perhaps! And the sons of my soldiers, who will bring this ideal to fruition will know with what tenderness I caressed this dream of my soul. And they will not suffer, they will not have the threat of suffering, which I endured in the fullest years of my life, which formed my youth and my entire maturity.

**Source:** The passage comes from Villa's memoirs discovered by Guadalupe Villa Guerrero, "Francisco Villa, Historia, Leyenda y Mito" (Thesis, University of Mexico, 1976) quoted in Friedrich Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, pp. 280-281.

*The Mexican Revolution spawned musical ballads, sometimes humorous, often melancholy, that related the people's history of the Revolution. Although at times the corridos, as they were called, mixed fact and fiction, we learn much about why people fought by listening to the words.*

## CORRIDOS

### Bitter Times

#### "Tiempos Amargos" (Bitter Times)

*Oh, how pleasant it is to live  
during these times of today.*

*We are the agraristas,  
though some people still doubt it.*

*These are no longer the times of Porfirio (Díaz),  
when they cried for the master  
when they'd meet him, they'd shake his hand,  
and button his pants.*

*If one day the steward  
became angry with a worker  
it was because there was another one  
closer to the snaps of his pants.*

*If someone had pretty daughters  
he'd get a job as a night watchman,  
or else he'd land a good job,  
at least as a payroll clerk.*

*If someone had a pretty wife  
they didn't let him rest,  
they'd get them up very early  
to work just like the oxen.*

*I bid you farewell, friends,  
you'll forgive my frankness.  
I've sung about the bitter times  
under the Porfiristas.*

### **"Corrido Historia Y Muerte del Gral. Francisco Villa"**

#### *Part I*

*In a hacienda in my country,  
marvelous México,  
from a worker of the land  
the great General Villa was born.*

*He worked to support  
his mother and sister,  
and aspired to be known  
as a good worker.*

*But the son of the boss,  
with money and power,  
seduced the peon's sister,  
who, as a woman, was helpless.*

*But Pancho was truly a man  
and, proving his courage,  
cleared his name with blood,  
badly wounding the seducer.*

*He joined Madero's forces  
with a strong hand,  
and the once lowly farmworker  
became an undefeated rebel.*



*Due to his extraordinary bravery  
and unsurpassed fierceness,  
at Rellano Don Pancho (Madero)  
promoted him to the rank of general.*

*His most courageous soldiers  
were his elite guard:  
the indefectible dorados  
of the Northern Division.*

*Yet an unforeseen incident,  
or the treachery of a scoundrel,  
caused him to lose his brilliant campaign  
in the battle of Celaya.*

### *Part II*

*He was fearless and courageous  
and of noble heart,  
and accepted into his ranks  
President Obregón's men.*

*In payment for his deeds  
they gave him "El Canutillo,"  
the hacienda he administered  
with his aide, Trillo.*

*But envy and treachery  
lurked nearby  
waiting for the opportunity  
to take his life.*

*Near Parral,  
the motive has yet to be discovered,  
they killed the General  
as he was driving his automobile.*

*But they did not have the courage  
to face the leader,  
they fired treacherously  
and also killed Trillo.*

*His soldiers grieved for him  
because he was their hope,  
and the brave Dorados  
swore to avenge his death.*

*That is how they defeated  
such a fearless leader  
who was respectfully known  
as the gentleman of "El Canutillo."*

*May you rest in peace, because your name  
shines like a star in history:  
immortal will be the fame  
of General Pancho Villa.*

**“El Cuartelazo” (The Coup d’Etat) (Part I)**

*Nineteen hundred and eleven,  
twenty second of February,  
in Mexico’s capital  
they killed Madero.*

*At five in the morning  
was the first cannon blast,  
that was the signal  
for the coup d’etat.*

*As the clock struck  
seven that morning  
into México City arrived  
Mondragon and his armed troops.*

*Félix Díaz arrived  
with a military order:  
“Either you resign  
or I’ll have you killed.”*

*Madero answered  
from his presidential chair:  
“You’ll have to kill me first  
before you make me resign.”*

*Madero in the presidential palace  
said: “How unfortunate is my fate!  
I give my life for the people,  
I do not fear death!”*

*Madero answered then:  
“I will not resign!  
I’m not a self-appointed president,  
I was chosen by the people.”*

*Gentleman, let me tell you  
what happened in México:  
a bunch of murderers  
killed Madero.*

*Madero is dead now  
and buried down below,  
only Carranza is left  
as Minister of War.*

*The artillery arrived  
transported by train,  
they were going to attack  
the jail of Belen.*

*The bugles were calling  
and the drums were playing and the  
canon niño  
was placed nearby.*

## WHY DID THEY CONTINUE TO FIGHT?

*The civil wars went on for nearly a decade, with the heaviest fighting taking place in 1914 and 1915 as the rebel factions, Villa and Zapata on one side and Carranza and Obregón on the other side, tore each other apart. Carranza and Obregón defeated Villa in a series of bloody battles in 1915 that forced him eventually to return to guerrilla warfare.*

*The Carrancista armies pushed the Zapatistas into guerrilla operations at the same time. Villa made it very difficult for the victors to control the northern states, until he agreed to peace in 1920 after Carranza's death. Zapata fell victim to an ambush in 1919. Throughout these years, combatants struggled on and on. They became hardened and cynical, but they continued to fight.*

*John Reed was a North American radical journalist who traveled with Pancho Villa during the heaviest fighting of the Revolution. Reed reported in detail the feelings of the common soldiers.*

## JOHN REED, INSURGENT MEXICO

Captain Fernando leaned over and patted my arm. "Now you are with the men (*los hombres*). When we win the Revolution it will be a government by the men—not by the rich. We are riding over the lands of the men. They used to belong to the rich, but now they belong to me and to the *compañeros*."

"And you will be the army?" I asked.

"When the Revolución is won," was the astonishing reply, "there will be no more army. The men are sick of armies. It is by armies that Don Porfirio robbed us."

"But if the United States should invade Mexico?"

A perfect storm broke everywhere. "We are more *valiente* than the Americanos—The cursed gringos would get no further south than Juarez—Let's see them try it—We'd drive them back over the Border on the run, and burn their capital the next day . . . !"

"No," said Fernando, "you have more money and more soldiers. But the men would protect us. We need no army. The men would be fighting for their houses and their women."

"What are you fighting for?" I asked Juan Sanchez, the color-bearer, looked at me curiously. "Why, it is good, fighting. You don't have to work in the mines . . . !" Manuel Paredes said: "We are fighting to restore Francisco I. Madero to the Presidency."

By the time he was halfway through, the entire Tropa was humming the tune, and when he finished there was a moment of jingling silence.

"We are fighting," said Isidoro Amayo "for Libertad."

"What do you mean by Libertad?"

"Libertad is when I can *do what I want!*"

"But suppose it hurts somebody else?"

He shot back at me Benito Juarez's great sentence:

"Peace is the respect for the rights of others!"

I wasn't prepared for that. It startled me, this barefooted *mestizo's* conception of Liberty. It is only correct definition Liberty—to *do what I want to!* Americans quote it

to me triumphantly as an instance of Mexican irresponsibility. But I think it is a better definition than ours—Liberty is the right to do what the Courts want. Every Mexican schoolboy knows the definition of peace and seems to understand pretty well what it means, too. But, they say: Mexicans don't want peace. That is a lie, and a foolish one. Let Americans take the trouble to go through the Maderista army, asking whether they want peace or not! The people are sick of war. But just to be square, I'll have to report Juan Sanchez's remark: "Is there war in the United States now?" he asked.

"No," I said untruthfully.

"No war at all?" He meditated for a moment. "How do you pass the time then . . . ?"

And there was a sullen, Indian-faced woman, riding sidesaddle, who wore two cartridge belts. She rode with the *hombres*—slept with them in the cuartels.

"Why are you fighting?" I asked her.

She jerked her head toward the fierce figure of Julian Reyes.

"Because he is", she answered. "He who stands under a good tree is sheltered by a good shade."

"A good rooster will crow in any chicken coop," capped Isidro.

"A parrot is green all over," chimed in someone else.

"Faces we see, but hearts we do not comprehend," said José sentimentally.

At noon we roped a steer, and cut his throat. And because there was no time to build a fire, we ripped the meat from the carcass and ate it raw.

"*Oiga, Meester*," shouted José, "Do the United States soldiers eat raw meat?"

I said I didn't think they did.

"It is good for the *hombres*. In the campaign we have no time for anything but *carne crudo*. It makes us brave."

By the late afternoon we had caught up with the coach, and galloped with it down through the dry arroyo and up through the other side, past the great *ribota* court that flanks the Hacienda of La Zarca. Unlike La Mimbrera, the Casa Grande here stands on a level place, with the peons' houses in long rows at its flanks, and a flat desert barren of chaparral for twenty miles in front. Che Che Campa also paid a visit to La Zarca. The big house is a black and gaping ruin.

Old Güereca was a white-haired peon in sandals. He had been born a slave on one of the great haciendas; but years of toil, too appalling to realize, had made him that rare being in Mexico, the independent owner of a small property. He had ten children—soft, dark-skinned girls, and sons that looked like New England farmhands—and a daughter in the grave.

The Güerecas were proud, ambitious, warm-hearted folk. Longinos said: "This is my dearly loved friend, Juan Reed, and my brother." And the old man and his wife put both their arms around me and patted me on the back, in the affectionate way Mexicans embrace.

"My family owes nothing to the Revolución," said Gino, proudly. "Others have taken money and horses and wagons. The *jefes* of the army have become rich from the property of the great haciendas. The Güerecas have given all to the Maderistas and have taken nothing but my rank. . . ."

The old man, however, was a little bitter. Holding up a horsehair rope, he said: "Three years ago I had four *riatas* like this. Now I have only one. One the *colorados* took and the other Urbina's people took, and the last one José Bravo. . . . What

difference does it make which side robs you?" But he didn't mean it all. He was immensely proud of his youngest son, the bravest officer in all the army.

We sat in the long adobe room, eating the most exquisite cheese, and *tortillas* with fresh goat-butter—the deaf old mother apologizing in a loud voice for the poverty of the food, and her warlike son reciting his personal Iliad of the nine-days' fight around Torreon.

"We got so close," he was saying, "that the hot air and burning powder stung us in the face. We got too close to shoot, so we clubbed our rifles—" Just then all the dogs began to bark at once. We jumped from our seats. One didn't know what to expect in the Cadena those days. It was a small boy on horseback, shouting that the *colorados* were entering the Puerta—and off he galloped.

Longinos roared to put the mules in the coach. The entire family fell to work with a fury, and in five minutes Longinos dropped on one knee and kissed his father's hand, and we were tearing down the road. "Don't be killed! Don't be killed! Don't be killed!" we could hear the Señora wailing.

We passed a wagon loaded with cornstalks, with a whole family of women and children, two tin trunks, and an iron bed, perched on top. The man of the family rode a burro. Yes, the *colorados* were coming—thousands of them pouring through the Puerta. The last time the *colorados* had come they had killed his daughter. For three years there had been war in this valley, and he had not complained. Because it was for the Patria. Now they would go to the United States where But Juan lashed the mules cruelly, and we heard no more. Farther along was an old man without shoes, placidly driving some goats. Had he heard about the *colorados*? Well, there *had* been some gossip about *colorados*. Were they coming through the Puerta, and how many?

"Pues, quien sabe, Señor!"

At last, yelling at the staggering mules, we came into camp just in time to see the victorious Tropa straggle in across the desert, firing off many more rounds of ammunition than they had used in the fight. They moved low along the ground, scarcely higher on their broncos than the drab mesquite through which they flashed, all big sombreros and flapping gay serapes, the last sunshine on their lifted rifles.

The room was full of smoke from the fire on the floor. Through it I dimly made out some thirty or forty troopers squatting or sprawled at full length—perfectly silent as Silveyra read aloud a proclamation from the Governor of Durango forever condemning the lands of the great haciendas to be divided among the poor. He read:

Considering: that the principal cause of discontent among the people in our State, which forced them to spring to arms in the year 1910, was the absolute lack of individual property; and that the rural classes have no means of subsistence in the present, nor any hope for the future, except to serve as peons on the haciendas of the great landowners, who have monopolized the soil of the State;

Considering: that the principal branch of our national riches is agriculture, and that there can be no true progress in agriculture without that the majority of farmers have a personal interest in making the earth produce. . . .

Considering, finally: that the rural towns have been reduced to the deepest misery, because the common lands which they once owned have gone to augment the property of the nearest hacienda, especially under the Dictatorship of Diaz; with which the inhabitants of the State lost their economic, political, and social independence, then passed from the rank of citizens to that of slaves, without the Gov-

ernment being able to lift the moral level through education, because the hacienda where they lived is private property. . . .

Therefore, the Government of the State of Durango declares it a public necessity that the inhabitants of the towns and villages be the owners of agricultural lands. . . .

When the paymaster had painfully waded through all the provisions that followed, telling how the land was to be applied for, etc., there was a silence.

"That," said Martinez, "is the Mexican Revolución."

"It's just what Villa's doing in Chihuahua," I said. "It's great. All you fellows can have a farm now."

An amused chuckle ran around the circle. Then a little, bald-headed man, with yellow, stained whiskers, sat up and spoke.

"Not us," he said, "not the soldiers. After a revolución is done it wants no more soldiers. It is the *pacíficos* who will get the land—those who did not fight. And the next generation . . ." He paused and spread his torn sleeves to the fire. "I was a schoolteacher," he explained, "so I know that *Revoluciones*, like Republics, are ungrateful. I have fought three years. At the end of the first Revolución that great man, Father Madero, invited his soldiers to the Capital. He gave us clothes, and food, and bullfights. We returned to our homes and found the greedy again in power."

"I ended the war with forty-five pesos," said a man.

"You were lucky," continued the schoolmaster. "No, it is not the troopers, the starved, unfed, common soldiers who profit by the Revolución. Officers, yes—some—for they get fat on the blood of the Patria. But we—no."

"What on earth are you fighting for?" I cried.

"I have two little sons," he answered. "And *they* will get their land. And they will have other little sons. They too, will never want for food . . ." The little man grinned. "We have a proverb in Guadalahara: 'Do not wear a shirt of eleven yards, for he who wants to be a Redeemer will be crucified.'"

"I've got no little son," said fourteen-year-old Gil Tomas, amid shouts of laughter. "I'm fighting so I can get a thirty-thirty rifle from some dead Federal, and a good horse that belonged to a millionaire."

Just for fun I asked a trooper with a photo button of Madero pinned to his coat who that was.

"*Pues, quien sabe, Señor?*" he replied. "My captain told me he was a great saint. I fight because it is not so hard as to work."

"How often are you fellows paid?"

"We were paid three pesos just nine months ago tonight," said the schoolmaster, and they all nodded. "We are real volunteers. The *gente* of Villa are professionals."

Then Luis Martinez got a guitar and sang a beautiful little love song, which he said a prostitute had made up one night in a *bordel*.

The last thing I remember of that memorable night was Gino Güereca lying near me in the dark, talking.

"Tomorrow," he said, "I shall take you to the lost gold mines of the Spaniards. They are hidden in a canon in the western mountains. Only the Indians know of them—and I. The Indians go there sometimes with knives and dig the raw gold out of the ground. We'll be rich. . . ."

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. To whom did the Liberal Party appeal in its program of 1906? Do you think it effective?
2. Madero appealed to a broad range of the population. Do you think that his Plan de San Luis Potosí was meant to maintain the cross-class alliance of his supporters? What was he trying to justify?
3. What do you see as the differences between the Plan de San Luis Potosí and the Plan de Ayala?
4. How does the Plan de Ayala compare with Pancho Villa's "dream" of a new Mexico? Which sounds more sincere?
5. Why did the rebels continue to fight the long, hard Revolution?