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IDEOLOGY AND LAND REFORM POLICIES IN POSTREVOLUTIONARY MEXICO: 1915-1965

Rice University

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IDEOLOGY AND LAND REFORM POLICIES IN POSTREVOLUTIONARY MEXICO: 1915-1965

by

CECILE SHAY ARTIZ

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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December 1985
IDEOLOGY AND LAND REFORM POLICIES IN
POSTREVOLUTIONARY MEXICO: 1915-65

by

Cecile Shay Artiz

This research considers the relationship of ideology to public policy. The hypothesis it tests is that verbal adherence to an ideological orientation by a decision maker should translate into the implementation of related public policies. It is further posited that the intensity of adherence to that ideological orientation affects the scope of the decision maker's policy choices.

The ideological orientations and policy decisions of thirteen of Mexico's postrevolutionary presidents from 1915 to 1965 were selected to test this relationship. Using content analysis of presidential addresses before Congress, a measure of the intensity of verbal ideological adherence to the revolutionary goal of land reform was assessed for each postrevolutionary administration during the time frame of this analysis. This information was then compared to actual policy choices and implemented programs to determine whether ideological identification influenced the selection and implementation of land reform policies.

The results of this research show that verbal ideological orientation toward the revolutionary goal of land reform reflected the intensity of adherence to that ideological goal. But in the case of Mexico, two competing theories of appropriate governmental action in the
land reform area developed out of the revolution of 1910. In most cases one of these orientations received greater governmental attention than the other and influenced the policies that were implemented. During six administrations, presidents verbally identified with a liberal land reform orientation that emphasized agricultural development, productivity, and the distribution of land into private properties. The policies implemented during these administrations were consistent with this orientation. During three administrations, the orientation was centered on social justice through land reform, and the policies which were implemented tended to be redistributive and collectivist. In the other three cases the role of ideology seemed to be more symbolic. Presidents employed popular revolutionary symbols relating to land reform to encourage support for the regime.

The conclusions reached by this research suggest that the relationship of ideology to public policies needs to be explored rather than discounted as much of the contemporary public policy literature suggests.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The combined years of study and preparation for writing this dissertation required and extracted commitment and perseverance. Although much of the project was solitary, it could not have been completed without the support and encouragement of many people. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of my advisors, Dr. Robert Dix, Dr. Fred von der Mehden, and Dr. Patricia Seed. Their experience and insight made important theoretical and empirical contributions to this work. And to my husband Ernest, my families, and Matey, I owe immeasurable gratitude for the moral support and necessary distractions that made work on this dissertation more enjoyable and a little less solitary.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Ted and Shirley, who have consistently encouraged the pursuit of excellence. It is a personal joy to become the family's third political scientist; I was able to reap all of the advantages of the accumulated experience of my parents and siblings in writing this dissertation.
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PREFACE

The central question under investigation in this research is that revolution mandates an ideology of social transformation that requires political action by the new revolutionary regime to bring to fruition its goals. To what extent do revolutionary actors seek to fulfill the goals of the revolutionary movement which brought them to power? To test specific propositions raised by this general question, I have collected a variety of data from Mexico during the first fifty years of its revolutionary history. The Mexican revolution was a fascinating struggle among competing power contenders with their own ideas about the proper constitution of government. The orientations of postrevolutionary administrations toward the goal of land reform, a primary ideological tenet of the revolution, reveal a wealth of information which assists us in understanding the dynamics involved in the processes of revolutionary transformation.

Much of the data collected in this project was derived from an intensive examination of presidential addresses delivered in Spanish. In an effort to retain some of the unique subtleties of the Spanish language, many Spanish words were incorporated into the text of this dissertation, and they are underscored at their initial usage only. A glossary of English translations is provided at the end of the text. It is hoped that the reader will learn about Mexico's interesting revolutionary history and gain a sense of flavor of the Spanish language at the same time.
INTRODUCTION

WHY STUDY LAND REFORM IN MEXICO?

Rural Mexico is seething with unrest. It is estimated that there are one million more landless campesinos today than before the initiation of Lazaro Cardenas's massive land reform policies of the 1930s.1 Sporadic land seizures test the commitment of the government to land reform. Underemployment abounds in the rural sector and nationally is estimated to be forty percent of the working population. Unemployment also is high.2 Agricultural productivity is low. Many rural areas are overcrowded, and much of the population lives in poverty. It is estimated that in the United States between three and five million Mexicans live illegally, and the rate of influx is rising. Compelled to leave Mexico because of the sagging economy and little hope of recovery, many of these illegal aliens come from the countryside.

The national economic picture is also bleak. The economy has been in decline for the last three years. Gross domestic product figures estimate the decline at 2 percent annually. Mexico's foreign debt now stands at more than $90 billion and is the second highest in Latin America, behind Brazil. A number of peso devaluations signal prolonged economic woes.3 One report discusses the challenges before the current administration of President Miguel de la Madrid:

A high rate of population growth and urbanization, the inability to enact a meaningful land reform policy, and a failure to satisfy labor demands will increase the chances of serious turmoil. De la Madrid will have to meet these overwhelming pressures or risk the
growth of significant opposition and the threat of a coup from the right. 4

Certainly the facts given above suggest rural Mexico is growing ripe for rebellion. For several years now forecasters have looked to the landless and unemployed campesinos as the spark to ignite Mexico's second agrarian revolt; but to date, aside from infrequent acts of violence, no movement has developed. Will President De la Madrid be able to keep rural Mexico quiet?

What factors are to blame for Mexico's current economic and social difficulties? Overzealous development schemes based on proven and potential oil wealth involved the Mexican government of José López Portillo in enormous spending programs financed by foreign loans. When the international oil market began to crumble in 1981 because of oversupply, Mexico faced its first true economic crisis. The crisis was exacerbated during the years of oil boom and mounting government revenues because little of the newly created wealth had found its way to rural Mexico. There were few redistributive programs, and very few pesos "trickled down" to the lower classes. The problems are so severe there is little hope that improvements will come in the near future.

The pretentious display of wealth by López Portillo and other prominent Mexicans in the heyday of the oil boom raised popular expectations that economic and social reforms would soon be implemented around the country. 5 In accepting his candidacy to the presidency in October 1981, De la Madrid said, "Our Revolution was born of injustice and has as its fundamental objective social justice." 6 How will his government be able to move toward the implementation of social reform programs still entwined in the history and myth of the 1910 Mexican Revolution? There
is little chance that during his term De la Madrid will bring about the kinds of economic or social reforms rural and urban Mexico need. He has emphasized managing economic problems and stopping corruption.

Even more far-reaching questions can be asked about how Mexico, a country which purportedly underwent a social revolution, could be in the position it is in today. How could Mexico have one of the most inequitable distributions of income in all of Latin America when its postrevolutionary governments are committed to social justice goals? How could there be more campesinos without land today than there were in the prerevolutionary period, after seventy years of agrarian reform?

These questions raise the point of whether Mexico indeed ever experienced a social-transforming revolution. If it had, how could it be that many students of Mexico compare the contemporary situation to the pre-1910 dictatorship of Porfiric Díaz? And why would postrevolutionary governments allow the growth of new agri-businesses--large, privately owned farms--in violation of the revolutionary land reform laws that establish limits on the size of private property? In many respects, large agri-businesses have replaced the latifundio of the older Mexico and represent new concentrations of landholdings in a context where millions have no land of their own. Are speculations of another agrarian uprising farfetched?

These questions go to the heart of an understanding of Mexican politics. The poor distributive performance of most postrevolutionary administrations is generally recognized both within and outside of Mexico. Often it is difficult to see the relationship of the Mexican Revolution to the contemporary scene. The facts suggest that there is
little reason to believe the rhetoric of Mexican presidents when they link their administrations to the ongoing process of social transformation that started in 1910 and purportedly continues today. But if a Mexican president is not to be believed, if it is commonly thought that revolutionary rhetoric is manipulated to encourage popular political support, how has Mexico avoided an unleashing of popular discontent? How has the regime maintained its linkages to the 1910 revolution, engendered popular support, and remained stable all these years if its performance in revolutionary policy areas is deficient?

These questions provide a springboard for the analysis of the relationship of the revolutionary goal of land reform to the performance of postrevolutionary administrations in this policy area. Have postrevolutionary Mexican presidents done what they said they would do in the area of land reform? What factors motivate their policy choices? What role, if any, does ideology play in the selection of policies and their implementation? What have been the effects of the revolutionary land reform program? It is hoped that answers to these questions will tell us more about contemporary Mexico and about the relationship of its revolution to the politics of land reform.
END NOTES TO INTRODUCTION


2 Time, 20 December 1982.

3 The Latin American Times, July 1982, 8.

4 Ibid., 10. 5 Ibid., 9. 6 Ibid., 8.


CHAPTER 1

IDEOLOGY AND LAND REFORM IN POSTREVOLUTIONARY MEXICO:
AN INTRODUCTION

The objective of this research is to determine whether ideology has a measurable influence on the choice and implementation of public policies. A revolutionary political environment was chosen for this study because of the relative prominence ideology plays in the formulation of an alternative political system during a revolutionary crisis. Central issues guiding this investigation relate to the motivations of decision makers, the relationship of policy decisions to popular expectations, and the systemic effects of policy decisions.

As a measure of the relationship of ideology to policy choice and implementation, the contents of public addresses by Mexican presidents were analyzed to assess manifestations of verbal ideological adherence to the revolutionary program of land reform in Mexico from 1915 to 1965. Land reform in the Mexican Revolution has been popularly viewed as the functional expression of social justice, a primary tenet of the revolutionary ideology. The methods employed in this research are designed to show the extent to which each postrevolutionary president demonstrated adherence to land reform through verbal pledges of furthering this revolutionary goal and through the implementation of policies designed to fulfill the goal over time. The central proposition of this study is that verbal references to a positive land reform
position in presidential addresses to Congress should translate into the implementation of public policies designed to resolve the land problem and fulfill the revolutionary goal. Such congruence between verbal ideological commitment to policy preferences and actual behavioral manifestations through the enactment of public policies should suggest a significant relationship exists between ideology and policy choices and actions. Any discernible incongruence between these variables raises the question of what factors influence the political decision-making process and what role, if any, does ideology play in that process.

Since 1915, Mexico has been governed by regimes committed to revolutionary social, economic, and political transformation; or at least this is the view the ruling elite has consistently endorsed. When a nation undergoes a process of social revolution, what effect does the revolutionary ideology have on the new regime's decision makers? How committed are revolutionary regimes to the postulates of social, economic, and political change which legitimated their seizure of power? Does ideological commitment change in intensity or direction over time? How do revolutionary regimes publicly portray their commitment to revolutionary goals? Are ideological goals translated into public policies? Answers to these questions will allow us to understand the ongoing relationship of ideology to public policy choices and implemented programs in the context of revolutionary transformation and to analyze the theoretical implications this may have for other societies.

This research is not designed to prove that ideology causes a decision maker to choose one policy over others to satisfy the tenets prescribed in an ideology. This study cannot analyze all other
variables which play a role in the decision-making process. Rather, the purpose of this investigation is to determine what linkages exist between the variables in a context that by definition is ideological. Revolutionary decision making and policy implementation should differ from "business-as-usual" politics precisely because the essence of revolution is the social transformation of a polity according to the principles set forth in a body of ideas subscribed to by the active population engaged in the uprising against the incumbent regime. If no ideas as to better government, better opportunity, better life-style exist to guide the actions of those seeking political power, no true social revolution as such can exist. In the case of successful social revolution there must be some purposeful motivation for removing the incumbent regime from power and bringing about the complete transformation of society. Mexico offers a well-documented case study of revolutionary policy making in the land reform area and will be the testing ground for the theory that the intensity of ideological adherence of individual decision makers influences the extent to which public policies designed to fulfill revolutionary goals are implemented and accomplish the intended results of the ideology.

The methodology employed in this research provides both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the hypothesized relationship. Content analysis is "the systematic, objective, and quantitative characterization of content variables manifest or latent in a message." The research design of this project involves the content analysis of sixty-six presidential messages to the Congress of Mexico from 1911 to 1966. These messages were acceptance speeches upon assuming executive
power and annual state-of-the-nation addresses given by each president
during every year of his term in office to inform Congress and the
country of governmental activities in a broad number of areas. In each
address the sections discussing the activities of the Secretaría de
Agricultura y Fomento, the Departamento Agrario, and related
dependencies, and introductory and concluding statements were subject to
content analysis for words and phrases reflective of each president's
perceptions of, attitudes toward, and policy positions on the land
reform question and the revolutionary ideology. (A list of these words
and phrases is contained in appendix A.) The use of language is
considered to be indicative of ideological orientations.

Land reform was a popular expectation arising out of the Revolu-
tion of 1910 to promote the economic and social advancement of Mexico's
campesino class through the distribution of land and the redistribution
of wealth. Originally complicated by competing ideological interpreta-
tions of the nature and extent of land reform, one collectivist and the
other emphasizing private property rights, the "ideology of land reform"
was shaped and modified by Mexican presidents until a kind of modus
vivendi between the approaches was achieved around 1940. Consequently,
for the first thirty years of postrevolutionary history the content
analysis had to be flexible in order to absorb many different references
to the ideologies of land reform and the policies each gave rise to.
This is not a serious problem because the victorious revolutionary
coalition brought to power its liberal ideology of private property
rights; the collectivists did not hold national political power until
1934.
The sixty-six presidential addresses subject to content analysis were read in Spanish. Five categories were used in the content analysis to tap different ideological and policy dimensions of the land reform issue. For each address, words and phrases were coded and placed within one of the categories. The relationship of these dimensions to the words and phrases coded in the content analysis can be found in appendix A. I was responsible for the coding throughout the project, thus negating problems associated with intercoder reliability. The use of certain words and phrases relevant to the Revolution and land reform is hypothesized as reflecting predispositions to behavioral patterns that would influence a decision maker to execute policies designed to satisfy the dictates of the ideology from which the goal was derived. Actual policy implementation will be determined by the use of economic and other indicators collected by researchers since the 1920s.

It is important to be sensitive to variations in the personal interpretations of revolutionary ideology of individual presidents and to compare these to other executive interpretations of the same ideology. To facilitate this, the focus of this research is on the individual president and his intensity of adherence to the ideology that brought to power the regime over which he presided. It is posited that for any given system of political beliefs there could be different levels of adherence among those who accept its general or specific directions. It is possible to identify the intensity of ideological adherence as if running along a continuum with extremes ranging from strong adherence to the ideology to weak adherence. This conceptualization suggests that ideological adherence is a function of the
individual's commitment to the ideas of a political belief system. This continuum is depicted in figure 1.

FIGURE 1. INTENSITY OF IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

The general theory underlying this proposition is that once an ideology becomes public and receives popular support, the intensity levels of ideological adherence can vary from individual to individual even though those involved may share a common commitment to the ultimate ends envisioned by the belief system. This study will attempt to measure intensity levels of ideological adherence for each of Mexico's postrevolutionary presidents. It is conceivable that the proposed relationship exists at the group level as well. Accordingly, it might be possible to find differing individual interpretations of the collective responsibility for seeking socio-political change which would implicitly bear on the ability of the group to bring about such change. At the group level, commitment to and consensus regarding the end of bringing about socio-political transformation must exist but not necessarily a concomitant agreement on how to proceed to bring it about.

The intensity of ideological adherence can vary over time and in the context of a social revolutionary movement must be evaluated for all leaders who pledge their administration to that movement. The literature on ideology suggests that over time ideological pronouncements diminish and the once motivating forces of commitment are either incorporated into the national political culture or are completely
revised by other systems of thought. Whether these patterns hold true is an empirical question subject to confirmation or refutation based on the specific examination of relevant cases. This study is designed to be sensitive to ideological intensity as well as to shifts in ideology altogether.

The purpose of this content analysis is to determine whether presidential references to Mexico's revolution and the revolution's ideology of land reform are indicative of the actual policies carried out during a president's term of office. "Symbol analysis rests on the assumption that the words a person uses in communicating are indicative of or symbolize his perspective." Frequency counts of items relevant to the study over time and the scope and intensity of such items permit us to raise interesting questions and offer insights about presidential behavior, motivations, and commitment in this policy area.

Methodological problems with the use of content analysis are many, but none is so severe as to negate the positive contribution this approach offers. Translation problems raise the question of functional equivalency. As the principal investigator, I am responsible for all translations. When a particularly difficult translation situation arose, a native Spanish speaker and professor of Spanish was called upon for an interpretation. Each address was read twice--once to become familiar with each president's verbal style and to translate unusual words or phrases, and a second time to look for anticipated as well as unexpected appearances of relevant words and phrases and to code them. The actual words and phrases were then manually recorded for each president and placed under the appropriate categories. This approach
ensured greater reliability in coding and in translation. Each category reflects mainly positive, although occasionally neutral, references to the revolution, the ideology of land reform, and land reform policies. Negative or unfavorable references were not generally noted in the addresses because each Mexican administration since 1915 has identified itself with the revolution which ostensibly brought it to power. This means a directional bias is incorporated in every address given by a Mexican president; but rather than presenting a methodological problem, this provides an opportunity to examine the actual congruence between what a president said about the revolution and its goals (presumably favorable) and the policies enacted during his term in office.

In the case of Mexico, the executive dominates the policy process and can move initiatives through Congress with relative ease. However, in making an annual address before a combined Congress the president also makes known to the greater public his administration's accomplishments and goals. Does a president put into practice policies that are reflective of the ideological goals he publicly endorses? The perspective assumed within this research question differs from other approaches to the study of what motivates political decision makers. Increasingly, the study of public policies has been undertaken to determine differences and similarities between political systems and to address the question of why governments do what they do. In some contemporary studies of what explains the political choice to create social welfare policies, the role of ideology is completely discounted. As one author found:

Regression analyses demonstrate clearly and consistently that ideology has no effect [in explaining national differences in
social security spending]; the beta weights, like the zero-order correlations, are all insignificant when in the presence of economic level or its correlates, age of the social security system, and percentage of old people.  

The general view of this relationship is that ideology provides a popular conceptualization of the political system (egalitarian, democratic, revolutionary, etc.) but that in practice there is great divergence between what is said through elite rhetoric tied to the ideology and what is done.  

Other policy studies reach a similar conclusion. As one student of Soviet politics found, "Policy decisions in the Soviet government have become so routinized within the Party bureaucracy that one is led to suspect that ideology may, if it has not already, become irrelevant to policy formation."  

Are we to assume that based on the study of a few generally advanced industrial nations of the West, ideology does not influence policy choices? The conclusion of the "End of Ideology" debate of the 1950s and 1960s is that in advanced industrial nations there is a convergence in policy choices that supersedes ideological differences and is a function of the similar socio-economic factors these nations face.  

But does this generalization hold for non-western or transitional societies? Do revolutionary regimes differ from other types of regimes? The consensus reached in the 1960s and 1970s was that the "End of Ideology" debate was spatially limited to advanced industrial nations. To date, few studies have analyzed the relationship of ideology and public policy in other political systems.  

One issue raised by the conclusion that ideology does not explain differences in policy choice is that of regime legitimacy. Does divergence between ideology, public policy choices, and implemented
programs affect the ability of the regime to authoritatively govern? Is there popular awareness that ideology and practice are incongruent, and does this bear on the question of regime legitimacy? Is ideology more important a determinant of public policy in an open democracy than in a closed, non-democratic system? Or is the inverse true, based on the finding that in advanced industrial nations, many of which are democratic, ideology is not an important variable in explaining policy choice? Satisfactory responses to these questions have not been offered by those who conclude that ideology is unimportant in explaining policy choices or implemented programs.\textsuperscript{15} Perhaps the perspective should be toward the relationship of public policy choice to regime legitimacy.

This study assumes that public policies are "a series of goal-oriented actions taken by authoritative (usually government) actors."\textsuperscript{16} The question then is, Does an ideology provide the goals toward which public policies are directed? At the core of any study of ideology is the question of what inspires and motivates political behavior. This question is not likely confined to one or even two variables but multiple factors, one of which could be ideology.\textsuperscript{17} This study is sensitive to the role other variables play in shaping policy decisions and will discuss the possible influences these might have had on post-revolutionary governments.

For the purposes of this study, land reform policies have been conceptualized as either distributive or redistributive. Distributive land reform is based on the division and lease or sale of public lands. Redistributive land reform is based on the division and distribution of private lands. Distributive land reform policies provide the
opportunity to farm and make a living from the productive usage of land.\textsuperscript{18} Redistributive land reform policies do the same but also redistribute national wealth through the division of private property.\textsuperscript{19} It is important to note the different role of the state in pursuing one of these policies over the other. Distributive land reform policies do not threaten private property interests in the same manner as redistributive policies. For that reason distributive policies are rooted in the liberal political tradition of the protection of private property rights, whereas redistributive policies have as a main goal social justice and equality. These ideological underpinnings would likely play a role in policy choice and program implementation based on the ideology of the individual decision maker.

The Mexican Revolution gave rise to two different interpretations of land reform, both of which coalesced in the national revolutionary ideology. The origins of these different approaches will be discussed in the next chapter. For now it is sufficient to classify one approach as distributive and the other as redistributive. Because of this ideological dichotomy, the study of the relationship of ideology to policy choice and implementation in Mexico is particularly interesting. Few contemporary works about Mexico are interested in the relationship of the revolutionary ideology to what the government says it will do and actually does. In part, this is because it is commonly believed that the revolutionary ideology is manipulated for symbolic, emotive, and nationalistic reasons and that public policies are not designed to fulfill the goals of the revolution. How, then, is popular support maintained if the government says it is working to fulfill the
goals of the revolution but does little to accomplish this? How has Mexico avoided political violence that could result from popular discontent? Many recent studies apply a variant of the bureaucratic-authoritarian model to explain Mexican politics.20 A review of the basic propositions of this model will show some of its weaknesses and provide justification as to why it should not be the exclusive paradigm for the study of contemporary Mexico.

Political relationships between elites and masses in Mexico are thought to revolve around and interact within well-established patron-client networks. This is characteristic of authoritarian regimes. Vertical chains of patron-client relationships connect a variety of groups to brokers capable of distributing particularistic rewards who thereby resolve certain claims or problems at various stages along these vertical ladders. These relationships seem to work very well in villages, urban squatter settlements, and among others who lack direct contact with government bureaucratic units. Large interest organizations in Mexico are state sanctioned, like labor and campesino unions; and as one author found, "interest groups in an authoritarian regime tend to play a reactive rather than an initiating role, responding to initiatives from above instead of creating and reflecting demands from below."21 Thus, in Mexico we would not likely find the executive responding to mass demands but rather shaping those demands with the policies pursued by his administration. In this way, political participation is controlled and relative stability is maintained by the dispensing of particularistic rewards in return for political support.
Because of these characteristics the Mexican system has been called "an inclusionary, essentially nonrepressive authoritarian regime."22

Events in Mexico's history show that the regime is only nonrepressive when compared to other authoritarian regimes, particularly exclusionary ones. In instances where unsanctioned mass demands have been made, the government has resorted to confrontational politics and even violence. The student demonstrations of 1968 are examples of occasions when the government used repression to stop unsanctioned protests. Land seizures may be met with troops and landless campesinos may be imprisoned, punished, or killed.23 In few cases will the government accede to the wishes or demands of a mass movement. It prefers the less noticeable path of patron-clientism where governmental support is elicited for providing relief in an ongoing process of political quid pro quo. Rather than relying on coercion, the Mexican system prefers to co-opt leaders of interest organizations and bring them into its corporatist fold. Conciliation of interests is facilitated when interest groups and the government are essentially one and the same.

This view of Mexican politics developed out of frustration with explanations derived from a body of literature that developed in the 1950s and 1960s which imposed a structural-functionalist model on Mexico and determined that to varying degrees the country was essentially moving toward greater democratization.24 It was assumed that interests flowed to the federal government from outside sources, that interests were aggregated through organizations and the official political party, and that with the development of other political parties, like the
**Partido de Acción Nacional** (PAN), greater democratization would occur. Field research in Mexico did not always support this view of the operations of its political system.

The authoritarian model as applied to Mexico seems to make more sense than the democracy model. It is better able to explain complex relationships between the government and the governed. However, it almost becomes too mechanistic an approach and tends to reduce these relationships to a function of co-optation, patronage, and support. So long as the government can dispense particularistic rewards to different segments of society, the **Partido Revolucionario Institucional** (PRI) will govern effectively and with little resort to coercion. In this view, the symbols of the revolution are frequently attached to government policies and programs to engender among the masses the belief and confidence that the government is working to fulfill revolutionary goals. Occasional efforts by the government to extend the distributive and redistributive capacity of the system "buy off" dissent by proving commitment to goal fulfillment. This means either that the masses are completely ignorant of the game imposed on them by Mexico's authoritarian government or that they are politically astute and understand that an exchange of their benign support will result in the dispensing of greater rewards. Accordingly, the revolution, its ideology, and its legacy are essentially meaningless in terms of goal commitment or fulfillment and are used by both the government and the governed to manipulate political processes. Or to put it another way, the purpose of the revolution, its ideology, and legacy today is to legitimize a regime that does not work to fulfill its goals by generating support
from the masses who are aware that the government is not moving to fulfill its goals. Does this make sense? Can a government derive long-term stability and support playing a game such as this? Are the masses only motivated by the receipt of particularistic rewards? What about those Mexicans who through the educational system were socialized to believe that the Mexican Revolution is meaningful and still guides government decision making? What does this theory suggest about the inability of the government to continue dispensing rewards? The current situation in Mexico has severely limited government revenues. Does this mean instability will develop? How would the government approach an unstable situation?

Additionally, this approach fails to consider the complexities of one of its key assumptions, that the executive initiates policy choices and interest groups react to them. In terms of this study, the question is raised as to the kinds of expectations the president fosters in reflecting a revolutionary ideological position with regard to land reform goals. If a president commits his administration to certain land reform policies, is he not initiating interest and raising expectations? How does a president respond to increased expectations, especially those from groups that would benefit most from governmental action and from those that would be deprived by it? Through the distribution of limited rewards? Through the implementation of public policies? Or is it appropriate to inquire whether a president is responsible for acting once expectations have been raised? Does an administration modify its ideological stance or alter its policy choices once expectations have
been raised? How does the government react to other power contenders once expectations are raised?26

These kinds of questions are not adequately considered in contemporary research on Mexico, not so much because the popular research paradigm is incapable of rendering answers inasmuch as few research questions have probed into these areas. This research will address some of these questions but realistically is limited in its ability to answer each one. Rather than assume the unimportance of revolutionary ideology and commitment to fulfill its goals, this research attempts to determine what is at play in this relationship. This does not mean that the authoritarian model must be discarded. Rather, it means that no one research paradigm will be employed to study this relationship, no assumptions about the propriety of the revolutionary ideology and its linkages to public policies will be made. The assumption incorporated in this research is that ideas guide rational thoughts and actions. This is a fundamental aspect of human psychology. It does not mean that political ideology determines thoughts and actions, although to some extent ideas constituting a belief system reflect a political ideology. It is up to the data to reveal whether postrevolutionary presidents articulated an ideology and then whether they acted on it through the implementation of land reform policies.

This study should make meaningful contributions to three bodies of literature in the discipline of political science. First, with the focus on the relationship of ideology to policy choice and implemented programs, this study should provide information as to whether there are meaningful linkages between ideas and actions. Second, because fifty
years of decision making is analyzed, this study will contribute an
historical look at revolutionary politics in the area of land reform.
Much of the literature on revolution attempts to determine its causes.27
This study will look at the decision-making process in light of the
ideology which brought the new regime to power and its commitment to
implement policies consistent with that ideology's goals. It should
tell us something about the dynamics of social transformation over time.
And it should contribute to an understanding of regime legitimacy for
revolutionary governments over time. Last, it is hoped that this study
will shed new light and provide new information on Mexican politics.
From the 1950s to the 1980s, different research approaches and different
scholarly works have shown that there is still no real consensus about
Mexican politics.28 I believe this results from the benefits of
investigation which each time encounters new information and allows
those who are interested to reconceptualize old ideas and formulate new
ones regarding the Mexican system. It is hoped that within this
research new ideas will have been tested and further insight reached by
its conclusions.
CHAPTER 1 END NOTES

1For discussions regarding the relationship of ideology to
evolution, see Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel, (Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 1970), chap. 7; and Theda Skocpol, States and Social

2This assumes that governmental actions are rational and
purposeful. This is not to suggest that ideology causes revolution.
Rather, ideology guides the actions of those involved in revolutionary
movements.

3Richard L. Merritt, Systematic Approaches to Comparative Politics
(Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1970), 64.

4The period 1911-15 shows the initial orientation of the revolu-
tionary government toward land reform. The 1966 address refers to
policy decisions and goals expressed in 1965. The time frame of
analysis is 1915 to 1965, or fifty years of postrevolutionary history.

5Samuel Beer and Adam B. Ulam, eds., Patterns of Government (New

6William T. Bluhm, Ideologies and Attitudes: Modern Political

7Merritt, Systematic Approaches to Comparative Politics, 73.

8Marta Vélez, Associate Professor of Spanish, Willamette
University, Salem, OR.

9For examples see Francis Castles, ed., The Impact of Parties:
Politics and Policies in Democratic Capitalist States (Beverly Hills,
CA: Sage Publications, 1982); Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Hugh Heclo, and
Carolyn Tetch Adams, Comparative Public Policy (New York: St. Martin's
Press, 1975); Howard M. Leichter, A Comparative Approach to Policy
Analysis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); John W. Sloan,
Public Policy in Latin America: A Comparative Survey (Pittsburgh:
University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984); and Harold L. Wilensky, The
Welfare State and Equality (Berkeley: University of California Press,
1975).


11Ibid., 40.

12Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Danielson, Soviet Foreign Policy

13See David E. Apter, ed., Ideology and Discontent (New York: Free
Press, 1964); Robert E. Lane, Political Ideology (New York: Free Press,

14This trend is changing, as witnessed by such publications as Sloan, Public Policy in Latin America: A Comparative Survey.


16Leichter, A Comparative Approach to Policy Analysis, 6.

17Castles, The Impact of Parties, 4-5.

18Colonization programs were developed to encourage the spread of productive agriculture.

19Redistribution was pursued through two policies. Dotation provided outright grants of land and restitution returned land to those from whom it had been illegally despoiled.


21Kaufman-Purcell, The Mexican Profit-Sharing Decision, 4.

22Ibid., 3.

23In 1962, campesino leader Rubén Jaramillo was assassinated.


28Kaufman-Purcell, The Mexican Profit-Sharing Decision, 1.
CHAPTER 2

THE ORIGINS OF LAND REFORM IDEOLOGY AND REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT, 1910-15

The ideology of land reform of the Mexican Revolution can be deduced from the manifestos issued by the leaders of the revolutionary movement. This chapter will consider the ideas of prerevolutionary and revolutionary actors and their relationship to the land question. To this end, the ideas of Ricardo Flores Magón, Francisco I. Madero, Emiliano Zapata, and Venustiano Carranza will be reviewed, compared and contrasted. The content of the documents and verbal addresses of these revolutionaries defined the direction of land reform goals incorporated in the constitution of 1917 and the policy goals of the postrevolutionary administrations from 1910 on.

One of the earliest formal acknowledgements of the land problem in early twentieth-century Mexico was published in a manifesto of the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM) on 1 July 1906. It was devised in the wake of numerous campesino uprisings in the latter years of the nineteenth century, all of which were quelled by the repressive Porfirián system. Known as the Program of the Liberal Party, this document set forth ideas for constitutional reform that advocated significant alterations to Mexican society. Sections 34 through 37 and 50 and 51 explicitly refer to the Liberal party perceptions of Mexico's land problem. To Ricardo Flores Magón and his Liberal party colleagues, the
Mexican land problem was of critical importance and demonstrated the failures of the capitalist system as it operated in Porfirian style "democracy." Their orientation combined liberal thought with an incipient anarchism and socialism for a more radical approach for change in rural Mexico. Increasingly, the land problem contributed to the grievances against the regime of Porfirio Díaz, and by 1906 these had become overtly political.

The PLM program for land reform was centered on the indigenous pattern of communal landholding and sought the return of Indian lands through the expropriation of private property. Under the program's provisions in cases where land was not used productively, the campesinos would have the right to petition the government to receive at least a share to then be put into production. Grants of land by the government to the petitioner were inalienable, to avoid a repetition of land grabbing that occurred in earlier times. Although expropriation was called for by the liberals, it was conditional and would involve compensation to the landowner except in cases where public officials associated with the Díaz regime owned large tracts of land. Their property was subject to outright confiscation. The program called upon the government to create a new credit system to assist small-property owners with low-interest loans. The program included a provision designed to entice Mexican nationals working the farms in the United States to return to Mexico by offering them land and a travel allowance.

Section 50 of the Liberal party program specifically addressed the question of the ejido. It called for the restoration of this traditional form of landholding through a redistribution program. Advocacy
of communal landholding gave the Liberal party a "socialist" label, but it fit the indigenous pattern of Mexican landholding. In supporting this pattern of landholding, the PLM spoke for Indian Mexico. This represented a significant shift from the Diaz administration's espousal of Social Darwinism and Positivism which rejected indigenous Mexican culture with its strong Indian roots in favor of white European values. The nativist component of the Liberal party platform would later prove important in the fight against Diaz and in postrevolutionary agrarian policies.

Although the land segment of the Liberal party program of 1906 called for important structural transformations of the Mexican land tenure system, the reforms it envisioned were to be brought about through liberal democratic processes in accordance with the Constitution of 1857. The PLM at this stage did not advocate a break with the liberal democratic principles of the constitution.

The program was written in St. Louis, Missouri while the Flores Magón group was in exile for its activities in Mexico. Exile and subsequent imprisonment radicalized some members of this group in the years preceding the revolution. Anarchism increasingly influenced the thought of Ricardo Flores Magón and split the PLM between radical and moderate members. Although Ricardo Flores Magón would have only limited personal influence on other revolutionary actors like Madero and Carranza, more moderate Liberal party members, like Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, would help inspire actual revolutionary policy. It is noted that the Liberal party program had a strong influence on the more radical members of the constitutional convention of 1916-17, especially on the
drafting of Article 27, the land reform measure. Thus, many of the revolutionary "precursors" were indeed members of successful revolutionary administrations, and their ideology had an impact on Mexican land reform.

Francisco I. Madero had been involved with the precursor movement prior to his 1910 revolt against Díaz. He helped finance dissident publications and actively worked in political clubs advocating reform of the Díaz regime. By 1907, after Díaz's famous interview with the American journalist James Creelman in which the aging dictator announced that he would not seek reelection in 1910, Madero tried to convince Díaz to liberalize his government. Later, learning that Díaz had fabricated his intentions to the American press and fully intended to run again in 1910, Madero met with the president and called upon him to name the more popular José Ives Limantour to be his vice-president. Madero and others believed that Díaz would not survive another full term in office and power would transfer to Limantour upon his death. Díaz, however, had reasons of his own for keeping the unpopular Ramon Corral as his vice-president, including the belief that Corral was too sickly to survive Díaz.

Disappointed by his lack of influence with Díaz, in 1908 Madero published a book entitled La Sucesión Presidencial en 1910. In it he discussed the numerous violations of the liberal democratic principles of the Constitution of 1857 committed by the Díaz regime, especially the blatant breaches of the no-reelection and effective suffrage clauses. The book produced a relatively mild critique of the Díaz regime, in part
because of Madero's regard for the economic progress Mexico had made during its thirty-five years in office.

The Maderos were prosperous landowners from Coahuila. Excepting Francisco and Gustavo, they were generally supportive of Díaz. But like other wealthy Mexicans they faced a certain amount of hardship with the prolonged economic crisis of 1907 to 1910. This crisis produced an interesting, loose coalition between landowners and landless campesinos with their grievances against Díaz. Madero's book did not consider in any appreciable measure the social and economic grievances becoming increasingly manifest across many sectors of Mexican society by 1908. \textit{La Sucesión Presidencial en 1910} clearly laid forth Madero's political belief system, his high regard for liberal democratic principles and how these had failed to operate effectively in Mexico.

With little success influencing Díaz, Madero organized his own campaign for the presidential election of 1910. As a challenger to the dictator, Madero at once represented the hopes and aspirations of those in Mexico who wanted economic and social change. He was imprisoned by Díaz when his appeal became too strong. His appeal rested on his articulation of an alternative system of government. He was not the charismatic leader of a well-organized movement. As one writer noted: "What was new was the stirring of the masses, who insisted on making Madero a symbol of something he did not represent." Predictably, Díaz and Corral won the election of 1910, but a freed Madero had begun plotting the overthrow of their government. The guiding principles of his movement, and the cornerstone of the Revolution's ideology, were drafted while he was in prison.
Madero's biographers have documented his life and actions. It need only be said here that Madero's background was not one typically associated with the rise of a revolutionary. He was not an ideologue nor even much of a political activist. According to one historian, "Madero was not a revolutionist; indeed a more unlikely leader of a revolution can hardly be imagined. He came from a large and rapacious family of landowners of Coahuila. He was a kindly man with no particular training for anything." However, following his release from prison and with a heightened political awareness of the Díaz dictatorship, Madero fled to San Antonio, Texas and issued his famous Plan de San Luis Potosí. This document, more so than his earlier book, set forth Madero's ideology regarding the purpose of government in Mexico. The central emphasis of the plan was on political reform that would meaningfully bring into practice the liberal democratic principles of the Constitution of 1857, specifically its provisions for effective suffrage and no-reelection. The plan did not sanction the creation of an active state that would correct social and economic injustices through governmental intervention. In its only reference to the land problem, Article 3, paragraph 3 pledged the return of lands illegally or wrongfully taken to those campesinos (primarily Indians) who suffered these acts of despoliation and could show actual legal title. Under Madero's plan for land reform the burden of proof was placed on those who had been subjugated and repressed for decades by the government.

Madero's Plan de San Luis Potosí rested on the belief that social and economic reforms could be effectuated only when the political system had been liberalized and made operative. For many Mexicans who
saw in Madero the tradition of Juárez and the liberal Reform period, his program made sense. For others whose ire had been stirred by the effort to overthrow a brutal, corrupt, and unjust dictator, Madero's plan smacked of conservatism. Madero's approach to land reform, in particular, seemed anything but revolutionary.

The Maderista faction constituted the victorious revolutionary group in deposing Porfirio Díaz on 25 May 1911. Following the brief interim presidency of Francisco León de la Barra, Madero and his vice-president, José María Pino Suárez, campaigning under the banner of the newly created Partido Constitucional Progresista, took office on 6 November 1911. The De la Barra administration was criticized for its conservatism, a tone which surely had an implicit political and social impact on policy following Díaz's exile. Madero defended De la Barra and maintained a generally conservative course during his fifteen months in power. Whatever Madero's ideological motivations were for aspiring to the presidency of Mexico, he was not attuned to the prevailing climate of opinion within his country favoring basic changes in not only the political system but also the social and economic systems. Whether it was intended or not, in publicly recognizing the existence of a land problem in his plan, Madero contributed to the unleashing of the most significant component of the revolutionary struggle, the peasantry:

Madero's revolution was a revolution against Díaz. But the hope which stirred the masses, and which was soon to be expressed in the revolutionary slogan of Tierra y Libertad, was the hope of overthrowing the creole landowners and the científicos, of ridding Mexico both of the descendants of the Spanish conquistadores and of the new, capitalist conquistadores from Europe and the United States.
Madero was incapable of leading the new forces released with the fall of Díaz. In part, an explanation rests on the fact that the Díaz regime effectively collapsed without much pressure from opposing forces. The internal decay that had set into Díaz's military and his administration became obvious as Madero's forces, in conjunction with Pascual Orozco's, captured the city of Juárez and forced the negotiations that led to the Díaz-Corral resignations. With little time to build a structure that would disseminate Madero's program, recruit members, and organize support, ideological conflict and ambiguity would constrain not just Madero's administration but those of the successors to his "revolution." Mexico's revolutionary land reform policies would be shaped more by actors outside of government than by those on the inside in the early years following the Porfiriato. It would be left to Emiliano Zapata, a small landowner from Morelos whose property had been taken from him, to forge an agrarian coalition and establish land reform as the sine qua non of the revolution.

Zapata and his followers from Morelos and neighboring states were supporters of the Maderista revolt against Díaz. They believed that the new revolutionary government would recognize the land problem as the principal crisis facing Mexico. Acknowledging that Madero made overtures to agrarian reform in the Plan de San Luis Potosí, the Zapatistas were nonetheless concerned with its limited program. When Madero made it apparent he would only pursue a gradual course of reform during his term of office, Zapata revoked his support for the new regime and issued his Plan de Ayala. This document, more so than any other of its time in Mexico, voiced the deeply felt grievances of the Mexican
campesinos and offered a more purposive (from the standpoint of
government initiative) resolution to the land problem. The Plan de
Ayala called for the expropriation of large landholdings with prior
indemnization and the return of lands to ejidos. Zapata the Indian, the
exploited former landowner, became the leader of the agrarian movement
and served to crystallize the hopes and aspirations of the landless
masses which had been raised through the successful removal of Porfirio
Díaz. With credentials juxtaposed, Zapata more clearly represented the
sentiments of the landless masses. Madero, on the other hand, became
the head of a bourgeois movement to depose the oligarchic remnants of
Porfirian society for the promotion of its own interests.

A leading student of the revolution noted that a transformation
in its very nature occurred early in its history, a change which made
the Mexican Revolution a true social revolution: "The Revolution begun
by Madero had unconsciously moved from the question of political
succession to a nativist nationalism that altered the character of the
upheaval." Nationalism in this sense was firmly grounded in the
agrarian question, for it represented a return to a traditional form of
communal landholding, a reassertion of Indian pride, and a significant
backlash against foreign economic penetration in Mexico. Morelos was
the stronghold of the Zapatista movement and symbolized a subnational-
ism, the patria chica, that in many instances was more significant than
the emerging sense of Mexican identity. This bond strongly linked
Zapata with his followers. As the Zapatista ideology spread, other
states, mostly neighboring Morelos, joined the struggle to influence and
radicalize the new revolutionary government. Increasingly, the Mexican
Revolution was being split by regional differences (north-south), the most basic of which bore directly on the agrarian question. Madero and many of his followers were from northern Mexican states where there were vast, lightly populated areas. The concentration of property in a small number of hands existed but seemed to cause less friction between the landowners and the landless. Zapata and his followers were primarily from the smaller southern states where the concentration of land in the hands of a few plantation owners was more acutely felt by the landless. This internal tension in the "revolutionary family" would have an effect on governments for years to come.  

Zapata's Plan de Ayala was, according to Article 4, a series of additions to the Plan de San Luis Potosí rather than its replacement. The Zapatistas clearly felt that Madero had acted courageously in taking on Don Porfirio but had failed to fulfill the promises of his plan. The Zapatistas made themselves the defenders of the principles of Madero's revolutionary plan. Indeed, their provision regarding land reform differed little from Madero's. Article 7 of the Plan de Ayala states:

In virtue of the fact that the immense majority of Mexican Pueblos and citizens are owners of no more than the land they walk on, suffering the horrors of poverty without being able to improve their social condition in any way or to dedicate themselves to Industry or Agriculture, because lands, timber and water are monopolized in a few hands, for this cause there will be expropriated the third part of those monopolies from the powerful proprietors of them, with prior indemnization, in order that the Pueblos and citizens of Mexico may obtain ejidos, colonies, and foundations for pueblos, or fields for sowing or laboring, and the Mexican's lack of prosperity and well-being may improve in all and for all.

The program contained in this Zapatista plan varied little from the Madero plan. What is significantly different and seemed to play an important role in setting the tone of agrarian reform once the
Zapatistas entered the struggle was the strong, more purposeful call for reform in the Plan de Ayala. It came to signify a more determined course of action to be followed to alleviate the perceived injustices of the Mexican land tenure system. The ideological orientation contained within the Plan de Ayala was firmly established in the Reform laws of the Juárez administration of the late nineteenth century. Zapata was keenly aware of the Juárez tradition, the Indian heritage he stood for, and the democratic principles he tried to foster in Mexico. Article 9 of his Plan de Ayala specifically mentions the Juárez legacy Zapata felt he now embodied. The provision for partial expropriation of private property with prior indemnization followed the Reform effort to peacefully break up ecclesiastical landholdings. Under Zapata the liberal tradition was coupled with a goal of social justice through the redistribution of land to the landless, and anticlerical sentiments were no longer salient.

Because of these important linkages between Zapata and his predecessor Juárez, the argument can be made that the Plan de Ayala did not call for a truly radical new program of change but rather a return to principles and actions previously devised when the land question had been salient. Additionally, in terms of land redistribution, Zapata's plan did not deviate significantly from the purported intentions of Madero's plan. Both shared an ideological foundation in moderate, legalistic change. Did the Plan de Ayala and, indeed, the Zapatista movement represent a more radical and hence more significant force of social revolutionary change? The facts enable us to argue that the Zapatistas and Maderistas shared similar ideological values deeply
grounded in the liberal period of Reform and in the Constitution of 1857, but were committed to different goals. Madero's primary goal was the establishment of a regime based on the concepts of effective suffrage and no-reelection. His orientation was politically and economically centered. His land reform goals were vague and secondary to these other goals. But Madero did not reject the idea of social transformation; to him, that would follow from political reforms. Zapata, too, shared the goal of ending tyrannical government through the kinds of political reforms the Maderista movement endorsed. But Zapata's primary goal was social reform and social justice, particularly in the rural sector, from which a freer and more just society would naturally develop. Zapata did not reject political change. Both revolutionary leaders operated in a similar ideological context, but their experiences led them to attach a higher level of ideological intensity to different aspects of a similar agenda. Seen in this way, the less-than-radical Plan de Ayala can be appreciated for its emotive rhetoric, its attack on Madero who was felt to have betrayed the Zapatista cause by pursuing reforms they felt to be of secondary importance. Madero's fear of the Zapatistas and his efforts to destroy their "rebellion" can be understood as a perception of ideological conflict owing to the more "radical" goal priority of the Zapatistas. In fact, Madero sought the elimination of a group he thought was a contender for power in an environment where a relative power vacuum existed. This view of the Madero-Zapata and even the later Carranza-Zapata struggle suggests that much of the revolution's actual ideology had been established some fifty years earlier in Mexican history.
The most fully developed programmatic aspects of postrevolutionary agrarian reform were established during the administration of Venustiano Carranza. This was so, in large part, because Carranza was able to successfully control executive power for five years, the longest term of office of any postrevolutionary president to that time. Through his Veracruz decree of 6 January 1915, and later in Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917, a more detailed and operational system of land redistribution developed in Mexico. It was a system that would have a profound effect on subsequent administrations.

Venustiano Carranza's view of agrarian reform in Mexico was shaped by the same liberal tradition that influenced both Madero and Zapata. Like Madero, however, Carranza was a wealthy landowner who viewed political reform as the imperative challenge facing Mexico. Coming to power initially as the First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army to vindicate the overthrow and assassinations of Madero and Pino Suárez, Carranza was forced to define his program of action as he worked to free Mexico from the counter-revolutionary dictatorship of Victoriano Huerta. In this endeavor, Carranza found challenges from Zapata in the south, who now was determined to make the agrarian issue the central concern of postrevolutionary governments, and his sometimes ally-sometimes enemy, Francisco "Pancho" Villa, in the north. At times, Villa shared with Zapata a primary concern for bringing about accelerated social reforms. He had, in his home state of Chihuahua, implemented some social reforms. But Villa's role in the revolution as an ideological force was not significant. He was loyal to Madero and entered the civil war against Huerta to vindicate the murdered
president. He did not issue a plan for social change that had any appreciable influence on the course of agrarian reform, although his powerful military presence assured that he was always in the forefront of attention of other revolutionary actors. The protracted personal animosity between Carranza and Villa is well documented and reveals the intensity of struggle that divided these foes in their quest for power and influence in Mexico.¹⁵

As First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army, Carranza's primary goal was to reestablish a government committed to the principles of the Constitution of 1857. Militarily, the combined forces of Carranza, Villa, and Zapata successfully toppled the Huerta dictatorship in August 1914. There then ensued the power struggle between Villa and Carranza, plunging Mexico into further civil strife. Carranza occupied Mexico City and assumed the title First Chief in Charge of Executive Power. Other revolutionary leaders held a convention in Aguascalientes and called upon Carranza to resign this position (Villa and his army were influences upon Convention decisions). They then named Eulalio Gutiérrez interim president of the republic. With Villista forces approaching Mexico City, Carranza and his government fled to Veracruz. Carranza maintained that he was the legitimate executive in charge of Mexican government, but Convention members disagreed and appointed Roque González Garza president following the departure of Gutierrez, and later named Francisco Lagos Cházaro to replace González Garza. The tension between Convention-named presidents and Carranza was resolved in 1915 when the latter received United States' recognition of his government. The Convention government dissolved in 1915.
This brief history illuminates the kind of political turbulence Mexico faced from February 1912 to June 1915. Although the convention presidents did not modify the revolutionary ideology or program, consumed as they were in the Villa-Carranza struggle, they did represent a source of contention for legitimate power that Carranza could not deny. He himself had not come to power through any democratic channels. To garner popular support and, in part, to enlist military assistance, Carranza issued agrarian and labor reform decrees in January 1915 from Veracruz. Carranza was ultimately successful in achieving political control over the warring factions (Villa's army was crushed by General Alvaro Obregón at Celaya in April 1915), and the reformist orientation he demonstrated through the Veracruz decrees won him greater popularity. His position regarding agrarian reform can be shown to fit with the ideological tradition previously established by the Plan de San Luis Potosí and Plan de Ayala.

Throughout this three-year period, situational factors directly influenced the development of the revolutionary ideology and policies designed to meet its goals. Carranza took advantage of ambivalent Convention presidents who were unable to render decisions and make policies that would have fulfilled some of the goals of the revolution. Inhibited by Carranza and constrained by the lack of a clear ideological program, other revolutionary actors at this time did little to enhance the purposes of the revolution. Carranza filled the vacuum and publicly offered measures that Mexicans had longed for since the Madero movement started.
Carranza's agrarian decree of 6 January 1915 was an elucidation of ideas embodied in his Plan de Guadalupe issued in March 1913 as he organized against Huerta. The plan was a political document and made no mention of social or economic reforms. As his control over government and the country weakened, Carranza responded with decrees designed to address social and economic grievances. His agrarian reform decree contained two important provisions, one declaring null and void the illegal or improper alienation of village lands and returning such to the original owners (restitución), and the other allowing certain villages which had no means of proving title to petition the government for grants of land (dotación). This decree was grounded in the legalistic framework provided in the Constitution of 1857 which permitted moderate changes to the land tenure system but which also judicially protected landowners. Legal burden fell on village campesinos to show prior ownership of disputed land or the lack of sufficient lands to meet their needs. Landowners had the right to petition for a writ of amparo, a form of injunction against expropriation of property. Many villages kept no records of title. Additionally, according to this law, only those villages with "political status" (rancherías, congregaciones, or comunidades) could petition for land under this decree either in the form of restitution or dotation. This provision effectively excluded all landless campesinos living within the boundaries of haciendas, the majority of campesinos needing land. The end result kept the hacienda system intact and provided relief to only a small number of rural, landless Mexicans.
The Zapatista response to Carranza's limited but symbolically important measure was more radical than their response to Madero through the Plan de Ayala. Throughout the early postrevolutionary period the Zapatistas advocated and expected to receive an accelerated land reform measure. What they encountered again with Carranza was a decision maker more oriented to political reforms and a gradualist approach to social reforms. By October 1915, the Zapatistas felt this was no longer tenable and countered Carranza with their own agrarian law. This law provided for expropriation by reason of public utility with indemnization, maximum portions of property not subject to seizure (ranging from 271 to 3,700 acres, depending on the quality of the land), the inalienability of lands granted to villages or individuals, confiscation of lands and properties belonging to enemies of the revolution, and state ownership of water.\(^\text{18}\) A provision addressing the implementation of the law noted,

> In order that the execution of this law be as rapid and complete as possible, there is conceded to the Department of Agriculture and Colonization the exclusive power to inculcate the agrarian principles confirmed in the same, and to hear and resolve in all affairs of the [agrarian] branch, without this disposition involving an attack on the sovereignty of the States, since the point is only the speedy realization of the ideals of the Revolution in regard to the improvement of the disinherited farmers of the Republic.\(^\text{19}\)

The tone and direction of this more complete agrarian reform measure would later serve to influence the delegates of the constitutional convention who ultimately embraced these ideals in Article 27.

At this juncture in Mexico's postrevolutionary history, the Zapatista radicalization of agrarian reform goals provided a new, more fully developed ideology of social transformation than any other plan previously considered by revolutionary leaders. It is possible to
conjecture that had Carranza implemented a concerted land reform policy, even as envisioned in the Veracruz decree, the more radical Zapatista attitude would not have developed. In this respect, the radicalization of the land reform ideology occurred because of the reluctance of the postrevolutionary governments to satisfactorily address the land question. The internal situation in Mexico in the postrevolutionary period helped to shape modifications to the revolutionary goal of land reform. Carranza, like his predecessor Madero, misunderstood or miscalculated the driving force of Mexico's social revolution.

By 1916, with firm hold of the political organs of government, Carranza called a convention to reform the Constitution of 1857 to make it more current with the changes Mexico had undergone. From 21 November 1916 to 27 January 1917, delegates met in Querétaro and broke from Carranza's reform mandate to create a wholly new constitution. The initial insubordination of the assembly surprised the president who felt he would be able to mold its activities. The 1857 constitution provided a guide for the delegates, and much of it was retained in the new document. But in many ways the delegates set the task of formalizing provisions that would speak directly to the question of social transformation in Mexico.

Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917 contains Mexico's land reform provisions. It is a synthesis of previously issued land reform measures. More radical and comprehensive than either Madero's or Carranza's plans, Article 27 encompasses the kind of land reform envisioned by the Zapatistas. In one important regard Article 27 broke with the traditional conception of property ownership embodied in the
liberal 1857 constitution. Under its provisions, original ownership of all lands and waterways vests with the nation and ownership may be transferred from the state to individuals as a form of private ownership. The nation is also the direct owner of mineral and subsoil deposits. Concessions may be granted by the state to private parties for the exploitation of these resources. The nation's right of ownership is inalienable.

The concept of public utility guides the nation's right of expropriation and places the interests of the larger society over the interests of the individual. Expropriation of property can only occur for reasons of public utility and with indemnization to the property holder. In important ways this provision is similar to the power of eminent domain in other nations with the exception that in the case of Mexico, the state is the original owner of all lands, waterways, and minerals.

Article 27 recognizes four means for the resolution of the agrarian problem, and two different ideological orientations influenced these approaches. One was collectivist and redistributive, the other protected private property. Communal ownership of land was made legal and the restoration of village lands was sanctioned in cases where such land previously had been illegally or improperly despoiled. It called for outright grants of land to villages that could not prove prior ownership or that lacked sufficient lands. It provided for the recovery of national lands and water from concessions granted under previous administrations which had resulted in monopoly control over these resources. Many of these provisions had been a part of some earlier
reform measures. The fourth component of Article 27 called for the enactment of federal and state laws designed to break up the latifundia and more fully endorsed the radical Zapatista call for land redistribution. Up to this time the hacienda system had remained intact. This provision set a maximum amount of land an individual or company could hold. Any excess beyond the maximum was to be subdivided by the owner and offered for sale. If the owner failed to comply with this provision, the government could expropriate and indemnify with bonds from the Local Agrarian Debt.  

Carranza did not endorse this more radical shift in constitutional law. The delegates produced a document which established the conditions for a far more active and purposive state. Although many have labeled this ideological shift as "socialist" for its emphasis on an active-interventionist state committed to social transformation, one historian noted:

Article 27 does not prescribe any one type of land holding as the accepted pattern for society. It legalized the landholding village, not for the purpose of displacing individual private property, but as the means of recognizing the only type familiar to a fairly large segment of the rural population. It still allowed a place for private landholdings under such limitations as public interest might require.  

Perhaps a more accurate view is that the delegates themselves resented the intrusions of Carranza and the conservatism of his actions in social and economic affairs. The delegates to the convention came from a diverse cross-section of Mexican society, and not all were wealthy landowners. After seven years of bloodshed many were ready for change. European socialist thought and examples set by governments creating the modern welfare state had an impact on the thoughts and actions of
Mexico's constitutional delegates. But the document they gave rise to shared more with traditional Spanish thought than with the more radical socialist philosophies of the nineteenth century.

With a new constitution and a "revolutionary" administration in power, Mexico should have been at the brink of major social transformation by 1917. Still, the internal divisions between the revolutionary factions and within their ideology would influence the scope and direction of Mexico's land reform policies in the years to come. It is to the ideological and policy orientations of Mexico's earliest postrevolutionary presidents that this study now turns.

The first administrations to hold power after the fall of Porfirio Díaz faced a tenuous situation of civil conflict. The ideological underpinnings of the Mexican Revolution were not altogether clear. In comparing ideological orientation toward land reform it must be noted that the brevity of term influenced any individual president's efforts to effectuate positive reforms. Thus, the measure of policy implementation and effectiveness at this stage of postrevolutionary history is less important than the tone established by these early presidents relative to the goal of land reform. How did they perceive their commitment to this revolutionary goal? What policy directions did they articulate?

Each presidential administration will be analyzed sequentially beginning with the term of Francisco León de la Barra, interim president following the exile of Porfirio Díaz; proceeding to the term of Francisco I. Madero, first elected president in the postrevolutionary era; and concluding with the terms of Eulalio Gutiérrez and Roque
González Garza, two of the three presidents selected by the Convention of Aguascalientes.\textsuperscript{24}

President Porfirio Díaz abdicated power in May 1911 under the terms and conditions of the Treaty of Ciudad Juárez. By this treaty, Francisco León de la Barra was named interim president until such time as elections could be held. De la Barra held executive office from 25 May 1911 to 6 November 1911. De la Barra defined his main duty as preparing the nation for upcoming presidential elections.\textsuperscript{25} He identified closely with the principles of no-reelection and publicly committed himself to a peaceful transference of power to the newly elected president.

In addresses before Congress on 16 September 1911 and 4 November 1911, De la Barra continually stressed the importance of political order and stability as prerequisites to reforms. The types of reforms he alluded to were political. His ideological orientation was solidly grounded in liberal democratic principles. During his interim term, De la Barra endeavored to bring about order in the war-torn country by encouraging the restoration of public services, especially in the capital, and by extending health care in areas of epidemic. He viewed his primary activity as emergency relief of a type that would promote unity and order following the battles of the revolution.

Regarding the agrarian question specifically, De la Barra perceived his obligation as laying the groundwork for future reform efforts and not as resolving the problems rural Mexico faced.\textsuperscript{26} He recognized the centrality of the agrarian question and noted: "The promises made in the name of the revolution respecting the agrarian
question, have awakened hopes amongst people . . ."27 But he
disapproved of what he termed the "banditry" in Morelos as misleading
the hopes of rural Mexicans and causing them to believe that their
demands for land would be filled immediately:

The leader of the seditious movement [Zapata] has made himself
popular amongst the uneducated classes of the State [Morelos] by
offering the distribution of lands, without taking into account the
rights of ownership, and flattering the passions of individuals of
the most humble class with this and other similar means, that they
do not account for the economic situation of this State and others,
nothing will be changed by means of violent acts or acts which are
contrary to the laws.28

De la Barra perceived land reform as evolving gradually through
a well-organized program. He worked to create a special commission that
would identify the most adequate methods and approaches for resolving
the irrigation, division, and colonization of lands. He voiced concern
for agricultural expansion and productivity as means by which the
general wealth of the country could be enhanced.29 His cautious
approach to most important agrarian problems recognized the need for
solutions to help promote domestic calm.30 De la Barra noted in his
address of 16 September 1911 that titles had been issued for 257,198
hectares of land which produced some 273,898 pesos for the federal
treasury. This reference is vague but must be presumed to involve the
sale of national lands. Because his concern was not directly focused on
the land question, De la Barra referred only to this sale of lands.

The results of a content analysis of De la Barra's two messages
before Congress in 1911 are depicted in figure 2. Clearly, he verbally
identified with the revolution, its goals, and ideals as shown on the
Symbols dimension. As the first president after Porfirio Díaz, even if
as an interim appointee, it was imperative for De la Barra to
acknowledge publicly his support for the movement which had displaced the dictator. He had been foreign secretary under Díaz with a long diplomatic career associated with the dictatorship, and he had been severely criticized for being selected successor to Díaz. Madero himself had been criticized for accepting the terms and conditions of the Treaty of Ciudad Juárez because it named De la Barra as interim president. De la Barra was widely recognized as a conservative not at all disposed to effectuating rapid change, particularly of a socio-economic nature.

FIGURE 2. DE LA BARRA: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms;
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

Even though he acknowledged the existence of an agrarian problem (Agrarianism dimension), De la Barra proposed no material solutions or
plans through which change could occur (see figure 2). His addresses were sprinkled with rhetorical-symbolic references to patria (Patriotism dimension). Little was anticipated in the way of agrarian reform from De la Barra, and little was done in this area during his brief term. But the high expectations aroused during the revolution were not pacified by the symbolic and emotive identification between De la Barra and the revolution.

On 6 November 1911, Francisco I. Madero became the first elected president of Mexico in the postrevolutionary period. As was discussed earlier, Madero's political ideology was liberal democratic and reformist. He believed that through meaningful political reform the social and economic conditions in Mexico would improve. De la Barra established a political-ideological tone toward liberal reform following the reestablishment of political order. This fit well with Madero's own political style.

To analyze Madero's ideological position relative to the agrarian question, two state-of-the-nation messages before Congress provide an exposition of his orientation. In his address of 10 April 1912, Madero disclosed a strong concern for the pacification of the country in the aftermath of the revolution. Like De la Barra, Madero became aware of the social forces which were aroused during the revolutionary struggle. He had not been blind to this awakening of the masses, but he did underestimate the extent of social demands emanating from this large and potentially powerful group. Along these lines, Madero expressed as his primary concern the movement in Morelos:

The question of Morelos, which is nearly resolved from a military point of view, contains a problem of a social character, and there
is impatience in some of the State's inhabitants who want it resolved without preparation, without study, and without justifi-
cation.\textsuperscript{32}

This statement is reflective of the approach to the agrarian problem assumed by the Madero administration during its brief tenure in office. Madero was a studied man, cautious and conservative regarding issues of a social or socio-economic nature. His administration was confronted by rebellious actions in the south, chiefly under the Zapatistas, and in the north under the Revistas and other factions.\textsuperscript{33}

He perceived social agitations as a threat to the nation and unwarranted in light of the circumstances which brought him to power (popular election). He clearly saw himself as a reformer, not as a radical.

In this April address, Madero declared his commitment to agrarian reform and referred to such policies as the breakup of large properties and redistribution of lands, especially those of the Indians who had faced improper despoliation under previous regimes. Structur-
ally, he referred to the work of the Comisión Nacional Agraria, the Dirección Agraria, and the Secretaría de Fomento as providing the structures through which reform would be undertaken. Madero linked his agrarian reform policy to his Plan de San Luis Potosí, which contained a clause promising the return of despoiled lands to Indians (see appendix B). He publicly countered the arguments of Zapatistas that he had not undertaken to resolve the agrarian problem by stating that this accusa-
tion wrongly named promises that were never made in the Plan de San Luis Potosí. He demonstrated the extent, to that point, of government effort in the agrarian question as directed by the Plan de San Luis Potosí. The governmental actions he referred to included:
1. A decree of 18 December 1911, which called for the division and irrigation of lands and preparations for establishing agricultural credit.

2. A circular of 8 January 1912, giving instructions for the demarcation, setting of landmarks, division and distributions of ejidos to pueblos.

3. A circular of 7 February 1912, making recommendations to the governors of the states regarding demarcation and distribution of ejidos to pueblos.

4. A decree of April 1912, calling for the rectification and demarcation of national lands and the alienation or renting of these lands in different states and in the territories.

In announcing these policy actions, Madero worked to prove his commitment to agrarian reform. These efforts were also used as justification for denouncing the rebellious activities of the Zapatistas as being extremist.

These same themes were expressed in Madero's presidential address to Congress on 16 September 1912. Public disorder in Morelos continued to present his administration with problems, most seriously the threat that the Zapatistas posed to foreign-owned property in Mexico. Madero was conscious of American displeasure regarding the chaos after the overthrow of Díaz and did not want to provoke any foreign intervention now that his regime had been installed successfully. As much as based in his own ideological orientation, the fear of American military intervention in Mexico tempered Madero's land reform policies.

Structurally, Madero had the Comisión Agraria Ejecutiva study the land problem in Morelos. Under this plan the hacendados would be questioned about the land problem and an engineer brought in for objective analysis of the situation. Madero's program progressively
involved more emphasis on the division and sale of national and idle (baldíos) lands to be sold as small private lots for agriculture. Although Madero spoke of ejidos and the restitution of their lands, he envisioned Mexico as a nation of small farmers owning their own lands. The policies he referred to were distributive rather than redistributive, for in practice they did not involve the division of private property, particularly haciendas.

In these two presidential addresses before Congress, Madero clearly linked his administration to the revolution and its principles, as shown on the Symbols dimension of figure 3. He made a significant number of references to reforms for the agrarian problem (Reforms dimension). Madero did recognize the existence of an agrarian problem even though his administration was not as concerned with implementing social change as it was with bringing about political reform and stability (Agrarianism dimension). In discussing the land issue, Madero used a high number of references to patria to link nationalism to his efforts to pacify the country (Patriotism dimension). Madero's approach to the agrarian question was clear and emphasized the need to make Mexican agriculture more productive to promote the well-being of the majority of Mexico's population and bring about economic recovery. Much like De la Barra before him, Madero defined the central issue in the land question as providing small plots of land to farmers who would actively pursue cultivation, thereby causing growth and productivity in this sector. He was apparently less able to understand the passions and aspirations stirred by the revolution regarding efforts to restore traditional forms of landholding and redistribute national wealth.
The congruence between Madero's manifest ideology of land reform and his expressed policy preferences and programs is significant. Although Madero had early in his quest for national power issued decrees regarding a program of restitution of ejido lands to pueblos, he showed little interest in implementing this policy. Therefore, regarding changes in the prerevolutionary land tenure system in Mexico, the Madero administration, for ideological and situational reasons, was unable to effectively alter this system. From his own addresses it can be shown that Madero's primary concern was for creating a class of small landowners farming their own plots of land. The hacienda system was not directly threatened by his policies because the main source of small
plots of land would be provided by the sale or lease of national or idle lands. He did allude to reducing the size of large landholdings in general, and he specifically reformed the contracts of two large landholding companies. However, Madero's emphasis on breaking up large landholdings did not threaten any such holdings so long as it could be shown they were in cultivation or being prepared for such.

Madero's ideology and policy efforts did reflect a significant degree of congruence. But more importantly at this juncture in post-revolutionary history, Madero's ideology and policy efforts were perceived as not being sufficient, of not satisfying the kind of demand for land issued from Mexico's campesino class. Therefore, the Madero ideology and actions stemming from it were in general conflict with the ideas and plans of others in Mexico. This lack of congruence manifested itself in the split between the Maderistas and the Zapatistas and would cause further problems for future postrevolutionary administrations.

Madero was also constrained by the very real threat of American military intervention in Mexico if land reform proceeded too rapidly. Since he did not endorse radical land reform measures, Madero did not precipitate such intervention. But he did fear the possibility of such intervention being provoked by the more rebellious forces operating in other parts of Mexico. Hence, the primary goal of Madero's administration was the pacification and disarming of the country to reduce the possibility of this threat materializing.

It is a moot question in this case of early postrevolutionary administration whether meaningful land reform could have occurred with the economy so devastated by war. All major revolutionary groups
endorsed some form of indemnization for lands taken from private owners for redistribution. Such a policy, especially in specifying prior indemnization even if for only a fraction of the value of the land, was dependent on the availability of government funds or the issuance of bonds. Surely a more radical program involving confiscation could have retained the notion of indemnization and merely issued worthless bonds, if the main goal was to satisfy the demand for land by the landless. But even the Zapatistas subscribed to a more legalistic program. The reliance on the national government to indemnify private landholders whose lands would be redistributed necessarily slowed the general process of land reform in postrevolutionary Mexico and gave it a liberal ideological slant.

In a similar fashion, a key component of the Madero administration policy regarding land reform also served to slow the process considerably and often in ways contrary to the interests of the landless. Madero's policy regarding the restitution of lands to ejidos allowed the landowner to petition for a writ of amparo prohibiting the division of his lands until an appeal could be heard. The landowner then had the opportunity to prove that he was indeed the legal owner of the disputed land. By incorporating a gradual approach to land reform, the Madero government would set the tone for land reform policies for the next five years.

In most instances histories of early postrevolutionary Mexico discuss only in passing the presidents selected by the Convention of Aguascalientes (1914-15). The assassinations of Madero and Pino Suárez set in motion various crusades to vindicate the slain leaders. Both
Francisco "Pancho" Villa and Venustiano Carranza defended their struggles against Huerta in such terms. Initially allies, the fissure in their relationship was most clearly depicted in the calling of the Aguascalientes convention. Carranza had assumed the title First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army and refused to sanction any of the Convention's proceedings. Villa saw the Convention as an opportunity to challenge Carranza.

The Convention presidents, Eulalio Gutiérrez and Roque González Garza, held power for less than one year combined. Neither possessed clear, legitimate authority while in office. In many respects, their terms were ineffectual insofar as establishing policy in Mexico, including land reform measures, is concerned. But to do justice to Mexican history, it would be prudent to include a brief review of their ideological positions as representatives of executive power in the post-revolutionary period.

General Eulalio Gutiérrez was named provisional president of the republic by the Convention of Aguascalientes on 3 November 1914. Faced with urgent domestic crises of leadership and authority, Gutiérrez could only pledge himself to vague goals of social, economic, and political reform. He clearly identified with the revolution by making eleven references to Symbols, but the addresses used in this content analysis revealed little insight into his program, if indeed he had one (see appendix B). Gutiérrez was an "emergency" president who was unable to undertake any meaningful actions to resolve the social and economic problems facing Mexico. Caught in the Villa-Carranza struggle, Gutiérrez without announcement abdicated power in mid-January 1915.
Roque Gonzalez Garza was named provisional president of the republic on 16 January 1915 by the Convention. Like his immediate predecessor, he could only pledge himself to the task of reestablishing peace and order in the turbulent period following Huerta's overthrow. Gonzalez Garza made only three references to revolutionary Symbols and none to Reforms or Structures (see appendix B). Eventually he left power and was replaced for a brief time by Francisco Lagos Chazaro. Convention power was severely cramped when Villa's forces were defeated in the Battle of Celaya in April 1915. By June 1915, Carranza had assumed national political power and authority in Mexico.

The early postrevolutionary period in Mexico can be characterized as highly turbulent. From 1911 to mid-1915, six men had assumed executive power. Madero's revolution not only freed Mexico of its aged dictator but also unleashed the passions so long suppressed by him. Madero was naive to assume that civil order would eventuate without struggle in Mexico. For too long the independent ambitions of Mexicans had been kept still. Diaz had insured stability through repression and manipulation. The revolution revealed the intensity of independence within many Mexicans. Without control over the nation, no government could tap Mexico's human energy for positive change.

The early postrevolutionary period did establish the tone of land reform policy that would influence future administrations. Situational and environmental factors as well as ideological predispositions had very obvious effects on the policy choices of these early administrations. The policy orientations of these presidents were defined by gradual reformism and legalism. The verbal ideological
orientation toward the land question of these early administrations was liberal and favored small-plot farming and increased agricultural production. The policies endorsed and minimally acted upon at this time called for the distribution of national and idle lands, not the redistribution of hacienda lands. The ideological base of this proposal was economic and was less concerned with the issue of social justice. Mexico's "social revolution" was slow in starting and took shape more clearly outside of government, in the countryside where demands had emanated and challenges were posed.
END NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1See especially James D. Cockcroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 1900-1913 (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1968). The discussion following draws on this source.


3Cockcroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 130.


5Cockcroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 45.


11Tannenbaum, Mexico: The Struggle for Peace and Bread, 54.


17 Ibid., 115.

18 Womack, Zapata and the Mexican Revolution, 406-11.

19 Ibid., his translation.

20 For a detailed discussion of the convention proceedings, see E. V. Niemeyer, Jr., Revolution at Querétaro (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974).


22 Ibid., 122.

23 Johnson, Heroic Mexico, 322.

24 Information regarding the details of the Francisco Lagos Cházarо administration was not available.


26 Ibid., 891.  27 Ibid., 890.  28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., 880.  30 Ibid.

31 Los Presidentes de México, 3:2.

32 Ibid., 2.  33 Ibid.  34 Ibid., 7.


36 In the state of Coahuila (Madero's home state), the Compañía Agrícola del Río de San Diego (Agricultural Company of the San Diego River) was called upon to irrigate, divide, and colonize some twenty-five thousand hectares. In the state of Tamaulipas, the Compañía Agrícola del Río Bravo (Agricultural Company of the Rio Bravo) was called upon to irrigate, divide, and colonize one hundred thousand hectares. Los Presidentes de México, 1:573-74.

37 The seizure of power from Madero by General Victoriano Huerta has been labeled as a counter-revolution by scholars. Although a return to Porfirian society was not possible, Huerta ruled in a repressive and
conservative manner. In agrarian reform he continued the same cautious approach as Madero because he recognized that the peasantry had been mobilized during the revolution. He did not advocate land distribution, but he did return ejidal lands to Yaqui and Mayo Indians in 1913 after it was established that these lands had been illegally taken from them. He also created a cabinet ministry for agriculture and had free seed distributed. There were two primary motivations behind the enactment of these policies. First, and most important, Huerta recognized the need to mollify the reformers who became active with the Maderista movement. Second, he himself was of Indian heritage and supported restitution of lands taken illegally from Indians. For an excellent review of the Huerta regime, see Michael C. Meyer, *Huerta: A Political Portrait* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972).


39 Ibid.
CHAPTER 3

LAND REFORM AND POLITICAL CONSOLIDATION:
CARRANZA, DE LA HUERTA, OBREGON

The political turbulence of the early postrevolutionary period gave way to more stability after 1915. Although violence continued to mark the exchange of power at the executive level, the terms of office of Mexican presidents now increased dramatically over those of the earlier period. With more time and firmer control over government, presidents in this second period of postrevolutionary administration had a greater opportunity to develop and enact land reform proposals that would fulfill the goals articulated during the revolutionary struggle. The following analysis is designed to determine to what extent postrevolutionary presidents expressed commitment to fulfilling the revolution's goals of land redistribution and reform at this stage of development.

As was noted in the previous chapter, Venustiano Carranza was a leading figure in the determination of the revolution's outcome and ultimately, although reluctantly, in the setting of revolutionary policy in the land reform question. As a leader of the constitutionalist movement against the reactionary government of Victoriano Huerta and later as president, Carranza's term of executive office spanned five years. During this time important legal developments occurred in land reform matters that would shape later policy choices. As many historians have noted, Carranza did not comply with all of the legal
requirements established before and during his administration.¹ History has labeled him a conservative, not a revolutionary, and, indeed, many of his actions confirm that he resisted reformist change in most policy areas and specifically in land reform. However, he was responsible for bringing to the forefront of the revolution the agrarian problem in his decree of 6 January 1915 and in his acceptance of Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917. This section will focus on Carranza's public perceptions of the land problem and the solutions he offered and acted upon during his term as president of Mexico.

The pattern of language Carranza used to address Mexico's land problem in six public messages is shown in figure 4. With civil struggles still occurring in this immediate postrevolutionary period, it is not surprising that there is a moderate frequency distribution on the Symbols dimension. The revolution was not yet consolidated, and references to it at this time were more practical than symbolic. The content analysis reveals only moderate frequency distributions on the Agrarianism, Reforms, and Structures dimensions of this index of verbal ideological adherence. This consistency of approach indicates a pattern of general verbal ideological adherence to the land reform goal of the revolution, and Carranza would be expected to proceed with fairly rapid land distribution. The one ambiguity that shows up in figure 4 is the distribution on the Agrarianism dimension. Because this is relatively low, it may have been an indication that land reform would not receive as much attention as the other indicators reveal. The very low distribution on the Patriotism dimension may be relevant to the extent that Carranza did not perceive the need to make patriotic references.
Perhaps he felt his popularity from the constitutionalist movement was sufficiently high that he need not make linkages between his land reform policies and nationalism to generate support for his regime. In general, Carranza's use of symbolic and reformist language indicated a purposeful approach to the resolution of the agrarian issue.

FIGURE 4. CARRANZA: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms; D = Structures; E = Patriotism

Because Carranza headed the government which was responsible for initiating the early land reform laws that would play an important role in the determination of policy choices for future administrations, it is necessary to review the general direction of these proposals. While acting as First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army, Carranza issued his famous Ley de 6 de enero de 1915 from government headquarters in
Veracruz. In announcing this law, Carranza discussed the linkages it had with the goals of the revolution and the means by which it would adequately address and resolve the agrarian problem.

In December 1916, Carranza called for a constitutional convention to meet in Querétaro to reform the Constitution of 1857. In his statements at the opening of this convention, Carranza tried to set the tone for the kinds of political reforms he felt should be considered by the convention.² He did not view the responsibility of the assembly to establish social change through reforms to the older document. Like Madero, Carranza felt that reforms were to be legislated once political conditions allowed for a functioning democracy and open society to exist. This convention, however, created a wholly new document that rejected gradual change and made the state responsible for bringing about marked social transformation. Articles 27 and 123 incorporated rights and protections for campesinos and laborers and required an active state to make these possible. The constitutional convention created a more sweeping and radical document than Carranza had sanctioned or desired. He now faced the choice of complying with its provisions in a legalistic and democratic fashion or rejecting them out of disagreement with their scope and direction. In choosing the latter, Carranza by and large created his own constitutional crisis and denigrated his own expressed concern for liberal democracy by placing his interests above those mandated in a public forum. This contributed to the view that the social justice goal of the revolution would not be translated into land reform during this presidency.
In a special meeting of the congressional chambers on 15 April 1917, Carranza discussed his perceptions of the events which had transpired from 1912 to that date. This long and historical address reveals a wealth of information regarding Carranza's personal interpretation of his responsibilities to the revolution and to the state as the new president. Considerable linkage was established between Carranza's land reform program and the goals of the revolution. Carranza discussed the kinds of structures through which his reform policies would be implemented. At the federal level these structures included the Secretaría de Fomento, Colonización e Industria and the Comisión Nacional Agraria. He referred to the role of Comisiones Locales Agrarias and Comités particulares ejecutivos which were authorized to proceed with the restitution and dotation programs as sanctioned in the agrarian law. Ultimate decision-making power over land grants was retained by the executive under the advice of the Comisión Nacional Agraria.

The main purpose of Carranza's address to this special session of Congress appears to be one of legitimizing his position as national leader and linking himself through his struggle to overthrow Huerta to the goals of the revolution. On 1 September 1917, Carranza gave his first annual address as president before the combined Congress. In the section on the activities of the Secretaría de Fomento y Colonización, Carranza discussed the progress of his administration in the land area. He saw as his main task the development of agriculture and established seven Agencias Generales to centralize efforts in this area. The states targeted for this activity were Sonora, Sinaloa and
Nayarit, Tabasco, Yucatán and Campeche, Chiapas, and the Territories of Baja California and Quintana Roo. Obviously absent were the states of Morelos and Guerrero. Carranza consistently voiced his opposition to the Zapata and Villa movements and appeared to withhold federal government aid and support from their home states even though those states had been hotbeds of land reform agitation throughout the revolutionary period.

In land reform and distribution, Carranza claimed that his administration had implemented the section of Article 27 calling for the nullification of contracts issued for the colonization of land during previous administrations. He announced that some 6,185,000 hectares of land were returned to the nation as a result of this policy and they were to be made available for distribution.\(^5\) In the first two years of his term, Carranza claimed that 13,280,000 hectares of land had been returned to the possession of the national government. In 1918, the nullification of contracts for colonization returned an additional 1,205,933 hectares to the national government for a cumulative total of 14,926,370 hectares during his administration; and, in accordance with Article 27, his administration pledged itself to review other contracts thought to be in violation of provisions for colonization.

Carranza combined agricultural development and colonization of underpopulated areas in a general policy that was designed to promote agricultural production. New colonization contracts were issued that provided land in designated areas for those willing to make it productive. The program was to induce Mexicans working in the United States to return as well as to relocate campesinos from crowded areas
into sparser ones so that there would be sufficient land available to distribute. Carranza noted the decision to begin mechanizing agriculture through the importation of tractors and through the expansion of modern irrigation projects. He reflected a dissatisfaction that no Ley Reglamentaria had been passed by Congress to normalize and regulate the activities of the Comisiones Locales Agrarias and the Comisión Nacional Agraria, especially as they pertained to agricultural development policies. A significant portion of the Carranza platform was directed to bolstering municipal autonomy from the national government. But in the area of agricultural development, Carranza saw the Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento and the Comisión Nacional Agraria as leading the way for greater rural expansion and productivity.

Carranza announced some of the successes of his policies of restitution and dotation of lands, noting specifically that eighty-two villages received 86,746 hectares under dotation, and five villages received 21,284 hectares under restitution. According to his figures, there were 1,914 petitions for land before the Comisiones Locales Agrarias.  

By 1918, an apparent shift toward redistributive land reform policies seemed to be indicated when Carranza announced the "acquisition" by his government of two farms (fincas) in the state of Guanajuato which were to be redistributed in small plots for private farming. He refrained from using the terms "expropriation" or "seizure" and opted instead for a vague reference to some form of nationalization which brought these lands into government ownership. There was no reference to that portion of Article 27 calling for
expropriation of private lands in the name of public utility. What can be inferred from the tone of this address is that these farms were undertilled and unproductive, therefore their seizure was an act similar in intent to the nullification of colonization contracts for failure to perform. The main difference between policies is that these private lands were targeted for redistribution rather than for sale or lease.

In an act likely designed to attract nationalist support for his government, Carranza successfully initiated the regulation of Article 27 through a Proyecto de Ley Orgánica de Petroleo y de Combustibles Minerales in 1919. The purpose of this law was to eliminate certain privileges foreign businesses enjoyed in Mexico during the Porfiriato. Because the new Article 27 claimed Mexican sovereignty over subsoil minerals and petroleum deposits and all lands, foreign observers were concerned that the Carranza administration was moving toward application of the full extent of the constitution. Carranza had earned the reputation of being fiercely nationalistic during the Huerta conflict. Yet the domestic support he might have obtained by nationalist legislation was counterbalanced by growing foreign concern over the safety of property and investments in Mexico.9

In his last annual presidential address before Congress on 1 September 1919, Carranza offered a detailed discussion of the accomplishments of his administration in the land area.10 Key to his success, as he saw it, was the Ley de 6 de enero de 1915, which by late 1919 had been made operative through five circulars he issued to regulate its application. These five circulars dealt with different aspects of the dotation and restitution programs of his administration
and better defined the orientation it assumed relative to the land question. The first discussed the legality of provisional possessions of pueblos, declaring that only definitive possessions were legally binding. The second dealt with the payment for lands divided into ejidos and distributed to pueblos and required the pueblos to pay the value of such lands at the time of their division. The third established the basis for the more rapid adjudication of complaints of landowners that had not yet been heard relating to the proceedings of land reform. The fourth cleared the way for pueblos to be responsible for the administration of the lands they received under the dotation program and determined that the municipal governments were not the beneficiaries of the lands redistributed by the national or state governments to villages. And finally, the fifth circular required that from the date the pueblos entered into possession of lands that were granted or restored to them, they had to pay their respective contributions to the Recuadaciones de Rentas so that payments would be assigned to those that they corresponded. These circulars are indicative of the type of land reform sponsored by the Carranza administration. Small, private plots of land were sold or leased to landless campesinos who would be required to pay for this privilege of land ownership. This was not a form of wealth redistribution as much as an extension of opportunity to farm land. Additionally, Carranza pledged his administration to start indemnifying landowners for expropriations of lands that went to ejidos. The motivation behind this was no doubt political. He wanted to represent his interest in reconciling disputes that could arise as a result of land reform. Was this the kind of land reform envisioned by
the revolution? The ideological orientation involved in this type of policy preference augmented and clarified the Maderista approach to gradual reform and rejected the more radical Zapatista demands for greater and faster land redistribution.

By late 1919, Carranza's land redistribution programs had proceeded at a slow pace and had benefited relatively few campesinos. Carranza claimed that 172,227 hectares had been divided among thirty thousand families, with 23,067 hectares redistributed through restitution and 149,160 hectares redistributed through dotation.\(^\text{11}\) Independent investigators, however, attribute Carranza with the redistribution of 167,936 total hectares of land.\(^\text{12}\) Under the Ley de 6 de enero de 1915, only 45,309 hectares were designated as definitive resolutions. His government more actively pursued land distribution and claimed to have leased forty-seven hundred hectares under twenty-one contracts for cultivation. This reportedly brought the federal government forty-five thousand pesos in revenue. In this way land reform also benefited the country's coffers. Because new laws prohibited the alienation of national lands, the government stepped up its program of leasing such lands and establishing ejidos in this way. By 1918, leases covered six million hectares of national lands. In 1919, 17,040 leases were granted and an additional 15,000 were petitioned. The policy of voiding breached contracts for colonization returned 47,493 hectares of land to the national government in this last year of the Carranza administration.\(^\text{13}\) The amount of land Carranza and other early postrevolutionary presidents claimed they redistributed or distributed is shown in table 1.
TABLE 1

LAND DISTRIBUTIONS CLAIMED BY EARLY POSTREVOLUTIONARY PRESIDENTS
(hectares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Dotation/Restitution</th>
<th>Nullification</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carranza</td>
<td>172,543</td>
<td>14,533,426</td>
<td>106,359</td>
<td>14,812,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De la Huerta</td>
<td>159,524</td>
<td>68,460</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>228,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obregón</td>
<td>1,753,002</td>
<td>276,613</td>
<td>248,635</td>
<td>2,278,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,085,069</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,878,499</strong></td>
<td><strong>355,994</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,319,562</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The colonization program launched by Carranza received considerable attention at this time. There was mention of European interest in establishing colonies in Mexico. Carranza spoke of allocating national lands or those declared untilled (baldíos) and subject to seizure to foreign settlers. With so many Mexican campesinos without land, it seemed ironic that Carranza would be interested in accepting foreign farmers and providing them with their own land. Like Díaz, Carranza saw great potential in European settlements in Mexico, in part because many Europeans were successful farmers and could transplant their skills. A new measure allowed the government to divide both colony and ejidal lands into parcels; and in 1919, some forty thousand hectares of village lands were so divided, 689 deeds were granted for 645 hectares to colonists in various colonies, and 144 deeds were granted for 7,463 hectares of land on an ejido. A colony in the state of Sinaloa made up of 106,359 hectares of high-grade land was divided among its
colonists. Similar efforts led the government to grant deeds to 17,411 hectares of national or idle lands. The apparent intention of this policy was to spread and encourage small, private, rural development, a keystone of Carranza's distributive land reform policies. But the effect was to start a process that eventually led to the proliferation of the minifundio in Mexico, plots of land so small that they were economically unviable.

Carranza introduced a measure that was designed to ensure the continuation of his land policies after his term of office terminated later that year. The Proyecto de Ley de Tierras was mentioned even though it would not be considered by the Congress until the next session. It authorized the executive to alienate national lands in sufficient amounts for small, rural property owners to adequately farm them, and it allowed for those campesinos leasing national lands to purchase them for private ownership.

The Carranza presidency began and ended with violence. In 1919, Carranza was assassinated. Following his removal from power, Adolfo de la Huerta was named interim president. His term in power continued the trends started by Madero and Carranza. Little that could be called revolutionary was accomplished during his brief term. However, De la Huerta continued the land reform programs started by Carranza and paved the way for President Alvaro Obregón to enact a more encompassing program. As is shown in figure 5, De la Huerta, through his message to Congress on 1 September 1920, pledged himself to finding solutions to the land problem. The Agrarianism dimension shows only a few references to the revolution or the land problem. De la Huerta made
more references to the kinds of programs that had been designed to
effectuate the distribution of land by Carranza, as shown on the Reforms
and Structures dimensions.

FIGURE 5. DE LA HUERTA: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms;
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

De la Huerta's policy actions in the land reform area were
moderate. He adhered to the distribution practices of Carranza which
reflected an endorsement of the agricultural productivity-economic
development ideology of the revolution. Through the policy of nullifi-
cation of colonization contracts, the nation came into the possession of
68,460 hectares of land. Some of the national land was rented to
small farmers willing to make it productive. Other portions of national
lands were used in the colonization program. In a move that seemed
contrary to previous nullification policies, De la Huerta announced the return of some 281,936 hectares of land to concessions previously declared void because he felt the concessionaires were men of "good faith."¹⁹ This was done, apparently, to promote agricultural productivity. De la Huerta also referred to agrarian reform proposals which would operate through the Dirección de Agricultura to sponsor the distribution of new seeds, the spread of education, and expansion of irrigation works. Especially in the area of irrigation, the Ley de Aguas obligated the holders of water rights to fulfill the stipulations of their contracts or face returning their rights to the nation. This marked the start of agrarian reform, not simply land redistribution and distribution, in the effort to transform Mexico's rural structures.²⁰

During the De la Huerta term, the various levels of government received 1,237 petitions for land under either the dotation or restitution program. Nearly 166,000 hectares of land were redistributed to 128 pueblos by definitive decree and another 28,156 hectares by provisional decree.²¹ De la Huerta compared this to what had been accomplished during Carranza's final year in which, according to his figures, only 45,309 hectares were returned to sixty-two villages.²² More so than Carranza, De la Huerta seemed interested in both land redistribution through dotation and restitution programs and land distribution programs through nullification and colonization policies. The figures De la Huerta cited in his address regarding the location and extent of his dotation and restitution policies pursued during his brief term are shown in table 2. In less than one year, De la Huerta had nearly matched Carranza's distributive performance. As is shown in table 2,
the quantity of land redistributed for each village was relatively low. De la Huerta seemed to prefer redistributing some land to many different areas around the country.

TABLE 2

LAND DISTRIBUTION CLAIMED BY DE LA HUERTA, 1920*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Territory</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baja California</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coahuila</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiapas</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chihuahua</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durango</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guerrero</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalisco</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>México</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michoacán</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayarit</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayarit</td>
<td>Restitution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oaxaca</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puebla</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San LUIS Potosí</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Querétaro</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinaloa</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinaloa</td>
<td>Restitution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonora</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonora</td>
<td>Restitution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tlaxcala</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yucatán</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zacatecas</td>
<td>Dotation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,511</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 128 165,947**


*These figures were given by President Adolfo de la Herta in his message to Congress, 1 September 1920.

**This is an approximation, as the figures listed were rounded for convenience.
In legal matters, on 10 January 1920, the executive promulgated a law creating the *Deuda Pública Agraria* that was to set guidelines for the objections and rejections raised by property owners who faced expropriation of their lands. De la Huerta acknowledged that part of the delay in land reform related to government scrutiny of various contracts and agreements entered into with previous administrations, and in dealing with petitions from both the landless and landowners for fair treatment. Procedural caution likely was exercised so as not to further disrupt agricultural productivity and not to further alienate landowners.

De la Huerta's administration was responsible for reestablishing the clause of the *Ley de 6 de enero de 1915* that granted the provisional possession of land to villages. This part of the agrarian law had been suspended by Carranza on 19 September 1916. Additionally, the *Ley de Tierras Ociosas* was passed on 23 June 1920 and was designed to turn over lands that were not in productive use to those willing to farm them. Under this law, privately held but unused lands would be granted to those willing to farm them with the stipulation that the workers would pay at least 10 percent of the harvest as rent and return the lands to the original owner after one year. This was a different approach to land distribution, but, being only temporary, it would not satisfy demands for land or redistributive justice. It was a policy that allowed De la Huerta to avoid confrontational politics between private landowners, both Mexican and foreign, during his interim term and to appear to move forward with more rapid reforms for the landless.
In compliance with Article 27 of the constitution, De la Huerta recommended that twenty-two million hectares of land along the border and coastlines owned by foreigners should be expropriated by the government following the passage of a law so specifying such action. The property owners were to be indemnified. This suggested course of action was relatively safe to discuss in a public forum for it appeased nationalist concern with foreign penetration, and it was highly unlikely that expropriations of foreign-owned land would occur. This section of Article 27 was important symbolically to Mexico's revolution-inspired sense of nationalism, particularly vis-a-vis the United States. Yet with the overthrow of Carranza and subsequent nationalistic rhetoric used by De la Huerta, the United States withheld recognition of the interim government and delayed giving such to the Obregón administration even after it had been democratically elected. This put external pressures on the post-Carranza revolutionary governments until the Bucaleri Agreement of 1923 was signed. It was designed to improve relations between the two nations by ensuring protection for American interests in Mexico.

From 1915 to 1920, revolutionary land reform took place gradually and with emphasis on distributive policies. The presidents during this period made few references to land redistribution, and there was little observable governmental commitment to the redistributive/social justice goals through implementation of policies. The main emphasis during this period was on national economic recovery. Carranza used revolutionary symbolism to show adherence to the land reform goals of the revolution, but he did not move ahead with significant
redistributive policies. Carranza claimed to have distributed over fourteen million hectares of national lands during his term (see table 1), but often these lands were sold or leased and therefore could not benefit Mexico's millions of poor farmers. De la Huerta faced many of the same constraints that Carranza had faced and, like him, did not move forward with progressive and active land redistribution. Political consolidation and economic recovery best characterized the policy preferences and choices reflected by both Carranza and De la Huerta. If regime legitimacy and stability were contingent on the implementation of revolutionary policies, postrevolutionary administrations would have to act expediently.

General Alvaro Obregón succeeded De la Huerta as Mexico's next postrevolutionary president. He was a military hero of the revolution and led the rebellion against Carranza under the Plan de Agua Prieta when it became apparent Carranza intended to remain in control of Mexico's government. Obregón earned a reputation as a champion of labor and campesino rights in the years of strife following the death of Madero. He came to power as president of Mexico with a mandate from these sectors to bring about much needed and anticipated reforms in the cities and in the countryside.27 Yet, at least one student of the Mexican revolution has questioned the validity of Obregón's ideological commitment to the revolution.28 When he announced his intention of seeking the presidency, Obregón stated that "The Revolution was fought for Democracy," and he made no mention of land reform in his manifesto.29 Was Obregón a revolutionary committed to transforming the basic fabric of Mexican society, or merely a seeker of power and control
who used reform rhetoric to manipulate the Mexican public? How did Obregón present himself through his political addresses? Did significant changes occur under his administration?

In his annual addresses before Congress, Obregón used concise and pragmatic language to discuss the accomplishments and policy goals of his administration. As shown in figure 6, there are very low frequency distributions on the Symbols, Agrarianism, and Patriotism dimensions on the index of verbal ideological adherence and only a slightly higher number of references to programmatic aspects of land reform on the Reforms and Structures dimensions.

FIGURE 6. OBREGON: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms;
D = Structures; E = Patriotism
Obregón portrayed himself in a non-ideological, practical manner which suggests that if he were inclined toward reformism he would be moderate. This safe position allowed him to hold in the balance radical reformers like Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama and conservative hacendados, a politically adept move in this time of political consolidation.30

What seems to be more interesting than the aggregate picture of Obregón's verbal ideological position is a breakdown of his addresses sequentially (see appendix B). In his opening to the special joint session of Congress on 7 February 1921, following the successful defeat of Carranza, Obregón emphasized the need for national reconstruction and putting into practice the reforms emanating from the revolution.31 He pledged himself to work toward the resolution of the land problem because "In the revolutionary program the equitable distribution of the land among the laboring class figured in the foreground, and the Executive should be attentive because this promise cannot remain in the sphere of political illusion ..."32

Obregón demonstrated his concern for agrarian reform and set a positive and purposive tone for his administration by decreeing the Ley de Ejidos only eight days after his inauguration. This law was designed to make more effective the Ley de 6 de enero de 1915 and Article 27 of the constitution in terms of better redistributing lands to villages. The attempt, however, made the restitution process more complicated by codifying rather than superseding previously issued circulars of the Comisión Nacional Agraria. The law also prohibited the making of provisional grants of land by the states and made the executive the final voice in the determination of definitive grants.33 By this one
measure, Obregón successfully allied himself with the agrarian movement and simultaneously increased the power of the president in agrarian matters. Not until April 1921 were state governors able to make provisional grants of land to villages. By this time, the ejido law was replaced by the Reglamento Agrario which fixed the amount of land issued through donation to villages at three-five hectares of irrigated land, four-six hectares of seasonal land, and six-eight hectares of pasture land. The bureaucratic structure of land redistribution was laid out along the lines of the Ley de 6 de enero de 1915 with local and state agrarian officials making recommendations to the Comisión Nacional Agraria for the donation of lands. Again, the executive, not the Comisión Nacional Agraria, made the final determination of land grants. Article 14 of the law, however, protected certain landholdings from expropriation: irrigated lands of up to 150 hectares, seasonal lands of up to 250 hectares, and pasture lands of up to 500 hectares. Also, productive agricultural units would not be subject to expropriation for land reform purposes. What did this law reveal about Obregón's land reform position? First, the size of plots to be granted to ejidatarios clearly was insufficient, from an economic point of view, to sustain a family. It would be necessary for an ejidatario to have some type of additional employment, perhaps working the fields of other farms. This adds credibility to the view that Obregón, like Madero and Carranza before him, favored the development of small, private farming over ejidos. Second, this law showed the intent of the Obregón administration to protect productive, private agricultural units despite the executive's acknowledgement that Mexico's landless faced a critical
situation. The law directly excluded from expropriation both large- and medium-size productive farms. Obregón's intent was to revive the agricultural sector and the national economy so dependent on its vitality. These policies clearly demonstrate the pragmatic rather than revolutionary orientation of Obregón's land reform measures.

At this time Mexican agriculture was recovering from nearly fifteen years of disruptions. Since before 1907, the Mexican economy had suffered recession, war, and chaos. Being heavily, although not exclusively, reliant on agriculture, no economic progress could be made without greater agricultural productivity. With a capitalist structure already in operation in the agricultural sector, private ownership of sizable productive plots of land was a fait accompli prior to the revolution, although this, as noted, contributed to the creation of the social justice/equalitarian aspects of the land reform ideology. Obregón, like other revolutionary presidents before him, endorsed agricultural productivity and faced the task of reconciling the revolutionary goals of land redistribution with this objective. In return for political recognition, Obregón signed the Bucaleri Agreement with the United States and promised not to threaten American interests in Mexico. The private landholdings of Americans were, therefore, protected from expropriation.

Since early in his presidential term, Obregón pursued a more active pace of land redistribution than had Carranza (see table 1). Adopting the dotation and restitution programs started by his predecessor, Obregón, by 1921, claimed to have accomplished the most
widespread redistribution of land in the postrevolutionary period.\textsuperscript{39} Through dotation policies, Obregón claimed to have redistributed 435,748 hectares of land, and 142,176 hectares were redistributed through restitution policies. Nearly 250,000 people benefited from this action. The amount of land redistributed through these policies clearly outdistanced the Carranza effort, and for that reason Obregón's claim about accelerated reform was correct. But insofar as contributing to basic changes in Mexico's land tenure system, Obregón's redistribution efforts were insufficient.

Obregón continued distributing lands from voided concessions, and in 1921 issued seventy-nine titles to more than 960,000 hectares.\textsuperscript{40} The nation recooperated some 258,000 hectares that year as well.\textsuperscript{41} Obregón noted that an investigation was underway to determine whether some one million hectares of land in the states of Tamaulipas and Guerrero were idle and subject to recovery by the national government. The threat of such action\textsuperscript{42} acted as an incentive for increased agricultural production on private farms. Thus, even though the Comisión Nacional Agraria underwent reorganization early in the Obregón administration and suffered from adjustment problems, a significant acceleration in land reform occurred to meet some of the demands emanating from the countryside. The improvement over Carranza's performance in this area was notable and earned Obregón the loyalty of many campesinos. Later this would prove crucial to his government in the face of a serious political-military threat in 1923 headed by Adolfo de la Huerta. It is likely that the political environment of civil unrest motivated, in part, Obregón's accelerated land reform policies so
that he could generate more campesino support for his government. It is difficult at best to prove that Obregón was committed to the revolutionary goals of land redistribution and social justice. He did not commit his administration to those goals and used very little revolutionary symbolism to generate support. His approach was more pragmatic and seemed to be successful.

The early years of his term in office found Obregón dedicating appropriate sections of his messages to discussions of the kinds of improvements made in the countryside through educational programs, the use of new technology and machinery, and the spread of irrigation works. On 1 September 1922, the executive noted the organization of agricultural cooperatives through a decree issued by the Dirección General de Cooperación Agrícola. The purpose of these cooperatives was to promote the use of new machinery and technology on a cost-effective basis for Mexico's small farmers by providing them with an Institución de Crédito and a network for the collective utilization of purchased equipment and shared knowledge. The organization of ejidatarios and small farmers from the Obregón administration on would play a significant role in land reform policies and would contribute to greater internal stability.

Later in his term, Obregón noted that the national treasury was in poor condition and Mexico could not service its debt. This situation had certain notable effects on land reform. Governmental indemnities for seized land were difficult to pay. Many land and agricultural reform costs were borne by campesinos and small farmers themselves. And the government was more inclined to pacify and reconstruct the nation in
an effort to rebuild the sagging economy.\textsuperscript{45} Pressure from foreign
governments, especially the United States, for guarantees for foreign
landholders in Mexico was somewhat alleviated in 1922 when the Mexican
Supreme Court ruled that the provision of Article 27 of the constitution
claiming national sovereignty over land and subsoil mineral rights was
nonretroactive. But still, claims for indemnities were being made by
foreigners and nationals whose lands had been seized or destroyed during
the years of civil conflict.

Obregón continued demonstrating a more active pace in the
agrarian area by issuing the Decree of 2 August 1923. This measure
authorized the immediate occupation and colonization of national lands,
allowing individuals to claim twenty-five hectares of irrigated land,
one hundred hectares of arid land, two hundred of semi-arid land, or
five hundred hectares of dry land.\textsuperscript{46} Occupied lands were to be
cultivated for two years; thereafter title could be received if the
occupant could prove the land was not ejidal or part of a privately held
productive unit. Obregón publicly stated that this measure would help
any Mexican over the age of eighteen years obtain land. This was a new
program which offered a low-cost means to distribute land and saved the
government from having to pay indemnities to landowners for expropriated
lands. It also required the landless to occupy only designated national
lands, thus easing the government's burden of having to provide lands in
heavily populated areas. But the measure may simply have been a
symbolic device to pacify growing agrarian concerns over land reform, as
it has been shown that few Mexicans ever learned of the program's
existence, and in many cases the national lands were unfit for agriculture.47

Promotion of agricultural reform was clearly found in Obregón's many addresses. In the programmatic aspects of policy implementation, Obregón resembled his predecessors to a considerable extent. Land reform moved slowly, cautiously, and under the rules of law and order. Obregón continued the Carranza program of gradual restitution and dotation of lands through local and state bureaucratic agencies tied to the Comisión Nacional Agraria and the distribution of national and idle lands. In his final annual message before Congress on 1 September 1924, Obregón discussed a series of perceived accomplishments in the agrarian area, including executing reform policies in many different states, most of which involved the distribution of national rather than private lands.48 His policies were designed to decentralize the land program away from heavily populated states. He noted a new policy that restricted ejidos from petitioning for the amplification of their lands by requiring them to demonstrate need and to pay for any increases should they receive more land through the expropriation of neighboring, privately owned property.49 This discouraged ejidatarios from seeking amplification and reduced the cost burden of the government. For many ejidos this meant retaining insufficient or unusable lands and continual struggle to survive. The policy also relaxed the legal obligation of the government to expropriate privately held lands upon receipt of an ejidal petition for amplification. This seemed to indicate an unwillingness of the government to undertake more rapid or sweeping land redistribution policies.
Interestingly, Obregón mentioned in his final address that the local agrarian commission received 2,600 requests for land, but the Comisión Nacional Agraria reportedly acted only on 565 either definitively or provisionally. What happened to the other two thousand petitions for land? This raises one of the most controversial questions regarding postrevolutionary agrarian reform in Mexico. The land reform structures established by the Carranza administration created a large and multi-level bureaucracy through which petitions for land passed. Local, state, and national agencies played a role in the determination of the status of the petition. Final disposition of the petition was left in the hands of the executive. Effectively, this structure relied on the ideological commitment of various local, state, and national officials, as well as the president, to the goal of land reform for any meaningful change to take place. As such, even if a president projected strong ideological adherence to land reform in his public addresses, lower level officials who did not share such commitment could easily manipulate the petition process and block distribution. And for a president lacking in personal ideological commitment to the goal but recognizing its rhetorical and political value, a safe position could be taken publicly while the process was conveniently blocked at lower levels. Local and state officials could be blamed for inadequate performance by an astute executive. As one observer noted:

Petitions for land languished for years in the hands of these [local and state] officials. Because of their indifference or hostility, a condition aggravated by red tape and bureaucratic inefficiency, countless demands for dotation and restitution never reached the desks of the National Agrarian Commission.
Not only could land petitions be manipulated at different locations within the bureaucracy, but also for political or economic reasons the executive could selectively apply the agrarian laws. The activities of the Comisión Nacional Agraria in making provisional grants of land to villages under the Obregón administration are noted in table 3.

**TABLE 3**

PROVISIONAL GRANTS OF LAND, 1920-24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chihuahua</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coahuila</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuevo León</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinaloa</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonora</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamaulipas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guerrero</td>
<td>107</td>
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<td>Morelos</td>
<td>108</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puebla</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Luis Potosí</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yucatán</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Unlike Carranza, many of Obregón's land redistribution policies were concentrated in the areas of prolonged rebellion like Guerrero, Morelos, San Luis Potosí, and Veracruz. The northern states received only ninety-eight total provisional grants of land from 1920 to 1924 even though Obregón was himself part of the "northern dynasty." As an observation derived from this information, it could be said that land reform was used at this stage of the revolution to promote peace in
areas of instability and was not applied in areas like northern Mexico where there was a high concentration of privately owned, large properties. This kind of policy no doubt assisted the postrevolutionary administrations in consolidating their control over the factionalized nation and prevented stronger conservative reaction from developing among Mexico's hacendados. But in addition to these possible motivations for pursuing particular policies in targeted areas, the Obregón administration was responsible for definitively redistributing more than 1,100,117 hectares and provisionally redistributing more than three million hectares during its four years in office. Compared to other postrevolutionary presidents before him, Obregón did pursue land distribution and redistribution policies and promoted agricultural recovery. Obregón stepped up a process of gradual rather than revolutionary change. The interesting question is, To what extent was that process carried forward in subsequent years and how did that relate to the revolution's goal?

The Obregón administration represented a turning point in Mexico's postrevolutionary history for a number of reasons. First, political power increasingly was concentrated in the hands of an elite which had played an active role in the years of civil strife following the assassination of Madero. These were the generals who had, for multiple reasons, fought Huerta's counter-revolution and abuses of power under the Carranza regime. The state was still militarized. Elections were manipulated; effective suffrage and no-reelection, pillars of the revolutionary ideology, were openly violated. Obregón was not an ideological leader. Although he espoused the same liberal creed as his
predecessors, he neither adopted a radical-reforming position nor a conservative one. In this respect he differed fundamentally from Carranza who had used revolutionary symbolism as a tool to manipulate popular expectations but followed a well-defined conservative course that allowed for only minimal change in Mexico's social and economic structures. The De la Huerta administration served Obregón well, for it extended implementation of the moderate land reform policies of Carranza but was not in power long enough to reap the benefits of bringing about change. De la Huerta recognized the limitations of his provisional presidency and peacefully transferred power to his successor. But he called for rebellion when he was snuffed in a bid for a full term in executive office. Obregón weathered this challenge in part because he was publicy perceived as both a revolutionary hero and a reformer. It can be said with certainty that by 1924, Mexico had come to accept the gradual, orderly, pragmatic and, for these reasons, less-than-radical land reform policies consistently practiced since the days of Madero.

What happened to the ideas of Ricardo Flores Magón, Emiliano Zapata and others? Were they no longer a part of Mexico's national consciousness? Would the largely unincorporated rural mass remain placated by limited reforms? At least for the next ten years the pattern of land reform in postrevolutionary Mexico would change little. This was a period of legitimization, coalition building, and political modernization. And the political role of rural Mexico would change in the process.
END NOTES TO CHAPTER 3


3 Ibid., 123-94.

4 Ibid., 198-236, especially 217-23. The discussion following is based on this information.

5 Recall that distributive policies did not involve the expropriation of private property as a source of redistributable land but rather relied on the distribution of public lands.

6 *Los Presidentes de México*, 3:219. 7 Ibid., 272.

8 Ibid., 271. 9 Ibid., 296-301.

10 Ibid., 303-80, especially 343-50. The discussion following is based on this information.

11 Ibid., 344-45.


13 *Los Presidentes de México*, 3:343. 14 Ibid.


16 *Los Presidentes de México*, 3:344.

17 Ibid., 382-419, especially 397-401. The discussion following is based on this information.

18 Ibid., 397. 19 Ibid., 398. 20 Ibid., 400.


23 Ibid., 399. 24 Ibid., 397.
26 Los Presidentes de México, 3:398.
30 Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, 182.
34 Ibid., 217, and Ruíz, op. cit., 316.
35 Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, 316.
36 Ibid., 313-14.
37 Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico, 69.
39 Los Presidentes de México, 3:426-75, especially 448-52. The discussion following is based on this information.
40 Ibid., 449.  41 Ibid., 450.
42 Ibid.  43 Ibid.

45 Ibid., 51.
46 Los Presidentes de México, 3:564.
48 Los Presidentes de México, 3:590-649, especially 624-28. The discussion following is based on this information.
49Ibid., 626.

50Ruíz, The Great Rebellion, 332.

51Hall, "Alvaro Obregón and the Politics of Mexican Land Reform," 224. Recall that there seemed to be regional differences in ideological orientation toward land reform and land redistribution, with northern Mexicans favoring distributive land policies and small-plot farming and south central Mexicans favoring redistributive land policies and collective agriculture.

52Ibid., 217.
CHAPTER 4

LAND REFORM AND POLITICAL LEGITIMACY: CALLES,
PORTES GIL, ORTIZ RUBIO, RODRIGUEZ

The Mexican Revolution underwent a process of consolidation from
the administrations of Carranza through Obregón, especially in the
powers of the executive. The ideology of revolutionary land reform was
taking shape according to the beliefs, perceptions, and experiences of
each president. A pattern of limited land distribution was first
outlined by Madero and put into practice under Carranza. Obregón
implemented policies consistent with the policies initiated by Carranza.
The coupling of power consolidation with ideological definition
established the foundations upon which revolutionary agrarian reform
rested.

The next period of postrevolutionary history, roughly 1925 to
1940, was one of active government and reform. Although it was still
questioned whether the prevailing interpretation of the revolution's
ideology fit with the intentions of its creators, this period found
presidents working hard to legitimize not only their own control but the
control of what was known as the Revolutionary Family. The motivations
for legitimation were no doubt multiple and included securing the power
of the regime and those who were in charge of it. Increasingly, organi-
zational structures developed as the revolutionary regime became stable.
Aspirants to power had to follow more or less prescribed paths as
caudillismo\textsuperscript{1} diminished and the process of political recruitment was established.\textsuperscript{2} The power of the state expanded as government policies and actions were accorded legitimacy. This period saw the economy rebound and then crumble again, but in its time of prosperity the postrevolutionary governments were able to move ahead with their programs. It was a creative time for a movement that had met with little but head-on challenges to authority, legitimacy, program development, and policy implementation.

Obregón ended his first term as president of Mexico amid controversy and violence. The De la Huerta revolt of 1923 had been carried out to protest the selection of Plutarco Elías Calles as the official presidential candidate. The rebellion carried a strong reactionary message, for the selection of the then left-leaning Calles alienated a number of supporters of the regime. During the revolt, as a demonstration against agrarianism, hacendados retook lands that had been redistributed to campesinos.\textsuperscript{3} The country again faced chaos. The fracturing of the revolutionary coalition sent an important message to those in power that no real consensus had been forged thus far in the postrevolutionary period.

Plutarco Elías Calles had served as secretary of Gobernación under Obregón and had established revolutionary credentials. He effectively ruled Mexico for ten years during which time he seemed to experience shifts in ideological orientation. It is best to view Calles in two time frames for the purpose of understanding the relationship of ideology to policy during his term. The first period occurred from 1924 to 1928, his first term as president. Respecting the constitutional
prohibition against holding consecutive terms, Calles ended his first term but remained politically powerful during the presidencies of Emilio Portes Gil, Pascual Ortiz Rubio, and Abelardo Rodríguez.

In his first term Calles was overtly prolabor, anticlerical, and "nominally pro-agrarian." His labor sympathies were known before he assumed the presidency and contributed to the popular perception that he was ideologically left-leaning. During this term, labor legislation and restricting the role of the church occupied a good share of the president's efforts. In the area of land reform, Calles continued the policies of Obregón, although in implementation he successfully redistributed more land than any of his predecessors. Calles's use of language in the four annual addresses to Congress given during his first term in office is summarized in figure 7. It reflects a strong emphasis on the Symbols dimension of verbal ideological adherence but relatively few references to Agrarianism. The low distribution on the Agrarianism dimension suggests that Calles was moving ahead with reforms initiated under the preceding administrations, and he did not verbally refer often to the prevailing agrarian situation. The symbolic language used by Calles was actually more moderate than is shown in figure 7, for in the first three addresses before Congress he averaged only three references to the revolution. In his last message in 1928, Calles mourned the assassination of president-elect Obregón and denounced the threat this action represented to the legitimacy of the revolution. In this one address alone Calles mentioned revolutionary symbols forty-nine times.

As reflected on the other dimensions of verbal ideological adherence, Calles publicly committed himself to the resolution of the
problems facing Mexico, one of which was land reform. The frequency distributions on the Reforms and Structures dimensions reflect this concern. If Calles was responsible for the redistribution of more land than any other postrevolutionary president, how could he earn the reputation for being only nominally pro-agrarian? What did he say about the agrarian problem and in what manner did he direct his policies to resolve it?

FIGURE 7. CALLES: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms;
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

In an interview with a North American journalist in November 1924, Calles discussed his perceptions of the land problem facing Mexico. In his opinion, the chief goal of revolutionary land reform was the creation of a large class of small-property owners, a class that
economically would come to represent the middle sectors. To this end, in an important policy shift from Obregón's restitution policies, Calles announced that he considered the ejidal system to be merely a temporary phase in the larger process of making small plots of land available to those who wanted to work them. In this way the nation would become rich and prosperous.⁵ He publicly acknowledged that the land problem was as much a problem of production as distribution. He shared Obregón's view that greater agricultural productivity would free the government from importing food and allow for a better investment of resources for development.⁶ In his first annual address to Congress on 1 September 1925, Calles discussed practical solutions to the agrarian problem.⁷ He stated that his primary concern was for the orderly redistribution of land to those capable of demonstrating need. Calles left intact the restitution and dotation programs started by Carranza but did not execute petitions for communal landholdings. In his first year, provisional possession of land was granted to 76,954 families for 629,629 hectares, and 476 definitive resolutions were issued, 359 of which made available 579,705 hectares to 360,718 individuals. The remaining definitive resolutions awaited execution.⁸

Calles also continued to use the colonization programs started by the postrevolutionary regimes. However, he made significant alterations to some colonization policies. He enforced a decree of 1909 that had suspended the alienation of national lands, lands which in the recent past had been leased under the colonization program.⁹ He also suspended arrangements made in 1921 that had provided tax exemptions and favorable governmental support for those colonizing national lands. The
effect of these decisions was to reduce government involvement in colonization programs. These programs generally required that the government locate available lands and contribute support to the colonists so that they could clear the land and prepare it for cultivation and settlement. Instead, Calles encouraged participation in the program established in the decree of 2 August 1923, Obregón's effort to extend small-property ownership to the landless where the burden of locating and developing land was left to those who wanted to farm their own land. He noted that as a result of this decree some 2,337 farmers occupied 572,992 hectares of national and idle lands. Another effect of these policies was to deemphasize the colonization of lands by collectives and instead encourage the division of lands into privately owned plots. By way of example, in the Distrito Norte del Territorio de la Baja California five concession contracts were voided and poor campesinos were allowed to colonize 3,741 hectares that were divided among them. Publicly, the motivation for the shift in colonization policy was the recognition that the original Ley de Colonización of 1883 gave rise to foreign holdings of large tracts of national lands. Calles felt this to be contrary to the nationalistic goals of the revolution. Primarily for this reason, Calles announced a plan to take back concessions granted for untilled lands in the states of Chihuahua, Sonora, and Durango totaling some 4,604,573 hectares.

Early in his term Calles announced another change in agrarian policy. He let it be known to the Congress that he would introduce a Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos y la Creación del Patrimonio de Familia which would divide ejidal lands into individually owned plots.
This policy choice reflected Calles's interest in creating a class of small-property owners. With the ejidal and colonization programs emphasizing the division of land into privately held plots, land reform took on a different dimension. Calles used the foundations laid by Carranza and Obregón but altered the direction of the communal aspect of the revolutionary land redistribution program. Although not a rejection of Indianism, per se, this shift in policy represented a significant movement away from restitution in favor of making small-plot farming a focal point. Dotation rather than restitution had become the most regularly employed method of land redistribution in the postrevolutionary period, and Calles indicated his willingness to extend this approach. In conjunction with other distributive programs, this clearly reflected a policy preference for one of two different theories of agrarian reform.

Calles recognized early that meaningful agrarian reform involved the dissemination of technical information, supplies, machinery, and, importantly, credit. Obregón was aware of the limitations of land distribution policies, especially their failure to provide adequate support for the growing numbers of farmers in Mexico, but he did not commit the resources necessary to bring about significant change in this area. Calles made special mention of his concern for the extension of rural education, including technical agricultural training, and the future introduction of credit legislation that would benefit small farmers.  

The issue of land reform versus land distribution became more pronounced during Calles's second year in office. In his message to
Congress on 1 September 1926, agricultural credit, rural education, and irrigation programs received a good deal of attention (see appendix B). Calles moved ahead with a credit program by establishing the Banco Agrícola Refaccionario to assist both large and small farmers, and four Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales in the states of Durango, Guanajuato, Michoacán, and Hidalgo. The intention at this point was to establish structures through which large and small private farmers and ejidatarios could request minimal assistance, since these credit banks were undercapitalized and could not immediately meet the nation's needs.

The creation of ejidal banks did not signify a reversal in policy from Calles's earlier plans to divide communal ejidos into privately owned plots of land. He held true to his word and through the Comisión Nacional Agraria issued the Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos y la Creación del Patrimonio de Familia. This policy was quickly implemented with the partitioning of twenty-six ejidos into 10,018 parcels for distribution to 9,893 heads of families.

On 5 April 1926, a new Ley de Colonización was issued which did indicate a change in attitude toward land redistribution policies. Under the language of this law, private interests were subordinated to collective interests, in keeping with the postulates of Article 27 of the constitution, thereby allowing the government to move ahead with the colonization of large tracts of land. The intention was to use the language of the constitution to enable the government to expropriate some hacienda and idle lands for redistribution into private plots. Calles mentioned the historic failure of the colonization program to alleviate the agrarian problem and placed blame on a lack of credit and
the farming inexperience of colonists. He felt his policies would
assist in correcting the shortcomings of the program. He referred on
several occasions to the extension of rural technical education which,
ostensibly, would equip campesinos with information to be more
productive as farmers.

To further promote agricultural productivity, Calles created the
Comisión Nacional de Irrigación in late 1925 to extend and regulate the
use of water. Most of Mexico's agricultural land was dependent on
irrigation. The monopolization of water rights under the Díaz regime
strangled many small farmers who could not rely on natural rainfall for
their crops. Since the fall of Díaz, postrevolutionary administrations
had made piecemeal efforts to organize the use of water in the
countryside, but none had succeeded in creating a national system of
irrigation. This became an objective of the Calles administration. In
time his Comisión Nacional de Irrigación would become the Secretaría de
Recursos Hidráulicos as the importance of irrigation to overall agrarian
reform was recognized.¹⁸

In another area previously underemphasized by earlier postrevo-
olutionary administrations, Calles announced plans to indemnify Mexican
nationals and foreigners for lands which had been expropriated or
destroyed. On 1 September 1925, the Departamento de Indemnizaciones was
created, and a year later Calles announced that it was responsible for
resolving sixteen claims totaling nearly three-quarters of a million
pesos. This debt was paid for with bonds of the Agrarian Debt. The
department acknowledged that it was studying 299 additional claims.¹⁹
This may simply have been an overture to Mexicans and foreigners who had
lost some land under the reform policies, since financially the government was not in a position to honor its bonds.

Calles's increasing activity in agrarian problems seemed congruent with his verbal ideological commitment to fulfill the land reform goals of the revolution. But other factors had a bearing on his actions. During his first term he was determined to restrict the activities of the church by enforcing previously ignored clauses of the constitution that were overtly anticlerical. What resulted was new civil tension known as the Cristero rebellion. The intensity of this rebellion found roots in a reaction to agrarianism and Calles's anticlericalism. Like the De la Huerta rebellion before it, the Cristero movement posed a significant reactionary threat to the revolution. In a move to counter the strength of the Cristeros, Calles enlisted the support of agraristas. He had successfully demonstrated his commitment to land reform and was generally popular in the agrarian sector. As the rebellion carried on, Calles would come to recognize, as Obregón before him had, the value of retaining agrarian support for the government.

The Cristero rebellion continued through 1927 and 1928. In a strong signal to reactionary elements, Calles, in his annual message to Congress on 1 September 1927, announced a plan for a new redistribution of lands resting on rehabilitated dotation, restitution, and colonization programs, the division of large latifundios, irrigation, credit, rural education, and agrarian organization (see appendix B). The concept of agrarian organization had become important to the Calles administration. Not only had the domestic situation worsened in Mexico,
but a sluggish economy restricted the government from moving ahead with many of its programs. Calles called on the nation to make sacrifices in the name of economic development and the equitable distribution of national resources. He pledged governmental support to the extension of rural infrastructure. Through the Dirección de Aguas, Tierras y Colonización he planned to regulate waterways and irrigation. He noted the initial success of the four Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales, but this success was limited since only a little more than a half-million pesos had been loaned to ejidatarios. It is doubtful whether in the early years these ejidal banks, still undercapitalized, made any appreciable impact on the improvement of ejidal agricultural practices.

Land redistribution continued at a steady pace with 263 resolutions for provisional possessions issued to 37,808 families and 408 definitive resolutions issued for 1,555,218 hectares benefiting more than 80,000 families. Nearly ninety thousand hectares of land had been leased or occupied during the years as well. Another revised Ley de Colonización was issued on 6 January 1927 which retained the subordination of private interests to the interests of the collectivity. This was used to colonize privately owned lands, especially in the north where cattle-raising colonies were encouraged. In keeping public law consistent with Article 27 of the constitution, a Ley de Dotación y Restitución de Tierras y Aguas was issued on 23 April 1927 and amended so that it would better serve the needs of Mexico's campesinos, even though it failed to resolve the question of peones acasillados.

With his first term coming to a close and with the realization that Álvaro Obregón would seek the presidency again after the
constitution was amended to allow him to run, Calles started to display a conservative shift in ideology. Although his ideas seemed to be undergoing change, Calles had earned a reputation as a reformer. Perhaps this was a mistake for it continued to raise popular expectations. In his last annual message to Congress on 1 September 1928, Calles discussed the political crisis resulting from the assassination of president-elect Obregón²⁶ (see appendix B). A fanatical Christian was responsible for the murder. The Cristero rebellion persisted. Obregón, like Calles, was reputedly anticlerical. Although it has been alleged that Calles himself played a role in Obregón's assassination in a move to retain power, he insisted on stepping down and named a provisional president until elections could be held. In practice, Calles did not relinquish indirect power until 1935, which his enemies claimed gave him motive for the killing of Obregón, a fellow caudillo whom Calles would not have been able to manipulate. Whatever the case, Calles evinced remorse for the death of his colleague Obregón, and in an emotive address called upon the political leaders of the nation to fulfill the goals of the revolution by making Mexico a civilized and modern political system.²⁷

Establishing national political organizations was a prevalent theme in Calles's last address. In an effort to boost private agricultural development, he called for the reorganization of federal agencies involved in agrarian reform under the Reglamento de los Servicios Agrícolas Federales.²⁸ The purpose of this reorganization was to extend the work of various agencies uniformly throughout the country, to identify areas of greatest need, and to facilitate a better
distribution of seeds, fertilizers, and other agricultural improvements. By this time nine Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales were open with a total capitalization of less than 1.5 million pesos. Still verbally committed to the idea of agricultural credit, the Calles administration could not or did not provide the banks with sufficient capital to make a meaningful contribution to the farming practices of ejidatarios or small farmers. For this reason it is likely that other considerations influenced Calles's selection of policies. At this time economic limitations constrained the ability of the government to provide agricultural supports even if it had a program that sanctioned this type of expenditure.

Land redistribution programs remained much as they had been in the early years of Calles's administration. New developments included the issuance of a distributive decree on 21 May 1928 allowing for the leasing of small amounts of national lands to those who expressed interest in farming them. Regarding redistributive programs, Calles claimed that definitive possession of land had been granted for nearly 716,000 hectares benefiting 68,837 families. There were 657 ejidal proceedings through which villages received more than 634,000 hectares. Under the Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos y la Creación del Patrimonio de Familia, thirty-eight ejidos of 31,428 hectares were divided into 11,410 plots for 7,939 families. Up to this point, according to the limited information Calles gave, the Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos y la Creación del Patrimonio de Familia was responsible for the division of at least sixty-four ejidos into 21,428 parcels with probably no more than sixty thousand hectares and
involving nearly eighteen thousand families. Although incomplete, these figures reveal a pattern of distributing too little land to too many people to provide a decent livelihood. If this was indeed the case, as the figures suggest, how had the revolution improved the lot of the rural poor in Mexico? How had structural transformations worked to bring about meaningful change? The period of indirect rule by Calles provides some answers to these questions and it raises a number more about the relationship of ideology to policy.

The Calles administration brought about increases in land redistribution and land reform. With the revolutionary regime relatively secure in power and the economy developing incrementally, more purposive action could be taken by the government. Yet occurring simultaneously with the consolidation of power were moderate shifts in the focus of revolutionary ideology. The facts suggest that communal landholding was never fully endorsed by the revolutionary faction that successfully took power from Díaz. None of the postrevolutionary presidents considered thus far worked with diligence to restore the true communal ejido. Agricultural productivity over land redistribution provided the rationale for favoring small, independent farmers.

After prolonged civil strife it is not inconceivable that the government would be concerned with increasing the nation's capacity to feed itself. However, with the subsidence of emergency situations a committed revolutionary regime should work expeditiously to fulfill its ideological tenets. Otherwise it could lose its identity with the movement from which it derives its legitimacy. By 1920, the civil war resulting from the revolution had all but ended. Economic chaos still
pressed government resources and restricted action. However, during this period President Obregón successfully implemented the revolution's most comprehensive land redistribution effort to date. It angered some landowners but was not enough to satisfy popular demands.

When Calles assumed the presidency in 1924, the economy was recovering, the De la Huerta rebellion had ended, and the nation was finally at calm. He then launched the most anticlerical campaign Mexico had experienced since the Reforma some seventy-five years earlier. The new tension this engendered severely challenged the postrevolutionary government and limited its ability to undertake the reforms it was mandated to effectuate. Calles had established clear linkages between his government and the revolution through the use of symbolic language in his addresses. But his verbal ideological commitment to the land reform goals of the revolution, as shown in figure 7 on the Agrarianism dimension, was not quite so clear. Calles moved ahead more rapidly than had Obregón or Carranza with land redistribution and land reform. His policy choices strongly indicate that he accepted the same ideological orientations as had Obregón and Carranza, although he effectively terminated communal land redistribution. There was significant congruence between Calles's verbal ideological orientation which favored increased production and economic recovery and his agrarian policies.

In 1928, Emilio Portes Gil was chosen by Congress to act as provisional president of Mexico until elections could be held to name a successor to Obregón's six-year term. He was acceptable to both Obregonista and Callista factions, for ideologically he had earned a reputation as a reformer while governor of Tamaulipas. In his formal
acceptance of the provisional presidency on 30 November 1928, Portes Gil
told Congress his central goal was to create a national political party
with its own program and popular support base (see appendix B). In
discussing his other policy preferences, Portes Gil clearly linked
himself to the revolution's goals of improving the position of laborers
and campesinos. Portes Gil established linkages between himself, the
revolution, and land reform in two addresses before Congress (figure
8). Significant frequency distributions on the Symbols, Reforms, and
Structures dimensions of ideological adherence suggest that Portes Gil
would move forward with agrarian reform policies. The moderate
distribution on the Agrarianism dimension indicates a similar verbal
ideological orientation as established by Calles, Obregón, and Carranza.

FIGURE 8. PORTES GIL: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms;
D = Structures; E = Patriotism
It is likely Portes Gil thought he would possess more independent political authority, but shortly after taking office, Calles made clear his notion of retaining power for himself. Because of this, when interpreting not only the Portes Gil but also the Ortiz Rubio and Rodríguez administrations it is necessary to keep in mind that the values of Calles, then known as the jefe máximo of the revolution, played an important role in influencing their rhetoric and actions. In other words, in many ways the 1928 to 1934 period can be considered as an extension of the Calles presidency.

In his first and only annual message to the Congress on 1 September 1929, Portes Gil discussed the policies and goals of his administration. In the area of land reform, he announced that the Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento continued working with the programs established by the post-revolutionary administrations.

The donation and restitution of lands continued, with Portes Gil claiming that 489 provisional resolutions were issued for 616,718 hectares benefiting 43,000 campesinos, and that 622 definitive resolutions were issued involving 1,236,791 hectares. Of this activity, nearly two hundred thousand hectares were attributable to the Calles administration. An additional fifty thousand hectares were distributed through the application of the law of 2 August 1923 and other leasing programs. Colonization slowed although there were investigations into the use of large cattle latifundios as colonies. The owners of these latifundios were called upon to voluntarily divide their lands into parts for this purpose. With Calles being from northern Mexico, it was unlikely he would expropriate these lands. He claimed that 673
petitions for the creation of ejidos were presented during the year: 183
were received before Calles's term ended, and the rest came during his
administration. Under the Ley de Fraccionamiento de Ejidos, eighty-one
divisions of ejidos were undertaken during the year of which fifty-three
were completed involving 21,857 parcels. Of these completed divisions,
sixteen occurred under the Calles administration and thirty-seven under
Portes Gil. Clearly, Portes Gil set an active pace in the redistribu-
tion of lands during his brief term of office.

Irrigation programs started by Calles continued to open up new
areas around the country to cultivation, and studies were undertaken to
extend the program further. Portes Gil publicly recognized the need to
diversify and improve Mexican agriculture by the introduction of new
crops into new areas. Under the Comisión Nacional de Irrigación and the
Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería, the social and economic
conditions of the state of Morelos were studied to determine the results
of the agrarian reform program there. The study found that the work of
agrarian reform was complete in Morelos and no new effort was needed
there. The local agrarian commission was instructed to leave Morelos by
October 1929 and move to the state of Veracruz to undertake a similar
study of its situation. Similar studies were to be conducted in the
Región Lagunera and Valle de México. It was also noted that the
rotation and restitution of lands were nearly complete in the Distrito
Federal and the state of Tlaxcala.33 Did these decisions reflect a
slowdown in agrarian reform, or had all the demands for land and
assistance been satisfied? It is likely that a public signal was sent
out through this address that land reform had been successful and that
there would be a slowdown in governmental effort at the federal level. It was clear that the demand for land redistribution was still high, but there was a reluctance to move ahead with further measures in certain areas. These had been the areas of agitation during the early revolutionary struggle.

The agricultural credit program continued to grow during this period. The nine Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales and the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola had made loans worth 1.5 million pesos during the year. The Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola was responsible for a total of seventeen hundred loans of thirty-six million pesos benefiting twenty-five thousand individuals, according to the president.\textsuperscript{34} Portes Gil wanted to increase the capital of the bank to between fifty and one hundred million pesos to enable it to provide more assistance to small farmers. Although not as direct a proponent of agricultural productivity over land redistribution as Calles, Portes Gil's actions complemented those of his predecessors.

Rural education programs received a considerable amount of presidential attention in this address. It was a safe policy area for any postrevolutionary administration. During the Porfiriato, Mexico's countryside remained outside the national educational system. This started to change with Madero, but the greatest impetus for change came under Obregón. Calles and Portes Gil continued to spread schools in the countryside. Although the improvement of literacy was a motivation behind the rural education programs, the organization of campesinos and their national integration also were key goals. For the course of the revolutionary experiment thus far, Mexico's campesinos had remained
unorganized. Industrial labor had successfully built workers' organizations. It was thought that national campesino organizations would promote the more efficient use of technology, machinery, seed, credit, talent, and farm labor. And their support for the revolution and its governments would be cultivated and encouraged.

Increasingly, the revolutionary governments of Mexico forged an understanding with the United States and rebuilt good economic and political relations. Portes Gil contributed to this process by moving ahead with indemnities to property owners whose lands were involved in the reform program. Many of these property owners were Americans. The number of petitions for indemnization increased to over one thousand by 1929. During Portes Gil's term, only sixty petitions were settled covering 38,523 hectares at nearly 3.5 million pesos in agrarian bonds. An additional seventy-nine petitions were under investigation by government authorities and thirty-six petitions were adjudged contrary to the law and voided.35

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the Portes Gil administration was the creation of the Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR). This fit with the larger plan of organizing Mexican society and establishing a political party to represent national interests. Calles was directly behind the creation of this party. It was to represent the interests of the revolution and consolidate the country's important political forces. From its inception the PNR was designed to incorporate supporters of the political system and exclude its detractors.36 It was meant to bring order to the electoral process and ensure the perpetuation of the Revolutionary Family as leaders of Mexico. Over
time, this party would contribute directly in the interpretation of Mexico's revolutionary ideology.

Portes Gil ended his provisional presidency amid controversy. In the summer of 1929, the PNR held its first convention and nominated Pascual Ortiz Rubio as the official party candidate for the presidency. In an apparently fraudulent election in November 1929, Ortiz Rubio was declared the victor over José Vasconcelos, his chief opponent, who represented a newly constituted anti-reelectionist party. There were still four years of the Obregón term to complete, and the new president came to power questionably and with the economy in decline.37

It was during the administration of Ortiz Rubio that Calles encroached most directly on the power and independence of the president. Portes Gil had earned a reputation as a reformist president for redistributing land even more rapidly than Calles. Ortiz Rubio, on the other hand, earned a reputation for being little more than Calles's personal puppet. As one historian noted:

Ortiz Rubio was generally known as 'Pascualito,' and his unimportance was so notorious that it threatened to make the whole government ridiculous. The domination of Calles now meant the end of the Revolution, and in particular of the agrarian reform.38

If this view is accurate, what had caused Calles to exhibit such sharp changes between 1928 and 1930? Did changes in ideological orientation toward land reform occur?

The use of language in the four addresses before Congress made by Ortiz Rubio is shown in figure 9. It is particularly interesting from the point of view of the Symbols and Reforms dimensions. The very high frequency distributions on these dimensions suggest that Ortiz Rubio was verbally committed to revolutionary land reform goals, but
again, the moderate distribution on the Agrarianism dimension implies that he did not take into consideration the prevailing situation. The indication is that he would continue the policies already in effect rather than alter them significantly.

FIGURE 9. ORTIZ RUBIO: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms; D = Structures; E = Patriotism

On 5 February 1930, Ortiz Rubio made a formal acceptance speech before Congress and discussed his views on holding the executive office (see appendix B). This address is significant for its use of revolutionary symbolism. In a strong passage Ortiz Rubio declared that the revolution had realized social transformation and had given Mexico revolutionary morals, justice, and policy. Ortiz Rubio pledged his administration to make meaningful contributions toward the fulfillment
of the revolutionary goals and the satisfaction of the national dream, and he called on the people to become more a part of this process.\textsuperscript{40} In an indirect reference to land reform, Ortiz Rubio noted the positive social function of the new concept of property. He acknowledged what he called the "just restitution of the ejidal form of landholding" brought about by the revolution.\textsuperscript{41} And like his predecessors, he discussed the dissemination of modern agricultural technology to improve productivity in this sector of the economy. According to this address, the administration of Ortiz Rubio was verbally committed to the ideological goals of the revolution, but he claimed that many of the goals already had been fulfilled.

In his first annual message to Congress on 1 September 1930, Ortiz Rubio continued using symbolic language to link his administration to the revolution\textsuperscript{42} (see appendix B). This message covered the period between September 1929 and February 1930 when Portes Gil was in power. Additionally, Ortiz Rubio was victim of a personal attack upon taking office that prevented him from acting as president for nearly two months. Consequently, for a good amount of the period covered by this address, Ortiz Rubio was not acting as president of Mexico. It was clear that he used symbolism to legitimize his administration by linking it to the revolution even though at this time he was not in political control.

In a long and relatively detailed discussion of the activities and plans of the Secretarfa de Agricultura y Fomento, Ortiz Rubio no longer expressed the view that social transformation was complete, and he mentioned the need to extend the land redistribution program of the
revolutionary platform. He noted that the revolution stood for the reorganization and restructuring of Mexico's rural production and he called on the three branches of government to work toward the satisfaction of this goal. By this time the world economic depression had affected Mexico, and concern for the resolution of economic problems was apparent in this address. Like his predecessors, Ortiz Rubio focused on ways to improve agricultural technology, to industrialize agriculture, and to boost production through the use of new seeds, education, irrigation, and credit. The Dirección de Aguas, Tierras y Colonización was working almost exclusively on irrigation projects to extend the program initiated by Calles. It was apparent that the redistribution of land was secondary to improving agricultural productivity, a contradiction of Ortiz Rubio's earlier comments.

Targeted for specific review by the executive was the situation of the ejido due to serious economic problems resulting from inefficient farming techniques, a lack of know-how, and credit. It was announced that the Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento was developing recommendations for Congress to modify the Ley General de Crédito Agrícola and reorganize the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola and the Bancos Ejidales. According to Ortiz Rubio, these institutions had failed to meet expectations, coordinate activities, and spread credit to ejidos and small farmers. They were cited for a lack of experience in such a complex and involved area. No specific reforms were mentioned in this address, but the credit program appeared to be of key importance to Ortiz Rubio and to the future of Mexico's ejidos and small farmers.
The pace of land redistribution slowed precipitously when Ortiz Rubio assumed the presidency, although he claimed otherwise. In reaction to Portes Gil's active redistribution of land, Ortiz Rubio under Calles's direction reduced the amount of land redistributed (see table 4).

**TABLE 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dotation/Restitution</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>8/2/1923</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1929&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2,226,079</td>
<td>34,076</td>
<td>3,759</td>
<td>2,263,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>978,532</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>978,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1,256,969</td>
<td>50,190</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,307,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>395,588</td>
<td>118,336</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>513,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>129,829</td>
<td>1,867,915</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,997,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>418,500</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>418,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,986,997</td>
<td>2,489,017</td>
<td>3,759</td>
<td>7,479,773</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Los Presidentes de México ante la Nación, 1821-1966, 3:879-1279.

*Includes both distributive and redistributive policies.

<sup>a</sup>Portes Gil.

<sup>b</sup>Ortiz Rubio.

<sup>c</sup>Rodriguez.

There was a marked decline in the amount of land redistributed through dotation and restitution policies and a noticeable increase in the amount of land distributed through colonization programs (see table 4). In his fourteen months in power, Portes Gil established a rapid pace of
land redistribution. Ortiz Rubio did not halt the process, but his declining efforts are indicative of the ideological shift toward less redistribution of the later Calles period.

Ortiz Rubio noted that the activities of the Comisión Nacional Agraria had increased in the states of Tlaxcala, Colima, Aguascalientes, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosí in recognition of the need to complete the agrarian program in these locations. As Portes Gil had done before in Morelos, the effort was being made to terminate the agrarian program in various parts of Mexico by the early 1930s. Before Congress, the publicly stated reason for the program's termination was the successful completion of agrarian reform. In reality, the effects of the world economic crisis, improving relations with the United States, and the commitment to industrialize the nation reduced the government's interest in the pursuit of land reform. Additionally, as noted earlier, the increasing conservatism of Calles and the men he placed in the presidency influenced the policy choice to reduce efforts in agrarian reform. Stability and political legitimacy seemed to have been achieved.

In his second annual message to Congress on 1 September 1931, Ortiz Rubio continued the strong use of revolutionary symbolism. As noted in his address, even though the world economic depression had caused severe problems for Mexico, the nation was committed to going forward with the revolutionary land reform program. He pledged his administration to resolving the problems brought to light by the revolution. He committed his government to the maintenance of "revolutionary unity, cohesion and solidarity." Directly referring to
the revolution's ideology, Ortiz Rubio discussed the inevitability of differing interpretations of revolutionary principles but argued this was beneficial in discouraging conservatism and developing new ideas for the resolution of problems. Of all the presidents of postrevolutionary Mexico to this time, Ortiz Rubio used the most symbolic and emotive rhetoric in his discussions of the agrarian problem. As will become clear, Ortiz Rubio, like Carranza, showed the most divergence between what was said and done in this area. The reason for this likely related to his ambiguous association with Calles. It was not at all clear what views Ortiz Rubio actually held since he was completely dominated by Calles.

In discussing the land question specifically, Ortiz Rubio noted that the economic crisis had impeded governmental efforts to extend the restitution and dotation of lands. From August 1930 through July 1931, the Comisión Nacional Agraria faced a large increase in the number of petitions for land it and its decentralized bureaus at the state level had received. In total there were nearly fifty-eight hundred petitions for the restitution or dotation of land with an additional estimated five thousand more entitled to make petitions. The Comisión Nacional Agraria issued only 515 favorable resolutions and 104 negative opinions. The executive acted upon 388 definitive resolutions, distributing 636,500 hectares to 49,778 families. State governors resolved 716 petitions for land, finding 635 to be acceptable and provisionally redistributing 620,473 hectares. This evidence suggests that in 1930, Ortiz Rubio took credit for land actually redistributed under the Portes Gil administration, for by 1931 the total amount of land redistributed
solely under the Ortiz Rubio administration was only a fraction of the stated amount. However, in what appears to have been an effort to legitimize his administration's performance in this area, Ortiz Rubio noted that as of the end of July 1931, Mexico had 3,778 ejidos with a surface area of over 6.8 million hectares (but only 245,000 irrigated) benefiting nearly three million campesinos. Additional lands were distributed under the colonization program but, again, in reduced proportions compared with previous administrations. About fifty thousand hectares of land were to be colonized according to several agreements entered into by the Ortiz Rubio administration. But the president noted that between 1916 and 1930 more than seven million hectares of land had been distributed under the colonization program to 378,385 families in nineteen states, most coming under the Ley Federal de Colonización passed during the Calles administration. Ortiz Rubio also noted that the Comisión de Colonización y Fraccionamientos de Predios Rústicos Nacionales was seeking a presidential decree that would authorize the division of good lands on private farms. From this, 206,500 hectares could be colonized by more than one thousand families.

In fulfilling a policy decision made in 1930, Ortiz Rubio terminated ejidal distribution of land in the states of Tlaxcala, Aguascalientes, and Zacatecas and noted that this activity would end soon in San Luis Potosí and Coahuila. This announcement was coupled with a long discussion in which Ortiz Rubio referred to the ejidal, colonization, and irrigation programs as being integral for the redistribution of wealth in Mexico, and the revival of the ejido as being a central focus of the revolution. Apparently, if this rhetoric
had any merit, Ortiz Rubio was convinced that the land reform program had been sufficiently completed in many states. Much of his attention toward ejidos and small farms was directed toward the credit system and professed ways to improve seeds, crop diversification, fertilizers, rural education, and irrigation. In other words, like postrevolutionary presidents before him, Ortiz Rubio continued to emphasize agricultural production over land redistribution. Proposed reforms to the *Ley de Crédito Agrícola* gave the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola authority to organize the ejido system. Congress was called upon to issue these reforms and others proposed for the *Ley Agraria*. Publicly stated, the purpose of these reforms was to enable the government to define the status of peones acasillados, those campesinos neglected by Mexico's land reform program because they were resident on haciendas. In reality, their purpose was to encourage greater rural organization and use of credit to promote commercial activity.

Ortiz Rubio increasingly found his administration controlled by former president Calles, and the conservative policies supported at this time by the government are evidence of a political realignment gradually taking grip on Mexico. In his 1932 message to Congress, Ortiz Rubio continued to use revolutionary symbolism to link his administration directly to the ideology and goals of the revolution. Again, the executive emphasized that the basic problem facing Mexico was the redistribution of land. In defense of the relatively low number of definitive grants, Ortiz Rubio noted that to date some 5,894 provisional or definitive grants of ejidal land has been made. An additional 17,866 hectares of national lands were opened to cultivation through leasing.
permits, and the Ramo de Colonización received 109 petitions to colonize land. The tone of the address is one of apology and defense in the land reform area. There was no other mention of executed land distributions in this address.

Organization of the countryside had displaced land redistribution as the government's principal concern. This fit with Calles's predisposition to divide and control the nation. The onset of the Depression coupled with lingering religious turmoil relating to the Cristero rebellion posed moderate threats to the legitimacy of the postrevolutionary government. Reforms to older laws and the creation of new ones served to increase the centralization of agrarian matters. Reforms to article 10 of the Ley Constitucional de 6 de enero de 1915 restated that responsibility for agrarian matters fell to the executive. New bureaucratic organs were created to monitor and direct activities in the land reform area. A Departamento Consultivo y de Legislación was established to act as watchdog over the Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento and to review all proposals for land distribution. A Departamento de Organización Agraria was created to oversee the ejidal program and monitor the extension of credit to ejidos. A Ley de Responsabilidades de Funcionarios y Empleados Agrarios was passed to sanction all legitimate rights to lands held by villages. And two laws were passed to promote greater rural organization--the Ley de Asociaciones Agrícolas and the Ley de Servicios Agrícolas Federales.

The efforts of the Calles-Ortiz Rubio administration to centralize agrarian reform would have a significant impact on the ability of other executives to successfully carry out land redistribution. The
proceedings had become increasingly complex and there was a concomitant slowdown in performance. The process of organizing the peasantry would also require future administrations to pay closer attention to this new, rural, political force.

Completely dissatisfied with the secondary role he had to play, Ortiz Rubio resigned from the presidency in September 1932, not long after he gave his presidential address to Congress. This lends support to the view that the rhetoric of Ortiz Rubio was used to divert attention away from the conservative policy actions of Calles, especially in the sudden and deep cutbacks in land redistribution following the Portes Gil administration. Once again Calles had precipitated a crisis of legitimacy for the revolution. But Calles was determined to make himself head of the Revolutionary Family. General Abelardo Rodríguez, a wealthy banker and owner of gambling houses, at the request of Calles, became Mexico's next postrevolutionary president.

Acting as interim president to complete the remaining two years of what was originally Obregón's term, Rodríguez discussed Mexico's state of affairs before Congress on 1 September 1933. In a statement of policy, Rodríguez assured Congress that he would intensify land redistribution, the division of ejidal lands into private plots, the organization of campesinos, and the extension of agricultural credit and education. He sanctioned the creation of the Oficina de Fraccionamiento to speed restitution and dotation policies and to encourage the fulfillment of the Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos. During the year, Rodríguez claimed that there were 1,023 petitions for dotation, restitution, or amplification of ejidos. He issued 338 resolutions of
which only 94 definitively granted possession to 129,829 hectares for 11,123 families. But he nearly halted the program (see table 4). To divert attention, as Ortiz Rubio before him had done, Rodríguez couched his policies in the accomplishments of all revolutionary regimes. He noted that by 1933 nearly 7.5 million hectares of land had been redistributed to 734,937 families under 13,500 petitions for dotation or restitution. In fulfillment of the Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos, Rodríguez claimed that 11,318 divisions of ejidal lands were made during the year, bringing the cumulative total to more than 52,000 divisions. Under the colonization program some 310,000 hectares of national land reportedly were occupied. Petitions were received for the colonization of fifty-seven privately owned fincas, two of which were expropriated by the government. The government purchased nearly 1.25 million hectares of privately owned land in Baja California with the expectation of colonizing this sparsely populated territory.

Structurally, Rodríguez continued the centralization efforts of the Calles-Ortiz Rubio administration. Several new agencies were created to promote greater cohesion in the land reform area. Comisiones Locales Agrarias, previously disbanded, were reinstated as the first layer in the process of petitioning for restitution or dotation of lands under the land redistribution program. The Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento was called upon to reorganize its technical and administrative structures, and the Comisión Organizadora del Consejo Nacional de Agricultura was created by a decree of 18 February 1933 to coordinate and unify all the acts of the Secretaría and its dependencies. The purpose of this reorganization was to better coordinate production and
consumption, promote greater cooperation in agricultural production, reduce "middlemen" costs between producers and consumers, extend the production of vegetables and animal husbandry, and improve the distribution of agricultural products. The Departamento Consultivo y de Legislación was called on to adjust and apply revolutionary land reform laws to make them fair to all parties involved while the administration studied a Código de Tierras which would modify the process of recovery and distribution of lands. Rodríguez was considering the creation of a financial institution to assist the colonization program and to move ahead more rapidly with colonization proceedings. The colonization program received new attention as a means to encourage Mexican nationals to return from the United States to farm their own plots of land, and to provide more land to ejidatarios currently living on crowded ejidos. The recovery and cultivation of national rather than privately owned lands was still at the heart of the colonization program.

With the Mexican economy still highly dependent on agricultural production, Rodríguez targeted agricultural recovery as key to greater national economic gain. Extending irrigation, particularly in northern Mexico, reorganizing ejidal credit banks, promoting agricultural diversification, and starting a pilot program offering Social Security to colonists were some of the new programs he announced to work in conjunction with rural education and improvements in technology to make Mexican agriculture more productive.

By the direction of this address it would appear that Rodríguez concentrated more on the execution of agrarian production programs and used less rhetoric in this discussion than Ortiz Rubio. There were
moderate frequency distributions on the Symbols and Structures dimensions of the index of verbal ideological adherence, a high distribution on the Reforms dimension, and a low number of references to Agrarianism and Patriotism (figure 10). This pattern is consistent with the verbal ideological commitment of Calles and the actions of Ortiz Rubio and signaled a continuation of their policies.

**FIGURE 10. RODRIGUEZ: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE**

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms; D = Structures; E = Patriotism

The end of the Calles dictatorship came in 1934, although not because Calles removed himself from executive power. The Partido Nacional Revolucionario had selected Lázaro Cárdenas as its presidential candidate and he was elected to that office in July 1934. Calles was instrumental in nominating Cárdenas even though he had earned a
reputation as a reformer while he was governor of Michoacán. In 1933, the PNR released a six-year plan (Plan Sexenal) of government policy which included a section on agrarian policy. Rodríguez left office after introducing a Código Agrario which established future agricultural and agrarian policy goals. Clearly, Calles's intention was to have Cárdenas follow the policy course established in the Plan Sexenal in agrarian reform matters. Rodríguez left office with little reputation save for introducing a new brand of official repression under the guise of suppressing Communists. In actuality, his "Gold Shirts" were ordered to quiet any opposition to Calles. The next phase of the revolution would include one of the most significant power plays in Mexican history between Callistas and Cardenistas and one of the only ones that occurred peacefully. It would also be a period of intense ideological redefinition and revolutionary goal fulfillment.

The period of the Maximato ended with increasing threats to the legitimacy of the regime. During the early to mid-1930s, Calles changed his reformist character and adopted a far more conservative attitude. Agrarian reform came to a grinding halt under Rodríguez. To restore public confidence in the postrevolutionary government, another change was necessary.
END NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1Caudillismo is a Spanish word that means rule of the chief, the strong man. Usually this individual has had military experience.


6Ibid.

7Los Presidentes de México, 3:650-717, especially 681-89. The discussion following is based on this information.

8Ibid., 686.  
9Ibid., 684.

10Ibid., 684.  
11Ibid., 685.

12Ibid., 684-85.  
13Ibid., 685.

14Ibid., 681.

15Ibid., 721-61, especially 736-42. The discussion following is based on this information.

16Ibid., 721, 739.  
17Ibid., 742.


19Los Presidentes de México, 3:741.


21Alan Knight in ibid., 58.

22Los Presidentes de México, 3:766-800, especially 778-84. The discussion following is based on this information.

23Ibid., 799.  
24Ibid., 780.  
25Ibid., 779.
26Ibid., 804-77, especially 835-41. The discussion following is based on the information.

27 Ibid., 805-6.  28 Ibid., 835.  29 Ibid., 840.

30 Ibid., 839.  31 Ibid., 879-83.

32 Ibid., 884-956, especially 903-17. The discussion following is based on the information.

33 Ibid., 905, 914.  34 Ibid., 916-17.

35 Ibid., 916. Of those declared void, twenty-seven were made by Mexican nationals and nine by foreigners.

36 Parkes, A History of Mexico, 392.

37 Ibid., 392-93.  38 Ibid., 393.


40 Ibid., 963.  41 Ibid., 964.

42 Ibid., 967-1031, especially 992-97. The discussion following is based on the information.

43 Ibid., 967.

44 Ibid., 1036-1106, especially 1063-70. The discussion following is based on the information.

45 Ibid., 1064.  46 Ibid., 1065.

47 Ibid., 1111-86, especially 1143-77. The discussion following is based on the information.

48 Ibid., 1191-1263, especially 1221-31. The discussion following is based on the information.

49 Ibid., 1223.  50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., 1227.
CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION OF REVOLUTIONARY LAND REFORM POLICIES:
LAZARO CARDENAS

To this point we have focused on the ways postrevolutionary administrations perceived their obligation and expressed their commitment to the ideological goal of land reform. If verbal messages are indicators of perceptions and attitudes, then from 1910 to 1930 Mexican presidents on the whole reflected concern for appeasing mass expectations for land distribution. Different distributive and redistributive programs were created, but on the whole, the pace of land reform was slow. Since the Ley Agraria of 6 January 1915, Mexican presidents were cognizant of the linkages between their commitment to land reform and popular support for their administration from the countryside. In the turbulent postrevolutionary period, regime stabilization and economic recovery were of primary importance, and policies designed to bring such development about were often couched in terms of rural recovery and land reform. Important until at least 1928 was the stability of Mexico's new revolutionary government as it worked to legitimize its rule.

A measure of whether verbal ideological adherence and policy preferences coincided in land reform policies is in the scope and direction of actual, implemented programs and the extent of the benefits they distributed. An assessment of the first twenty years of land reform in Mexico will provide a standard by which to determine whether
revolutionary administrations committed themselves not only to the language of the revolution's ideology of land reform but also to the structural transformation it was to bring about.

In the period from 1915 to 1932, the government of Mexico had been controlled to greater or lesser degrees by seven presidents, three of whom held office provisionally. This kind of instability was particularly harmful to Mexico from the standpoint of political consolidation and organization. It was difficult at best to devise consistent governing structures and policies when the average duration of an administration was little more than two years. Similarly, until 1929 violent political turnover was attempted through rebellions. This kind of political environment did not lend itself to policy implementation. But it is important to know what these many administrations felt they could achieve within the constraints of the prevailing political environment and their own ideological position. This gives an idea of how land reform was taking shape as a national policy in the postrevolutionary period and how it would be structured for future administrations. It is to this that we now turn.

A study of the rhetoric of early postrevolutionary presidents (Carranza to Rodríguez) uncovered a division between ideological and pragmatic political styles of presidents. The distribution of rhetoric among select dimensions of the index of intensity of ideological adherence for each administration permits the labeling of the political style of Carranza, Calles, Portes Gil, and Ortiz Rubio as ideological because of high frequency counts on the Symbols and Reforms dimensions (A and C). De la Huerta, Obregón, and Rodríguez each exhibited a more
pragmatic political style by using less symbolic rhetoric to associate their administrations with the revolution and generally made fewer references to agrarian reforms. The language of the ideological presidents gives the impression of strong commitment to the revolutionary goal of agrarian reform. In each case, except for Portes Gil, the verbal commitment was to distributive land reform and the creation of a class of small, land-owning farmers. Portes Gil endorsed both the private-property goals of small farmers and redistributive land reform. The pragmatic presidents used less specific symbolism in discussing their views of land reform, although Obregón did refer to the restitution of Indian village lands. Of these pragmatic presidents, Obregón was the only one to complete a full term in office. Both De la Huerta and Rodríguez were provisionally appointed and this likely influenced their perceived role in land reform.

The cumulative picture we get from the 1915 to 1934 period of land reform would lead us to assume that the ideology of the revolution influenced the kinds of public policies each president endorsed (see figure 11). Although in each instance presidents from this period made only a moderate number of references to the agrarian question (Agrarianism dimension), a high number of references was made to reforms designed to resolve the problem (Reforms dimension). Therefore, we must conclude that these presidents were verbally committed to the revolutionary ideology of land reform and pledged their administrations to finding solutions to this problem. Within this group, the prevailing ideological preference favored creating an independent class of small, land-owning farmers. Private property and productivity were emphasized.
in their addresses. The preferred type of land reform was based on the sale and/or lease of public and idle lands.

FIGURE 11. PRESIDENTS, 1916-34: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms; D = Structures; E = Patriotism

As we have seen, ideology and policy choice within this first stage of postrevolutionary administration in Mexico showed incongruity between verbal adherence to land reform and the execution of meaningful policies designed to resolve the issue, except in the cases of Calles and, to a lesser extent, Obregón. In publicly presenting himself as pragmatic, Obregón obfuscated his position on land reform. He improved the redistributitional performance over that achieved by Carranza to a considerable extent; but taken alone, his land distribution and
redistribution accomplishments were moderate rather than revolutionary. Situational and environmental factors, in part, explain his output.

Calles used more ideological language in discussing his policy preferences in land reform and he demonstrated a strong commitment to land distribution in the execution of policies. Portes Gil continued this style during his interim presidency and the pace of land distribution intensified. However, the other symbolic presidents, Carranza and Ortiz Rubio, showed the highest frequency distributions on the dimensions of intensity of ideological adherence, but they did not translate this commitment into action. Their performance in land distribution and especially redistribution was weak, both relative to others and taken alone. A review of other pertinent facts during this period will provide some explanations for these patterns.

To blame political environment for the lack of significant implemented land reform in this period would conceal important policy dynamics that make the study of this area so interesting. For many reasons through the period 1915 to 1934, land reform and distributive and redistributive programs existed on paper, were verbally endorsed by every political administration, were becoming part of the national value system, but did not significantly alter the land tenure system of Mexico. The latifundio still existed, peones acasillados were still trapped on large haciendas, campesinos worked property other than their own and remained very poor and illiterate. Some figures make these points clear. Through the Portes Gil administration nearly 7.7 million hectares of land had been distributed to 750,000 campesinos. More than 121 million hectares of land were still in the hands of private owners,
seventeen times the amount of land distributed since the Ley Agraria of 1915. Further, most of this private property was in holdings of more than one thousand hectares, far exceeding the constitutional provisions regulating private landholdings.\(^1\)

**TABLE 5**

**PRESIDENTIAL CLAIMS OF REDISTRIBUTIVE LAND REFORM, 1917-33 (hectares)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dotation</th>
<th>Restitution</th>
<th>Both D&amp;R</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>19,128</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>19,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>86,746</td>
<td>21,284</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>108,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>45,309</td>
<td>968(^a)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>45,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>113,975</td>
<td>44,581</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>159,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>435,757</td>
<td>142,182</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>577,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>112,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>112,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>311,938</td>
<td>751,125(^a)</td>
<td>1,063,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>579,705</td>
<td>629,629(^a)</td>
<td>1,209,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,352,770(^a)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,352,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,155,218</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,155,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,067,803</td>
<td>634,103(^b)</td>
<td>1,701,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,609,361</td>
<td>616,718(^a)</td>
<td>2,226,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>978,532</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>978,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>636,496</td>
<td>620,473(^a)</td>
<td>1,256,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>395,588</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>395,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>129,829</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>129,829</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 1,634,138 208,123 7,739,017 3,253,016 12,491,294


\(^a\) Provisional possessions.

\(^b\) Ejidal proceedings.

Through their state-of-the-nation addresses, Mexican presidents during this period claimed to have redistributed nearly 12.5 million hectares of land through restitution and dotation policies (see table
5). They also claimed to have distributed more than 22.8 million hectares of national or idle lands for a total land distribution of over 35 million hectares. Information collected in Mexico in the 1930s confirms, however, that what actually was accomplished in land distribution fell far short of what Mexico's many presidents had claimed. In part, this problem related to conflicting opinions of what constituted Mexico's revolutionary land reform program. By 1934, restitution policies no longer occupied much space in annual reports to Congress, and performance in this area never amounted to a significant return of lands to communal villages. Dotation became the principal land reform policy but involved an array of complicated and often conflicting federal and state laws governing the division and distribution of land.\(^2\) Carranza and Calles, to a considerable extent, relied more heavily on the division and sale of national and idle lands to the landless campesinos (see table 6). This marked the beginning of the noticeable differences between those administrations pursuing redistributive policies and those pursuing distributive policies. In the context of land reform, redistributive policies included expropriations of privately held land, application of the Ley Agraria requiring landowners to voluntarily conform to its stipulations by dividing their own lands, or the division of idle lands. The impetus for this policy was the redistribution of national wealth through land reform. Distributive land reform policies, on the other hand, involved the division of national lands or the purchase and sale of national lands. The purpose of this policy was the distribution of land to the landless and did not involve a redistribution of national wealth as much as the opportunity
for campesinos to earn a living from the farming of their own plots of land.

### TABLE 6

**PRESIDENTIAL CLAIMS OF DISTRIBUTIVE LAND REFORM, 1916-33**

(hectares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Nullification</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>8-2-1923</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>7,095,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7,095,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>6,185,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6,185,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>1,205,933</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,205,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>47,493</td>
<td>106,359</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>153,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>68,460</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>69,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>258,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>18,613</td>
<td>248,635</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>267,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>4,604,573</td>
<td>12,442</td>
<td>572,992</td>
<td>5,190,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>42,652</td>
<td>203,680</td>
<td>246,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>64,107</td>
<td>6,598</td>
<td>70,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>34,076</td>
<td>3,759</td>
<td>37,835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50,190</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>118,336</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>118,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,867,915</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,867,915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 19,483,072 2,545,712 787,029 22,815,813


Because Mexico was a predominantly rural, illiterate, and unorganized society up to the mid-1930s, public recognition of the discrepancies between what was said about land reform and what was actually done was minimal. Land seizures occurred on an infrequent basis and were not condoned by governmental authorities.³ Rural Mexico was more at peace by the mid-1930s than it had been in recent memory.
Zapata was killed in 1919, and with his death the urgency of land reform seemed to diminish. By the direction of presidential addresses and policies, Mexicans were prepared for gradual and careful land distribution while the economy recovered. From its inception, land reform proceeded at a slow pace and there was little reason to believe it would accelerate. The pace of land reform from 1916 to 1934 is depicted in table 7.

TABLE 7

LAND DISTRIBUTION IN MEXICO, 1916-34

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Date Term Ends</th>
<th>Total Hectares</th>
<th>Cumulative Total</th>
<th>% of Mexico's Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carranza</td>
<td>5-1920</td>
<td>167,936</td>
<td>167,936</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De la Huerta</td>
<td>11-1920</td>
<td>33,696</td>
<td>201,632</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obregón</td>
<td>11-1924</td>
<td>1,100,117</td>
<td>1,301,749</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calles</td>
<td>11-1928</td>
<td>2,972,876</td>
<td>4,274,625</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portes Gil</td>
<td>2-1930</td>
<td>1,707,750</td>
<td>5,982,375</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ortiz Rubio</td>
<td>9-1932</td>
<td>944,538</td>
<td>6,926,913</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodríguez</td>
<td>11-1934</td>
<td>790,694</td>
<td>7,717,607</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The government was able to defend its program by citing that millions of hectares of land had been made available to Mexico's campesinos. What the presidents neglected to mention was that private landholdings were relatively secure and were not subject to division. The disorganization of the campesinos worked to their disadvantage as the government was more concerned with appeasing the more powerful landholding class than with alienating the landless. In practice, politics
and regime stability were more important priorities at this juncture than fulfilling the social justice promises of the revolution. The achievement of regime stability and political consolidation provided the context for the massive land distributions of the 1930s.

For those campesinos who had received land, part of the revolution's promises were fulfilled. They then encountered the problems attendant with the cultivation of crops: the need for seeds, machinery, fertilizers, and insecticides. These required credit, of which little had been made available through the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola. Obregón and Calles had been sure to borrow from this lending institution for their own agricultural pursuits while it was known that the Banco preferred to lend to haciendas and productive agricultural units over uneducated campesinos. The credit squeeze continued to limit the productivity of ejidos and small farms until the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal was established in 1935.

Each of the early postrevolutionary presidents expressed concern for agricultural recovery. The health of the national economy was tied to the recovery of the agricultural sector. Because of the devastation to farm properties caused by the civil war, each administration showed appreciation for the need for credit. It was at this point that land distribution more fully developed into land reform, a more integral program designed to provide low-cost assistance to Mexico's new class of small-property farmers. With economic and political disorganization throughout most of this period, agricultural credit was discussed more than it was realized with funding. This, too, would change in the next phase of postrevolutionary history, and with it would come a tremendous
expansion in the scope of governmental activities in the land reform area.

Land reform policies in Mexico up to the mid-1930s had diverged from the social justice, redistributive ideology of the Zapatistas and instead endorsed the economic development, distributive ideology of the Carrancistas. Madero's revolution never intended such a split: it had advocated the creation of a class of small-property holders. The uncontrolled outburst that accompanied the overthrow of Porfirio Díaz brought to light the indigenous campesino ideology of communal landholding; and although this ideal was not shared by the successful revolutionary elite, the impact of the Zapatistas was powerful and helped define land reform possibilities in Mexico. The revolutionary elite recognized communal landholding but did little to encourage its development through land redistribution. They had given priority to a different ideological goal. In 1934, a reorientation of Mexico's revolutionary land reform was to take place, and for the first time in postrevolutionary history, the communal form of landholding would be fully sanctioned and encouraged by the government. This represented a major ideological shift that would have profound implications for Mexico's rural transformation and for the popular view of the role of the revolutionary government.

Lázaro Cárdenas del Río was elected to the presidency of Mexico in 1934. He was selected at the PNR convention and his nomination was endorsed by the Callistas. Cárdenas appeared to represent a more liberal faction than the Callistas, but Calles himself had every confidence Cárdenas would prove as malleable as his predecessors. In
this he was wrong; and as history has shown, Lázaro Cárdenas was the most revolutionary of Mexico's postrevolutionary presidents. The Cárdenas period is well documented, especially in the land reform area, as land redistribution represented one of his most spectacular accomplishments. This section will show how Cárdenas perceived his role in the evolving history of Mexico's revolution and what he felt were the major agrarian policy challenges facing his administration. The facts are clear: Cárdenas redistributed nearly eighteen million hectares of land to campesinos. What factors account for the fundamental shifts in policy preference and approach assumed by Cárdenas? How different was he from those who preceded him as president of Mexico?

One of the most obvious differences between Cárdenas and other presidents before him was in his campaign style. As hand-picked successors to the incumbent, most presidential candidates failed to make public contact before the election, as nomination was tantamount to election. Cárdenas, on the other hand, campaigned extensively throughout Mexico and came in direct contact with the campesino class. In his inaugural message to Congress on 30 November 1934, Cárdenas noted that he had encountered "profound inequities and iniquitous injustices" in the countryside. He found villages that had not received any land and others that had received land of very poor quality. He pledged his administration to making rapid redistribution of workable land and organizing campesinos into more productive units to bring about the kinds of reforms promised by the revolution. More so than any other president before him, Cárdenas saw the perpetuation of the feudal land
system as Mexico's greatest impediment to social transformation and economic growth.

Cárdenas continued to outline his agrarian program in his first message before Congress on 1 September 1935. He acknowledged operating under the Plan Sexenal, the program devised by Calles and his associates before the election of 1934 and revised by Cardenistas at the national PNR convention in 1933. He continued working to extend technology and instruction to the countryside, the colonization program, irrigation works, and other related programs initiated by his predecessors. He increased the funding of the Departamento Agrario over the limits set in the Plan Sexenal from 4.25 million pesos in 1934 to more than 7.5 million pesos by April 1935. This funding increase was indicative of his commitment to pursue land redistribution at a more rapid pace than had those who came before him. Cárdenas claimed to have redistributed more than 2.6 million hectares to 200,000 thousand ejidatarios during his first year in office. He announced a program combining the activities of the secretaries of Agriculture, Education, National Economy, War and Navy, Communications and Public Works, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Forestry and Hunting and Fishing to formulate an integrated program of agrarian reform. He introduced reforms to the Código Agrario that improved policies for the division and colonization of latifundios and for providing irrigation. And he attended to the latent problem of the peones acasillados, those campesinos bound to the hacienda and effectively excluded from the original Ley Agraria of 1915. Cárdenas's approach was calculated and
thorough. He made it clear early in his term that he would bring about significant changes to Mexico's rural structures.

The themes contained within his first state-of-the-nation address were continued in following years. Cárdenas faced financial constraints imposed by the recovery from the Depression but was able to move ahead with strong national support for agricultural credit programs. In creating the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal, Cárdenas signaled his approach to Mexican land reform: he felt that both small farming and ejidal farming had equal status and should be fostered equally by the government. Formation of cooperatives and ejidal associations assisted Cárdenas in granting more equal status to ejidos.

Cárdenas discussed the relationship of general land reform funding policies to the question of increasing agricultural production through the extension of irrigation projects into new areas of Mexico. Rapid land redistribution as experienced in Mexico during the Cárdenas years revealed how little cultivable land there was available in the more heavily populated areas. New irrigation programs were meant to open up new territory to farming or grazing, especially for ejidal communities that often lacked resources to finance such projects. National irrigation works were initiated under Calles but had not successfully reached all areas of the country. Cárdenas publicly committed his administration to the extension of irrigation.

By 1938, Cárdenas had brought about the rapid expansion of credit to ejidatarios as the national economy experienced improvements. Since 1935, the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal had made loans totalling $126,361,696 while the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola had
loaned $37,300,000 during the same period.⁹ According to Cárdenas, the amount allocated to the Banco Ejidal was insufficient to meet the needs of the ejidatarios. He spent much of the last years of his term structuring ejidos so that credit institutions would be more aware of their needs and supply them loans more directly. The cumulative effect of his fiscal land reform policies was to improve the quality and quantity of both ejidal and small-plot farming through irrigation projects and improvement loans.

In fulfilling his pledge to organize campesinos, Cárdenas laid the groundwork for the creation of the Confederación Nacional Campesina (CNC). As with other national structures developing at this time, part of the motivation behind campesino organization was to prevent the usurpation of political power by General Calles. It was rumored that Calles would attempt to depose Cárdenas. As a counterthreat, Cárdenas made campesinos part of his militia and armed them. He also initiated a process of campesino politicization through this campesino union. By affiliating the CNC with the revolutionary government, Cárdenas helped assure campesino support for government policies both as they pertained to land reform and non-land reform issues.

Late in his term Cárdenas reflected concern for the number of campesinos leaving Mexico to work in the United States. Cárdenas interpreted this as a domestic embarrassment and failure to provide adequate employment opportunities and levels of assistance to campesinos. By this time Mexico's population was beginning to grow rapidly. It would take only a short while before decision makers realized that steadily rising birth rates would impede successful rural transformation. For
overcrowded areas and as an incentive to those who had left Mexico, the colonization program received new attention during the Cárdenas term. The recovery of national and idle lands had been a policy preference of the earliest of the postrevolutionary administrations, for this did not involve the expropriation and division of privately held tracts of land and did not, therefore, alienate landowners. But because Cárdenas was concerned with past reform gestures that granted un till able land to campesinos, his colonization program was integrated into the complex agrarian reform project he undertook in 1935. This included the dissemination of technological information; use of machinery; new seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides; and irrigation. To meet these goals, credit had to be supplied to the colonists, many of whom were the poorest of the campesino class. The costs of colonization were high.10

With the exiling of Calles in 1936, Cárdenas brought about other reforms that would bear directly on the resolution of the agrarian problem. In 1936, he had begun collectivizing ejidos in the Laguna region. This was later followed by collectivizations of ejidos in Yucatán State and the Yaqui River and Mexicali Valley areas. This represented a complete break with the earlier patterns of dividing ejidos into private parcels of land. Cárdenas rejected the Ley del Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos in favor of the original Zapatista program of encouraging collective farms. This created some tension as small farmers felt secondary to ejidal units. Agrarian reform received consistent support from Cárdenas, and by the end of 1937, 565,216 campesinos had received land.
In 1938, Cárdenas undertook the most significant single policy decision of his presidency, the expropriation of the petroleum industry. The legal basis for this decision had been laid in 1936 with the passage of the Ley de Expropiación. Article 27 of the constitution was used as the rationale for going forward with the protection of Mexico's subsoil mineral and petroleum reserves. A large portion of the remaining state-of-the-nation addresses of President Cárdenas was devoted to detailed reviews of the actions his government took in the wake of the expropriation. Although pertinent to other land reform considerations, in this policy area Article 27 was applied for the purpose of achieving Mexican economic sovereignty and to encourage national unity during the divisive period of reformism. His land reform policies in particular had alienated landowners who were now threatened, foreigners who felt that the expropriation of the petroleum industry would further jeopardize their interests in Mexico, and campesinos who had yet to enjoy the benefits of land ownership.

By 1939, Cárdenas had to concern himself with the rising conservative reaction to his accelerated reform policies. Now called a Socialist and in some quarters a Communist, Cárdenas explained his actions in terms of revolutionary goal fulfillment. Increasingly his rhetoric contained symbolic references to the revolution, and he reduced the pace of agrarian reform to appease domestic as well as international criticism. But Cárdenas did not reverse himself as Calles had earlier done. Rather, he retained a strong ideological commitment to agrarianism and continued land redistributions. He applied in practice his conviction that national interests were superior to individual
interests. He alienated many but skillfully brought campesinos and laborers into his support group while simultaneously removing the military from political affairs. In 1938, the National Revolutionary Party became the Party of the Mexican Revolution, and it was structured along corporatist lines that effectively permitted Cárdenas to forge independent support groups among the constituent members of the party.

The verbal style of Cárdenas is reflected in the content analysis of his seven addresses before the Mexican Congress from 1934 to 1940. What is discernable in these addresses is significant congruence between what was set forth as goals in the land reform area and what was actually accomplished during his six-year term. Cárdenas did not load his messages to Congress with superfluous rhetoric as Ortiz Rubio before him had done. (See appendix B for the patterns found in the individual addresses.) There was a progression toward more symbolism in the later years of his term, particularly as conservative reaction escalated. But the content of the messages was consistent and clear—-Mexico would have meaningful revolutionary land redistribution and land reform.

What kind of land reform policies did Cárdenas implement and whom did they benefit? According to the figures cited in his presidential addresses to Congress, Cárdenas made available more than thirty-one million hectares of national and privately held lands (see table 8). Through both donation and restitution programs and provisional and definitive decrees he claimed to have redistributed 24,278,014 hectares of land. Through the application of the Ley de Colonización, the Law of 2 August 1923, and the nullification of land concessions, Cárdenas claimed to have distributed 7,715,974 hectares of land. Data collected
by independent investigators, however, attribute Cárdenas with the total distribution of 17,906,429 hectares of land during his six-year term.11

### TABLE 8

LAND DISTRIBUTION CLAIMED BY CÁRDENAS, 1935-40
(hectares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dotation/Restitution</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>4,709,769</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5,209,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>4,783,906</td>
<td>275,000</td>
<td>431,000a</td>
<td>5,489,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>5,186,973</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5,186,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>4,428,520</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4,428,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>2,844,599</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,844,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>2,324,247</td>
<td>705,349</td>
<td>5,804,625b</td>
<td>8,834,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong> 24,278,014</td>
<td>1,480,349</td>
<td>6,235,625</td>
<td>31,993,988</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


aLey de 2 de agosto de 1923.

bIncludes cumulative totals from nullification proceedings.

In part, the discrepancy between these figures has to do with the way land grants were categorized, i.e., whether provisional and definitive grants were counted together or separately. Also, most reports of land distribution in Mexico do not mention the role of national or idle lands in their figures, just the dotation and restitution of lands. However the numbers are interpreted, Cárdenas was responsible for the most active land redistribution and distribution policies in the postrevolutionary period. There was significant congruence between what he verbally pledged as his goals and what was accomplished during his term. It is not likely that verbal ideological commitment alone caused him to
proceed with rapid land redistribution, but the data does indicate that the rhetoric and actions of Cárdenas coincided in every year of his term of office, even in the final years when the pace of land reform slowed when compared to the early years. He still redistributed more land in those final years than had been redistributed in any single year by any other president. The accumulated pattern of speech used by Cárdenas in his messages before Congress from 1934 to 1940 is shown in figure 12. Taken as a whole it represents the intensity of verbal ideological adherence of Cárdenas to the revolutionary goal of land reform.

FIGURE 12. CARDENAS, 1934-40: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

Across the four revolutionary ideology dimensions (A, B, C, and D) Cárdenas employed very favorable language to discuss his policy
preferences in the land reform area (figure 12). Except for the Patriotism dimension (E), which is designed to account for a linkage between nationalism and revolutionary symbolic language, Cárdenas averaged more than six references to the revolution, agrarianism, and bureaucratic structures related to his reform program, and nearly twenty-four references to actual agrarian reform plans or policies in each of his seven messages to Congress. The Patriotism dimension should not be interpreted as demonstrating weak nationalist sentiment, but rather suggests that Cárdenas saw little need in stressing the relationship of his administration to the nationalistic goals of the revolution. Because the expropriation of the petroleum industries was excluded from this analysis, a number of patriotic/nationalist references to the homeland (patria) were not counted into figure 12. This policy decision in and of itself was a move by the president to generate mass popular support and unity in the face of an impending crisis of legitimacy associated with challenges to Mexico's sovereignty and the rise of the conservative sinarquista movement in Mexico.12 The conservative reaction to the Cárdenas reforms received considerable support not only from middle and upper classes threatened by increasing equalitarianism and spiraling inflation, but also from campesinos who did not benefit from Cárdenas's agrarian reform and suffered from deteriorating economic conditions. These disparate groups were linked by their grievances against Cárdenas and by adherence to Catholicism.13

Before leaving office, Cárdenas issued a new Código Agrario to codify and organize the reforms he had pursued while in office. It facilitated the redistribution of lands, set forth ejidal organization,
clarified what was meant by "unaffected property" (land that was protected from distribution), ratified the rights of rural wage earners, permitted governmental regulation of water rights, fixed the conditions of large land holdings subject to redistribution, allowed the creation of cattle-raising ejidos, and made the Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento responsible for ejidal organization and required it to encourage a devolution of decision-making authority to decentralized units. The comprehensive scope of this new code was to act as an influence on those administrations to follow Cárdenas. It codified his approach to the agrarian question.

Lázaro Cárdenas spearheaded the most dramatic land reforms post-revolutionary Mexico had experienced to date. In so doing, he not only successfully transferred eighteen million hectares of land to more than 750,000 campesinos, he also raised expectations that a true structural transformation of the Mexican countryside was occurring. Campesinos who had not previously benefited from agrarian reform pressed demands for land, and those on ejidos with poor quality or insufficient lands also petitioned for redress. Private landowners had not before witnessed such purposeful political actions by the federal government. Their property was threatened and they turned against Cárdenas in support of a conservative opposition candidate. Even some of the old revolutionaries seemed to think the Cárdenas reformism went too far. Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, once Zapata's chief agrarian strategist and proponent of radical reform, and Dr. Atl, Mexican painter and revolutionary, had by the end of the Cárdenas term formed the Comité Revolucionario para la Reconstrucción Nacional to bring back respect for the constitution and
put an end to the perceived "communism" of the Cárdenas administration. They supported conservative opposition candidate General Juan Andreu Almazán.14

Apart from the politics of the era, it is pertinent to ask what effect the reformism of Cárdenas actually had on the land situation in Mexico. From the rise of conservative reaction in the late 1930s, it would seem that Cárdenas's agrarianism had a profound, transforming effect on the agricultural sector of Mexico. The facts suggest, however, that in 1940, 60 percent of the land was held by fewer than ten thousand hacendados, and three hundred haciendas of more than one hundred thousand acres (forty thousand hectares) remained intact in Mexico. Large landowners still owned more than three times the amount of land as the ejidatarios, and 49 percent of the population engaged in agriculture was classified as wage laborers.15 Nearly 60 percent of the campesinos eligible to receive land had little to none of their own, and some one million had been excluded from the credit system. Corruption during the Cárdenas administration reduced the real amount of redistributed land and generated dissatisfaction. As one observer noted:

Another potent source of popular discontent during this period was the widespread corruption that had accompanied implementation of the Cárdenas reform program, particularly in rural areas. Expropriated land all too often found its way into the hands of politicians and bureaucrats directing the redistribution program, rather than into peasant holdings.16

In light of these facts, it appears that the Cárdenas reforms only actually started the structural transformation of rural Mexico, and that a considerable amount of work was left to be done to dismantle the
hacienda system and return land to the landless. From this point on, the verbal ideological commitment of postrevolutionary presidents becomes even more important a variable in analyzing land reform because the figures suggest there were private lands available for expropriation and redistribution if the government wanted to move forward with the revolutionary program.
END NOTES TO CHAPTER 5


4Parkes, A History of Mexico, 382.


8Ibid., 16-38, especially 24-26, 31-33.

9Ibid., 25.

10James W. Wilkie, Measuring Land Reform (Los Angeles, UCLA Latin American Center, 1974), 9.


15Parkes, A History of Mexico, 403.

CHAPTER 6

INDUSTRIALIZATION, MODERNIZATION, AND LAND REFORM POLICIES:
AVILA CAMACHO, ALEMAN, RUIZ CORTINES

Many important studies of Mexico's postrevolutionary history claim that the impetus of revolutionary reform faded in the period immediately after Cárdenas and subsequently died under the postwar industrialization policies of the 1950s and 1960s.¹ The contention is that the social program of the revolution never received the kind of presidential initiative that it had under Cárdenas. Many facts support the view that in the land reform area, the redistribution of land to the landless fell sharply after Cárdenas. The drive for modernity and economic advancement replaced the equalitarian impetus of the Cárdenas presidency as World War II gave Mexico the opportunity to develop export-oriented industries. Economic development had a profound effect on Mexico's executive decision making. What were the prevalent elite attitudes toward the revolution's agrarian reform program in this period of economic development? Was there a shift in priorities or a shift in ideological orientation? Had a newer generation of leaders broken with the legacy that had supported the Mexican regime well during the twentieth century? One of the interesting paradoxes in the study of contemporary Mexican politics is the view that the revolution died an unceremonious death at the end of Cárdenas's presidency but that the political system it created still relies on its symbolism for popular
support and legitimacy. According to one interpretation, supporting
evidence that this paradox has become part of the national political
consciousness was derived from survey data collected in Mexico:

... the poor-to-mediocre output and performance evaluations are
juxtaposed within many of the same respondents with highly positive
orientations toward the political system itself, especially as it
relates to and embraces the goals and symbolism of the Mexican
Revolution.²

If the ideology of the revolution ceased to influence policy
preferences and choices of Mexico's decision makers, how could the
regime derive popular support from the revolutionary legacy? The
proposition that the Mexican government only manipulates revolutionary
ideology for popular consumption and does not commit itself to
fulfilling its ideals relates to the authoritarian characterization of
Mexican politics. As discussed earlier in the depiction of Mexican
political relations as rooted in patron-clientism, the regime operates
structurally in a non-ideological, corporatist, and demobilizing
context. For effective political action, an intricate system of broker
relations exists at the local, state, and federal levels, channeling
demands and providing supports. These features typify an authoritarian
regime. The symbolism of the revolution and the manipulation of its
ideology do not link governmental performance to goal expectation.
Rather, in this view, the role of ideology, at best, is one of unifying
the population around an intensely nationalistic, common historical
event and generating emotive support for the perpetuation of the regime
the revolution inspired.

This description of the Mexican political process simplifies a
very complex reality and in so doing implies a deficiency in the popular
estimates of governmental authority and responsibility. Reducing the ideology of the revolution to a purely symbolic and manipulative role suggests that the government relies on mass ignorance or can effectively purchase support through its clientist policies. In order to avoid the reductionism of these assumptions, we must ask how the government has presented itself publicly and determine what it has accomplished or failed to accomplish in the land reform area in the postwar years. The final task is to make associations between what was said and done and the ability of the regime to effectively govern and retain control.

In one of the most controversial elections in postrevolutionary Mexico, Manuel Avila Camacho succeeded Cárdenas as president. It is generally known that Avila Camacho won in a fraudulent contest against his opponent, conservative ex-general Juan Andreu Almazán. The Cárdenas reform period had won the Partido Revolucionario Mexicano a good deal of support from the countryside through the new Confederación Nacional Campesina and in urban areas from organized laborers. But the rising middle class and the elite had watched the political system turn to the left and wanted to reorient it along more conservative lines. Perhaps Cárdenas recognized the importance of the systemic disruptions that occurred with his reforms. He named Avila Camacho as his successor knowing that a more conservative administration would take control of Mexico's politics. This admission by the ex-president helped set the tone for the more conservative Avila Camacho administration and made the transition to power more peaceful.

The facts allow us to view the Avila Camacho term as one of gradual transition away from rapid social reform, especially in the land
reform area, and toward consolidation of the gains made in the Cárdenas period, thus permitting a better appreciation of the extent of land redistribution which occurred in the 1940s. Avila Camacho showed a significant level of congruence between what was said publicly in his state-of-the-nation addresses and what was actually accomplished in the land reform area during his term of office (see figure 13).

FIGURE 13. AVILA CAMACHO, 1940-46: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms;
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

A moderate number of references was made to revolutionary symbols and a relatively small number of references on the Agrarianism dimension. Both reflected declining administrative emphasis on the revolutionary social justice goals best embodied during the Cárdenas term. Avila Camacho made a high number of references to Reforms and Structures
through which land policies would be channeled. Interestingly, Avila Camacho referred to patria with relative frequency in his addresses, no doubt to link his policies to the national interest. This content analysis reveals that Avila Camacho intended to signal shifts in government land reform policies in his presidential address. With the world war at an end, Avila Camacho had to reorient Mexico's new industrialism to peace-time activities which required a considerable amount of governmental attention. Postwar urbanization began in this period as the new industrial infrastructure required additional labor, providing an incentive for rural wage laborers to move to the cities. As the economy shifted away from agriculture, government policies in the land reform area changed.

In his inaugural message to Congress, Avila Camacho seized the opportunity to win support for his administration by claiming the time had come for Mexico to consolidate the material and spiritual gains it had fought so hard to acquire. A new era of reconstruction and economic expansion would provide the means for an abundant life in Mexico. The agrarian problem was still rated highly by the new administration and Avila Camacho pledged his government to "loyally complete the propositions of the Revolution." According to this address, the main agrarian reform goal of his administration would be the protection of small property. Uncultivated lands would be turned into new, small-property developments. This positive endorsement of small property can be properly interpreted as Avila Camacho's break with the Cárdenas administration's land reform policies and the emphasis on the collective
ejido. In subsequent reports to Congress, Avila Camacho demonstrated consistent support for the small farmer over the collective ejido.

In his 1941 message to Congress, Avila Camacho explained that land redistribution had reached its peak under the Cárdenas administration because there were fewer available areas of land subject to the Ley Agraria and that those that did exist were a distance from population centers. For these reasons, according to Avila Camacho, "the previous dotation action must necessarily decrease." This line of argument was found in each of his annual addresses. In a sense, relying on the rationality of the argument that Cárdenas's extensive land redistribution program had depleted Mexico of available cultivable land for further division and distribution, the Avila Camacho administration absolved itself from the responsibility of continuing the rapid pace of the preceding program and expropriating private landholdings. It enabled the president to return to the program of parceling ejidal lands into privately owned plots to further extend small-property ownership, thus satisfying some of the continuing demands for land voiced by Mexico's campesinos. Avila Camacho argued that tension was mounting between small farmers and ejidatarios. He felt this could be diminished if the ejidatarios had their own plots of land to farm. Census information shows that between 1940 and 1950, the area of irrigated land in private holdings increased from 905,000 hectares to 1,788,000 hectares. Prior to 1940, ejidos possessed more than 50 percent of irrigated land. But during the ten years after Cárdenas, the amount of irrigated ejidal land increased from 994,000 hectares only to 1,221,000 hectares. The 1940 census also showed that 87.4 percent of ejidatarios had holdings of
under ten hectares. Under provisions of the law, small farms and cattle ranches could be protected from agrarian reform and from campesino invasions. The number of these Certificados de Inafectabilidad Agrícola issued from 1941 to 1948 is presented in Table 9.

**TABLE 9**

**CERTIFICADOS DE INAFECTABILIDAD AGRÍCOLA, 1941-46**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Issued</th>
<th>Hectares Protected</th>
<th>Average Size (hs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>500*</td>
<td>51,000</td>
<td>102.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>5,045</td>
<td>253,000</td>
<td>50.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>4,665</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>3,808</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>3,770</td>
<td>260,518</td>
<td>69.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>158,000</td>
<td>178.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18,671</td>
<td>722,518</td>
<td>70.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Shows combined farm land and cattle ranches.

In 1943, the Código Agrario was amended again, this time sanctioning the parceling of ejidal lands into privately owned plots and permitting the government to take away ejidal rights if lands went uncultivated for two consecutive years. This reform was tantamount to creating out of the old ejidal structure a new form of small-property farming in Mexico.

In his first nine months in office, Avila Comacho claimed to have distributed 439,997 hectares of land through dotation and divided seventy-seven ejidos into 9,779 parcels of irrigated and temporal land with a total of 32,635 hectares of land (the average plot size was 3.3
hectares). The amount of land Avila Camacho claimed to have distributed during his term is shown in table 10.

**TABLE 10**

**LAND DISTRIBUTION CLAIMED BY AVILA CAMACHO, 1941-46**

(hectares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dotation/Restitution</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>Small Property</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>439,997</td>
<td>575,691</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1,015,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>2,300,000</td>
<td>1,275,466</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>3,575,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>1,600,000</td>
<td>2,202,730</td>
<td>4,988,242</td>
<td>8,790,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>1,133,000</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>315,700</td>
<td>1,448,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>779,978</td>
<td>9,149</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>789,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>549,000</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>257,324</td>
<td>806,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>6,801,975</td>
<td>4,063,036</td>
<td>5,561,266</td>
<td>16,426,277</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This table shows an initial rise and then steady decline in the reported amount of dotations and restitutions from 1941 to 1946. The total amount of land redistributed by dotation and restitution claimed over the six years was 6,801,975 hectares. Other studies have shown that the actual figure was 5,944,449 hectares, a significant decline from the Cárdenas years. But if we discount the Cárdenas period, Avila Camacho outperformed all other postrevolutionary administrations in the total amount of land redistributed and distributed. Recall that Calles, the leading land reform proponent before Cárdenas, had redistributed a total of 2,972,876 hectares during his four-year term of office. On the average, Avila Camacho distributed about 250,000 hectares of land per year more than Calles. When seen in this light, the Avila Camacho administration did not stop Mexico's revolutionary land reform program.
The pace that had been set by Cárdenas in the 1930s had slowed but was still well ahead of that established in the pre-Cárdenas period. This no doubt contributed to the legitimacy of the regime.

Increasingly in the latter half of the Avila Camacho term, presidential attention turned to agricultural production. The goal was to produce enough for internal consumption, to increase production of primary materials for industrial use, and to provide enough surplus for export to the American market. Cattle raising had been strongly encouraged as an ejidal activity under Cárdenas and cattle exports had steadily risen. Cattle-raising properties were protected from agrarian reform in the Código Agrario of 1943. With this sanction, they developed at a rapid pace, particularly in semi-arid northern Mexico (see table 11).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Issued</th>
<th>Hectares Protected</th>
<th>Average Size (hs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,400,000</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>730,478</td>
<td>9,871.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>343,500</td>
<td>6,870.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>3,473,978</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Insufficient data.
Large and small irrigation projects were emphasized throughout the nation. During the first three years of this term, more than 260,000 hectares of land had been supplied with irrigation. This amount surpassed the cumulative total of hectares brought under irrigation from 1926 to 1940 and is indicative of the government's drive to improve Mexico's workable land. In 1945, greater emphasis was placed on building large-scale irrigation projects, as demonstrated by the fact that these projects received $130 million in funding in that year whereas smaller projects received only $15 million. The figures for 1946 were $189 million for large projects and $20 million for smaller projects. Clearly, the government was developing large-scale irrigation to open new lands as well as to make existing land more productive. During this six-year term, the Comisión Nacional de Irrigación improved more than 650,000 hectares of land through irrigation development.

The postwar period also brought peace to Mexico. With internal stability and industrial and agricultural production came steady increases in the birth rate, most of which occurred in the countryside. Increases in the rural population had the effect of pressuring already overcrowded areas. Prior to the war the rate of population growth was under 2 percent annually. The material gains Mexico reaped from export-oriented industrialism meant that increases in gross domestic product surpassed increases in the population of the country and contributed positively to Mexico's economic development and the health and welfare of the people. The postwar period found Mexico still undergoing economic growth; but at the same time, steady increases in the birth rate, coupled with better and more medical and sanitary services, meant
significant population growth. This put strains on the ability of Mexicans to advance economically even though employment opportunities and wages were better than they had been in many years.

The Avila Camacho administration had brought with it peace and security. The religious turmoil of the Calles years faded as the president announced that he was a "believer," a euphemism for being Catholic. Land reform continued through the dispensation of land to those who had not received any to date and to augment insufficient parcels. The credit programs started earlier were extended. Labor benefited from industrial activity. And relations with the United States improved under the Good Neighbor policy. The conservative shift in policy preference and direction noted when Avila Camacho was nominated by the Partido Revolucionario Mexicano did not cause severe disruptions with the Cárdenas reforms and had been welcomed by all classes as a reprieve from the very active pace of reform and inflation which accompanied it in the earlier period. The conservatism of postwar Mexico was endorsed when Miguel Alemán Valdés was nominated to replace Avila Camacho as the next president of Mexico.

With regard to the more ideological goal of social justice through land reform, Alemán discussed the plight of Mexico's three million campesinos who suffered from a low level of existence in the countryside. In his view, the well-being of the nation was dependent upon increases in agricultural production and the extension of cultivable land through irrigation projects. He pledged equal support for the ejido and small farm in Mexico. Based on early statements of approach, it was apparent Alemán would not change significantly from the
Avila Camacho administration. Yet even more so than his predecessor, Alemán was held responsible for terminating revolutionary activity and moving Mexico into a postrevolutionary period now completely removed from the inspiration and goals of the 1910 event. How did Alemán publicly portray his ideology? Did he differentiate himself from earlier revolutionary presidents in policy preference and choice? What were his ideas of land reform and land redistribution, and what policies were implemented during his term?

In his inaugural speech before a joint session of Congress on 1 December 1946, President Alemán discussed his agrarian approach in terms of increased productivity and technological improvements. He announced the creation of an Instituto de Investigaciones Agrícolas to organize experimental programs for the use of seeds, fertilizers, and new agricultural technology. He proposed reforms to the Banco Agrícola so that it could provide financing for cattle raising, and he wanted both the Banco Agrícola and Banco Ejidal organized on a regional basis to be more aware of particular agricultural needs. Irrigation works would continue to be a cornerstone of agricultural industrialization and crop production. The irrigation goal he set forth targeted $1.5 billion over the course of his six-year term to improve more than 1.4 million hectares of land. He planned reforms to Article 27 and to the Ley de Crédito Agrícola. He announced plans to create a Comisión Nacional de Colonización to encourage the relocation of campesinos out of crowded rural areas to new agricultural colonies and to encourage Mexicans working in the United States to return to Mexico to farm their own land on these colonies.
In the area of land reform, Alemán continued the Avila Camacho reduction in area distributed. The amount of land Alemán claimed to have distributed and the policies associated with his style of land redistribution is outlined in table 12.

**TABLE 12**

**LAND DISTRIBUTION CLAIMED BY ALEMAN, 1947-52**

(hectares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dotation Restitution</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>342,900</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>342,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>1,738,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,738,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>732,000</td>
<td>6,515,400</td>
<td>7,247,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>665,228</td>
<td>120,409</td>
<td>785,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>691,134</td>
<td>4,207,914</td>
<td>4,899,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>822,099</td>
<td>4,794,657</td>
<td>5,616,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>4,991,361</td>
<td>15,638,380</td>
<td>20,629,741</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Los Presidentes de México ante la Nación, 1821-1966, 4:355-512.

Alemán claimed to have redistributed 4,991,361 hectares of land by either dotation or restitution policies, with most falling under the former. Independent investigators attribute Alemán with the total distribution of 3,844,745 hectares of land by means of these two policy options, a discrepancy of 1,146,616 hectares. At this pace, Alemán was responsible for redistributing approximately 640,790 hectares of land per year. The average amount of land redistributed yearly by Mexico's postrevolutionary presidents is shown in table 13. Out of the thirteen postrevolutionary presidents subject to this analysis, Alemán ranked sixth in the average annual amount of land redistributed through
dotation or restitution programs, and his performance compares favorably with that of Calles in the pre-Cárdenas period.

**TABLE 13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Total Hectares Distributed</th>
<th>Average Annual Hectares Distributed</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carranza</td>
<td>132,640</td>
<td>33,160</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De la Huerta</td>
<td>33,696</td>
<td>67,392</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obregón</td>
<td>971,627</td>
<td>242,906</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calles</td>
<td>3,088,072</td>
<td>772,018</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portes Gil</td>
<td>1,173,199</td>
<td>586,599</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ortiz Rubio</td>
<td>1,468,745</td>
<td>587,498</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodríguez</td>
<td>798,982</td>
<td>319,592</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cárdenas</td>
<td>17,889,792</td>
<td>2,981,632</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avila Camacho</td>
<td>5,518,970</td>
<td>919,828</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alemán</td>
<td>3,844,745</td>
<td>640,790</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruiz Cortines</td>
<td>3,198,781</td>
<td>533,130</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>López Mateos</td>
<td>16,004,169</td>
<td>2,667,361</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Díaz Ordaz</td>
<td>2,507,000*</td>
<td>1,253,500</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Alemán, like others before him, claimed to have distributed more land through the division and distribution of national lands. During his six-year term he claimed to have distributed some 15,638,380 hectares in colonization and related programs, most of which were national lands. The distribution of national lands was a less complicated and more politically palatable policy choice given the historical power of Mexico's landowners. Much of this national land was
located in uncultivable areas of the north and coastal states. Populating these areas would encourage irrigation projects which would improve the quality and productivity of these new lands. Because the colonists in many instances had few resources of their own and were often forced to wait for governmental assistance through credit and other assistance programs, the distribution of these lands did not constitute a policy of wealth redistribution and therefore was peripheral to the revolutionary goal of social justice. What the colonization policy did contribute to was a greater sense of popular legitimacy by responding to campesino demands for land. Apparently the quality of land distributed was an issue of secondary importance at this time to Mexico's landless population.

Alemán pledged himself to fulfilling the revolutionary goal of land reform early during his term of office. In his address of 1 September 1948 he promised:

The Agrarian Department maintains the policy line designed by the revolutionary regimes, and will continue not only to find rapid solutions to the petitions for land, but also to look for ways to accommodate those campesinos that do not yet possess lands in other regions of the country.15

Consistently, Alemán referred to the equal protection of ejidos and small farms. These references were infrequent but seemed to indicate a policy preference favoring previous patterns of land reform. Underlying these references to land reform was the theme of agricultural productivity. Alemán expressed more confidence in the ability of the small farm to productively utilize workable land.16 In 1948, Alemán created the Dirección General de Promoción Agrícola Ejidal to give greater attention to the agricultural practices of ejidos. The purpose of this agency was
to monitor the investment of ejidal credit funds to ensure greater returns and to improve the overall productivity of ejidal farms. Also, this agency would be charged with promoting planning in the sugar industries. These actions reflected concern for ejidal organization and productive capabilities. The Alemán administration involved the federal government in monitoring the activities of ejidos to see that they complied with the emphasis on agricultural productivity.

Alemán's use of language in seven addresses before Congress between 1946 and 1952 reveals a pattern of pragmatic rather than symbolic rhetoric in the land reform area (see appendix B). The intensity of ideological adherence for Alemán as reflected in the content analysis of his presidential addresses is shown in figure 14. There were relatively few references to the symbols of the revolution or to agrarianism. There was only a moderate number of references to either reform policies or reform structures. Interestingly, there was a high number of references to the homeland, perhaps in recognition of the turmoil of the immediate postwar years worldwide. Compared with other postrevolutionary presidents, Alemán did not use symbolic language in his annual discussions of the land reform program in Mexico. But in this instance, the decline in semantic output corresponded to the decline in the amount of land redistributed during his term. In other words, there seems to be a significant degree of congruence between the way in which Alemán discussed land redistribution and what was actually accomplished. There also seems to be a link between Alemán's lack of emphasis on the social justice component of the revolutionary ideology of land reform and the consistent support he gave for the economic
development component of the revolutionary ideology. Alemán effectively encouraged the promotion of economic development in the agricultural sector and did not limit it exclusively to industrial output. His policy preferences were not focused on land redistribution as much as on land reform through activities designed to enhance the productive capacities of Mexican agriculture.

FIGURE 14. ALEMÁN, 1946-52: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

The dominant themes during the Alemán administration were oriented toward economic development, expansion, and productivity in the agrarian sector. In his first annual message to Congress on 1 September 1947, Alemán announced the change of the Secretaría de Agriculture y Fomento to the Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería. Name changes of
governmental dependencies are not always significant, but in this instance the change represented a movement toward greater developmental emphasis on raising cattle for export. The large expanses of semi-arid lands in northern Mexico were effectively transformed into cattle ranches protected under the law (see table 14), and the proximity to the United States made trade that much more lucrative as transportation costs were low.

**TABLE 14**

CERTIFICADOS DE INAFECTABILIDAD GANADERA, 1947-52

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Issued</th>
<th>Hectares Protected</th>
<th>Average Size (hs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>302,000</td>
<td>6,040.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>851,955</td>
<td>5,957.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>288,263</td>
<td>2,573.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>556,663</td>
<td>3,920.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>302,140</td>
<td>3,051.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>2,301,021</td>
<td>4,214.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the postwar period, the United States and Mexico entered into an agreement to eradicate hoof-and-mouth disease which was of epidemic proportions in Mexico at the time. The United States promised to pay the costs of administering this program, for it had agreed to export cheap beef to European allies in the postwar period and itself needed Mexican supplies to fulfill its commitment. The Banco de Crédito Agrícola was changed to the Banco Agrícola y Ganadero in a move to provide credit to cattle ranchers. The budget for this Banco was $109
million for the year, and the Banco Ejidal was authorized to loan $194 million in the same period. Interest rates both banks offered were lowered to 6 percent annually by cutting the cost of middlemen and making the loans directly with ejidatarios and small farmers. Since the 1930s, funding of credit institutions and their responsiveness to Mexican farmers had been primary governmental concerns. In 1948, the Banco Ejidal operated on a lower budget than the Banco Agrícola y Ganadero, with $112 million and $135 million respectively.¹⁹ These institutions were assisted by resources from the Banca Privada and the Nacional Financiera to extend credit to Mexican farmers. In 1949, funding of the Banco Ejidal had increased to $253 million and the Banco Agrícola y Ganadero increased to $148,500,000. Reforms were initiated to the Ley General de Instituciones de Crédito to facilitate the funding of long- and medium-term agricultural projects that required large amounts of capital.²⁰ The funding of these credit institutions through the Alemán administration is shown in table 15.

Until 1950 the amount of credit each financial institution could make available to Mexican farmers remained fairly constant after experiencing notable increases when President Alemán took office (see table 15). In 1951, significant increases in budgetary allocations to these lending institutions enabled them to extend more credit than had been made available before. These increases were reflective of the Alemán commitment to extend more credit opportunities to both the ejidatarios and small farmers. Had his administration not been plagued so extensively by graft and corruption, this increase in funds for the
credit banks could have made an even more appreciable impact on Mexican agriculture.

TABLE 15

ANNUAL BUDGET AUTHORIZATIONS FOR THE BANCO NACIONAL DE CREDITO EJIDAL AND THE BANCO NACIONAL DE CREDITO AGRICOLA Y GANADERO
1947 to 1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Banco Ejidal</th>
<th>Banco Agricola y Ganadero</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>$194,000,000</td>
<td>$109,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>$112,000,000</td>
<td>$135,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>$253,000,000</td>
<td>$148,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>$247,000,000</td>
<td>$178,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>$378,000,000</td>
<td>$210,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>$397,500,000</td>
<td>$311,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $1,581,500,000 $1,091,500,000


The migration of Mexican farm labor to the United States had become a politically sensitive issue at this time, and the new colonization effort was rationalized, in part, to encourage landless Mexicans to farm newly opened lands. In 1948, nearly thirteen hundred campesinos were relocated from Tlaxcala and Guanajuato to irrigated zones in Tamaulipas. In 1949, President Alemán announced that 4,082 new campesinos were involved in the colonization program and had received a total of 21,400 hectares of land. According to the 1949 address, large tracts of national lands were being earmarked for colonization with 5.8 million hectares in Sonora, 400,000 hectares in Guerrero, and 64,000 hectares in Oaxaca and Veracruz. Out of this land only some 230,000 hectares would be cultivated, implying that much of it was
located in arid or semi-arid parts of the aforementioned states. In 1950, Alemán announced that 400,000 hectares of new land had been opened to cultivation in the previous year. Of this, nearly 100,000 hectares were colonized. Studies were being conducted regarding the use of an additional 260,000 hectares of land that had been earlier colonized. In 1951, Alemán announced the relocation of 2,507 heads of families to 34,251 hectares of vacant parcels and the creation of ten new population centers in these areas. More importantly, he announced that 4,173,663 hectares of land had been expropriated by means of public utility and nearly two thousand colonies were established. In 1952, it was announced that 6,049 new colonies were created with 645,060 hectares of land for the benefit of campesinos who had not received land under any agrarian reform measure. The steady increases in the number of colonists and colonies established demonstrates that Alemán was pursuing a policy preference that combined the distribution of land and the extension of farming to new areas. The total amount of land involved, however, was not sufficient to meet the needs of landless Mexicans, and it has been said that this program was used to distribute large tracts of land to friends and associates in violation of the agrarian laws. The 1950 census showed that 708 estates of over 800 hectares with a total of 3.5 million hectares of cultivated land existed. It also showed that there were 10,519 cattle-raising, forest, or grazing estates of over 1,000 hectares each with a total land area of 80,974,000 hectares, of which an estimated 60 million hectares were privately owned. Despite public messages to the contrary, it was apparent that a reconcentration of privately held lands was occurring under
Alemán. This pattern fit with the emphasis placed on productive farming.

The promotion of irrigation works throughout the country was another of the major components of Alemán’s land reform policy. Both large- and small-scale projects were advanced during his term of office. The northern areas of Mexico were targeted for irrigation activity in Alemán’s 1948 presidential address. The budget allocation for the Secretaría de Recursos Hidráulicos was $310 million during the year, and 135,000 hectares of land were to benefit from improvements. In 1949, the Secretaría de Recursos Hidráulicos operated on a budget of $343 million and sought the improvement of more than 110,000 hectares of land during the year. Large- and medium-sized projects received priority in the northern part of Mexico. By 1950, the Alemán administration combined public and private revenue sources to create a budget of $486 million for irrigation works during the year. Because of this increase in funding, the Secretaría was to finish work on projects that would irrigate 321,000 hectares of new land. By this time it was announced that 179 small projects were under construction and would provide water to nearly forty thousand hectares. Desert and semi-arid lands in northern Mexico were receiving a large share of these funds. The Alemán administration continued soliciting private funds to work in conjunction with public allocations to irrigate land and in 1951 made available $642 million. It was announced that ninety-five small irrigation projects were completed providing irrigation to 26,267 hectares. Of this newly irrigated land, 70 percent was ejidal and 20 percent belonged to small farmers. During the year a total of 147,403
hectares had been made productive because of irrigation. In 1952, Alemán announced that $718 million would be available for irrigation. The Alvaro Obregón Dam on the Yaqui River was completed and would irrigate 220,000 hectares of land. A canal system was completed in La Lagunera and would assist fifteen thousand ejidatarios in farming their lands. Clearly, Alemán concentrated a significant amount of governmental activity in the area of irrigation; more so than other policies, it materially promoted agricultural productivity and fulfilled a primary goal of his administration. But with high costs, the process of extending irrigation moved slowly. By concentrating most new projects in northern Mexico, the government was creating the context for unequal agricultural development.

During the Alemán term, Mexico underwent profound infrastructural and structural changes, enabling it to become a more agriculturally productive nation. Alemán pledged more than $2 billion to agricultural credit. Mexico now had under cultivation some 9.5 million hectares of land, and the annual rate of increase in cultivated land approximated 450,000 hectares. Since agricultural productivity was the primary expressed goal of the administration, we must conclude that Alemán carried out the kinds of policies he preferred even though in so doing he departed from the revolutionary ideology of social justice through land redistribution. To legitimize his actions, Alemán's ideology of economic development and private-property ownership was successfully transposed on the agricultural sector. Declining popular support for his administration's policies seems not so much to be
attributable to the emphasis on land reform over land redistribution as much as to the level of corruption of Alemán and his associates.

The issue of political corruption became salient in the months before the presidential election of 1952. The PRM had been renamed in 1946 and was now called the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). At its national convention the PRI carefully selected Adolfo Ruiz Cortines as its next candidate; he had served as the head of Gobernación under Alemán but was not tainted by corruption accusations. In his inaugural address before Congress on 1 December 1952, Ruiz Cortines linked himself to the social justice ideology of the Mexican revolution when he said: "The regime that we initiate will multiply its efforts to realize the ideals of our collectivity and to unite Mexicans in the postulates of social justice."37 This address was dedicated to the theme of fulfilling revolutionary promises for bettering the quality of life of rural Mexicans. Poverty was seen as the greatest impediment to economic and social advancement. Agricultural productivity continued to be viewed as the means by which to promote greater rural prosperity. And more so than any president before him, Ruiz Cortines devoted considerable attention to the issue of population growth and announced that the doubling of the population over the course of the preceding fifty years strained the ability of the government to fulfill its land redistribution goals and hurt the poor by increasing the cost of primary goods. On the basis of this address Ruiz Cortines's verbal ideological preference in the land reform area seemed to rest on social justice issues more than economic development issues, especially when compared
to the Alemán presidency; but he gave no clear indication that social justice would be defined through redistributive land reform.

In his six-year term, Ruiz Cortines claimed to have redistributed 4,463,840 hectares of land through dotation and restitution policies. The annual distribution by policy area for the period 1953 to 1958 is shown in table 16. Like other presidents before him, Ruiz Cortines claimed to have redistributed more land than independent investigators attribute to his administration. It has been shown that he redistributed 3,198,781 hectares through dotation and restitution programs. In this particular case, the discrepancy is more important because the figures imply even further reductions in the redistribution of land than had been the case under Avila Camacho or Alemán.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dotation/Restitution</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>905,693</td>
<td>1,096,504</td>
<td>2,002,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>915,266</td>
<td>1,074,405</td>
<td>1,989,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>900,953</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>3,900,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>802,288</td>
<td>940,000</td>
<td>1,742,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>486,000</td>
<td>852,000</td>
<td>1,338,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>454,000</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>454,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 4,464,200</td>
<td>6,962,909</td>
<td>11,427,109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As shown in table 16, Ruiz Cortines ranks ninth among post-revolutionary presidents in the average annual amount of land distributed. Compared with the pre-Cárdenas period, Ruiz Cortines ranks
fourth behind Calles, Ortiz Rubio, and Portes Gil in the average annual amount of land distributed. His administration, therefore, followed the policy style of Avila Camacho and Alemán in reducing the pace and amount of land redistribution. One of the central differences between the rhetoric of Ruiz Cortines and others immediately before him was less verbal emphasis on economic development and agricultural productivity. Ruiz Cortines was noted for bringing peace and stability to Mexican politics after the turbulent post-Cárdenas period. He campaigned on an anticorruption platform and encouraged Good Neighbor policies with the United States. With social peace, Mexico was in a position to reap the gains of its incipient industrialism. How was social peace maintained through this period which, when taken with prior periods, meant eighteen years of reduced redistribution efforts? How did the Ruiz Cortines administration present its policy preferences and goals? What line of reformism, if any, did it maintain?

Unlike Alemán before him, Ruiz Cortines used revolutionary symbolism and select rhetoric to discuss his policy positions in addresses to Congress. A significant number of references on the Symbols dimension suggests that strong linkages between the Ruiz Cortines administration and the revolution were made in six annual addresses (see figure 15). On the average, eight references to the revolution were found in each address. The Agrarianism dimension shows moderate references to the agrarian problem in Mexico, but the Reforms and Structures dimensions show that Ruiz Cortines made a high number of verbal references to resolutions of problems associated with the land question. The Patriotism dimension is most interesting for the
different pattern it shows from previous administrations. With an average of six specific references to patria, or the homeland, Ruiz Cortines likely was using patriotic language to remind Mexicans of their common nationalistic linkage. This would enhance his position regarding social peace by emphasizing national unity and integration, themes that repeat themselves throughout the postrevolutionary period.

FIGURE 15. RUIZ CORTINES, 1952-58: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

From the information provided in figure 15, we can detect a strong verbal ideological linkage between the Ruiz Cortines administration and the goals of the revolution, especially as they pertain to agrarian reform. With significant frequency distributions on the Symbols, Reforms, and Structures dimensions and a moderate distribution
on the Agrarianism dimension of the measure of intensity of ideological adherence, Ruiz Cortines publicly appeared committed to the ideology of social justice as defined in the revolutionary ideology of land reform.

Expressed ideological tendencies and actual policy performance in the case of Ruiz Cortines in the land reform area differed markedly. The average amount of land redistributed each year was 533,130 hectares, or under 50,000 hectares per month. This performance places him on par with the pre-Cárdenas administrations that faced severe environmental and structural constraints impeding land reform. Since land redistribution patterns diverged from his expressed goals, how did Ruiz Cortines maintain political control and legitimacy during his term? A qualitative review of his addresses before Congress provides revealing information regarding Ruiz Cortines's position relative to the land question.

In his annual addresses to Congress, Ruiz Cortines showed consistency in his concern for quality-of-life issues, especially rural employment opportunities. In each address he expressed mounting concern over the number of rural Mexicans migrating to the United States as seasonal farm laborers and blamed increasingly high birth rates and overcrowding in some rural areas as the root of the problem. In a policy move designed to encourage Mexicans to stay in Mexico and farm new lands, Ruiz Cortines placed a good deal of emphasis on the colonization program. The primary centers of colonization were in northern and northwest Mexico and along the coastal areas. The combination of irrigation projects, transportation connections, and colonization helped improve these previously underdeveloped areas. Colonies were to be the basis for increased agricultural employment, thereby creating an
incentive for Mexicans to remain in Mexico. As another incentive, Ruiz Cortines extended Social Security protection to the countryside; created Centros de Bienestar Rural to improve the health, culture, and economic well-being of campesinos; and extended the Seguro Agrícola and Ganadero programs which insured crops and cattle. The official view was that improved living conditions in rural areas would provide campesinos with security and create a stable environment in which to farm. Implied in this was an economic assumption that agricultural productivity could be increased if the rural population was healthy and secure. Shown in table 17 are the claims made by Ruiz Cortines regarding the distribution of land to colonies during his administration.

Rather than break up large, private landholdings that were economically productive, Ruiz Cortines followed the established path of distributing national lands to campesinos. In two instances, though, privately owned haciendas were expropriated by his government and their lands were earmarked for colonization. The ex-haciendas "Bávícora" and "San José Cloete" were expropriated because they were conspicuous in size and left large tracts of land untilled, both violations of the agrarian laws. In announcing the government's decision to expropriate these properties, and in general throughout his six addresses, Ruiz Cortines made references to freeing Mexico's campesinos from the slavery of the haciendas with the redistribution of their lands. The use of this old-style symbolism probably had roots in Ruiz Cortines's desire to present more popular land reform policies than had the pragmatic Alemán. Although colonization received considerable attention from the post-Cárdenas administrations, by the late 1950s only a few thousand
campesinos had benefited. Colonization had become a symbolic program to satisfy immediate demands for land distribution. With only 1.25 million hectares of colony land under cultivation, the productivity of these units was not critical to Mexico's agricultural position internally or internationally.\textsuperscript{42}

**TABLE 17**

**COLONIZATION POLICIES CLAIMED BY RUIZ CORTINES, 1953-58**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hectares</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Colonies</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>1,097,904</td>
<td>Tamaulipas</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>San Luis Potosí</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chihuahua</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>324,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>6,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>263,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>(Total)</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>52,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>Baja California</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(state and territory)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>San Luis Potosí</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guerrero, Sonora</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sinaloa, Tabasco</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yucatán</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>620,000</td>
<td>Baja California</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>12,225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(state and territory)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chihuahua</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coahuila, Sinaloa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jalisco, Veracruz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oaxaca, Guerrero</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Campeche, Tabasco</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


With the conclusion of the Ruiz Cortines administration, Mexico approached the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution. Land reform policies had been pursued for forty-five years, but questions about the
commitment of revolutionary presidents to its goals were still raised. Ruiz Cortines used symbolic rhetoric to link his administration to the social justice tenet of the revolutionary ideology and verbally committed himself to land redistribution and land reform. But the effective redistribution of land under his administration was not sufficient to bring about social justice or equity in the Mexican countryside. His term concluded eighteen years of declining land redistribution efforts and gave credence to claims that the revolutionary ideology of land reform ceased to inspire governmental policies. At this point, this ideology seemed to be a tool used to legitimate the government but not to influence policy choices. The gap between elite and mass expectations and their relationship to the revolution seemed to be widening.
END NOTES TO CHAPTER 6


4 Ibid., 150.

5 Ibid., 152-87, especially 163-68.

6 Ibid., 163-68.


9 Ibid.

10 *Los Presidentes de México*, 4:287.

11 Ibid., 313. 12 Ibid., 341.

13 Ibid., 355-59.

14 Wilkie, *The Mexican Revolution*, 188.

15 *Los Presidentes de México*, 4:388.

16 Ibid. 17 Ibid., 423.


19 *Los Presidentes de México*, 4:396.

20 Ibid., 421. 21 Ibid., 388.

22 Ibid., 415. 23 Ibid., 424.
In 1946, Alemán increased from one hundred hectares to three hundred hectares the amount of irrigated land that constituted a "smallholding" for the production of coffee, cocoa, fruit, grapes, sugarcane, and other export crops. See ibid., 171.

CHAPTER 7

THE RESURGENCE OF REVOLUTIONARY LAND REFORM POLICIES:

LOPEZ MATEOS AND DIAZ ORDAZ

The 1940s and 1950s proved to be as turbulent as the Cárdenas period in postrevolutionary Mexican history, although not because of purposeful governmental social reformism. Economically, Mexico had begun the process of industrialization. The concomitant shifts in social structure which attend such economic development caused migration from the countryside into the industrial cities as rural laborers sought greater financial benefits with new employment opportunities. A new middle class developed and worked for greater economic and political power. This Mexico was substantially different from the Mexico of 1910 which underwent revolution in order to bring about economic, social, and political changes. The agricultural sector was still integral to the Mexican economy, but it had experienced changes in technology and was increasingly dedicated to the commercial production of export crops. What effect did these changes have on elite interpretations of the revolutionary ideology of land reform? Had mass expectations changed as well, or did the revolutionary goal of "tierra y libertad" still shape popular interpretations of legitimate governmental actions? How had nearly twenty years of reduced land redistribution affected both elite and mass expectations?
Ruiz Cortines selected his labor minister, Adolfo López Mateos, as his nominee for the presidency for the 1958 election. Ruiz Cortines most probably understood that continuation of conservative administration could jeopardize the stability and continuity of PRI political control, and so he selected a more liberal candidate to succeed his administration. This move was similar to that of Cárdenas before him, who selected a more conservative candidate to follow a very reformist period. López Mateos had earned the reputation as a labor and agrarian supporter. In winning the presidency in 1958, he was able to bring to executive decision making a liberal approach which, to many, appeared similar to that of Cárdenas.

Before analyzing the approach taken by López Mateos with regard to the agrarian situation, a review of economic and social indicators of the state of the Mexican economy and society in 1960 will provide important contextual information about the effect of land reform during the previous forty-five years. The rate of population growth for Mexico from 1900 to 1960 is shown in table 18.

Starting in the 1940s, Mexican presidents gave more consideration to the problems of rapid population growth, particularly in rural Mexico, and how these affected their ability to distribute land. To date, no president had called for a national policy designed to address rapid population growth. The problem itself gave justification to the push for agricultural productivity and diversification, as these were seen as realistic solutions to the problem. Since much of the population growth was occurring in rural areas, there was an ever-increasing amount of pressure put on the executive to quicken the pace of land
redistribution. However, in the post-Cárdenas period, as we have seen, the general policy preference of Mexican executives was to reduce the pace and extent of land redistribution. The land reform policies that were pursued after Cárdenas placed greater emphasis on capital-intensive agricultural production. Loans were designed to permit the purchase of tractors and harvesting equipment. This had the effect of reducing the demand for farm labor and contributed to rural underemployment. Although labor was shifting out of the agricultural sector to industries, rural Mexico still continued to experience absolute population growth. Legal migration to the United States under the bracero agreement continued, but so too did the illegal migration of Mexican farm laborers searching for better opportunities to the north.

### TABLE 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Annual Rate of Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Porfiriato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900/1910</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolution and Reform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910/1930</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930/1940</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940/1950</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950/1960</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Rapid population growth contributed to a decline in the standard of living of poor Mexicans, especially campesinos. The income levels in
Mexico from 1900 to 1960 are shown in table 19. What is most obvious from the data is that the position of Mexico's poor worsened over time relative to the position of the middle and upper classes.

**TABLE 19**

**INCOME DISTRIBUTION IN MEXICO, 1950-68**

(Percentage of Income)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decile of Families</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1957</th>
<th>1963</th>
<th>1968</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Poorest)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Richest)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The contradiction this signaled between the espoused goals of the revolution and governmental policies was glaring. Mexico's revolution may originally have been started by a disillusioned bourgeois middle class hungry for a share of political and economic power, but it was soon transformed into a peasant movement that stood for social justice and equity. These two goals, although peripheral to the Maderista movement, were incorporated in the 1917 constitution and became a part of the national ideology which took shape in the first quarter of this century. By the 1960s, Mexico had one of the most
inequitable distributions of income of any Latin American nation, even after going through a revolution that was designed to transform the socio-economic and political fabric of the country.\(^1\) The data from the 1960s raises the question of whether Mexico had actually undergone a social revolution. What really had changed? Almost in response to this question, López Mateos began a second resurgence of revolutionary land reform and land redistribution policies that seemed inextricably linked to the social-transforming, social-justice ideology of the revolution.

In his inaugural address before Congress on 1 December 1958, López Mateos made clear his verbal commitment to the revolution and its ideology of social justice through land redistribution. He linked the achievement of the objectives of the Mexican revolution to raising the standard of living of all Mexicans through a better redistribution of national wealth. He balanced his approach by calling for increased productivity in all economic sectors to create "abundance" and thereby resolve lingering problems associated with poverty and demographic boom. Specifically addressing the agrarian question, López Mateos promised that "The new zones or lands opened to farming by the nation will be destined exclusively for the benefit of authentic campesinos, ejidatarios, and small farmers."\(^2\) This apparent criticism of past land reform policies marked the first acknowledgement by a post-Cárdenas administration that campesinos were not benefiting from land redistribution and hinted that the subversion of land reform policies had actually benefited a new class of large landholders.\(^3\)

López Mateos continued to emphasize revolutionary land redistribution throughout his six annual messages to Congress. His
addresses were full of old-style revolutionary symbolism (see appendix B). His land reform policies linked him more directly to the revolutionary program than any president since Cárdenas. In his 1959 address, López Mateos used the Zapatista call for "tierra y libertad" and pledged the continuation of revolutionary land reform. In 1960, López Mateos announced: "With absolute decisiveness the Executive has worked toward the completion of the agrarian postulates of the Revolution. The facts confirm this."4 The intensity of ideological adherence of López Mateos as measured through a content analysis of his presidential addresses is shown in figure 16. The frequency distribution on each dimension of ideological adherence is significant.

FIGURE 16. LOPEZ MATEOS, 1958-64: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms
D = Structures; E = Patriotism
The high number of references to the symbols of the revolution is explained, in part, by the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution in 1960 (see appendix B). Yet as revealed in figure 16, López Mateos used very traditional revolutionary rhetoric to refer to the agrarian question, reform policies, and structures. The Patriotism dimension is also significant in that it suggests a period of nationalism and increasing independence from the United States after an eighteen-year period of close relations. Indeed, with the success of the Cuban revolution in 1959, the López Mateos administration did verbally move away from United States support and developed a sympathetic rhetoric endorsing the Cuban cause. The information derived from figure 16 allows us to suggest that López Mateos verbally and publicly committed his administration to the revolutionary agrarian reform ideology. Not since Cárdenas had such rhetoric been used by a postrevolutionary president.

With such strong verbal adherence to the goals of the revolutionary ideology of land reform, we would expect López Mateos to proceed with rapid land redistribution. But in the preceding years, Ávila Camacho, Alemán, and Ruiz Cortines had publicly stated that there was little available land to redistribute to Mexico's landless population. Could López Mateos move forward with land redistribution, or was his rhetoric designed solely to manipulate popular expectations without providing meaningful reform because of the "constraints" of having little available land for redistribution?

The amount of land López Mateos claimed to have distributed during his term of office is shown in table 20. Clearly, his
performance ranks with that of Cárdenas, although their policy emphases differed, and the rapid increase in the amount of land redistributed marked a reversal of previous policy choices. Through dotation and restitution policies, López Mateos claimed to have redistributed 16,909,456 hectares of land. Independent investigators attribute his administration with the redistribution of 16,004,169 hectares, a discrepancy of only 905,287 hectares. But it should be mentioned that in reality much of the land redistributed at this time involved confirmation of title to lands that had been redistributed earlier, even as far back as under Cárdenas. López Mateos did not distinguish this in his addresses.

TABLE 20
LAND DISTRIBUTIONS CLAIMED BY LOPEZ MATEOS, 1959-64 (hectares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dotation/Restitution</th>
<th>Colony</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1,180,000</td>
<td>451,879</td>
<td>30,842a</td>
<td>1,662,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2,386,838</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,016,963b</td>
<td>3,403,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3,841,577</td>
<td>308,348</td>
<td>7,270,975c</td>
<td>11,420,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>3,370,000</td>
<td>471,000</td>
<td>515,471d</td>
<td>4,356,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>2,085,146</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>81,501a</td>
<td>2,166,647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>4,045,895</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>258,044a</td>
<td>4,303,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>16,909,456</td>
<td>1,231,227</td>
<td>9,173,796</td>
<td>27,314,479</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


aNational lands.

bNullification of concessions.

cNullification of concessions and expropriations of private property.

dNational lands and nullification of concessions.
Referring to table 13, the average annual redistribution of land under López Mateos was 2,667,361 hectares, not far below that of Cárdenas who distributed 2,981,623 hectares of land per year. This very active pace meant that there was not a shortage of available land, as other presidents had claimed, but rather that new policies had to be enacted or older ones executed to ensure the continuation of land redistribution. In suggesting that no land was available for further redistribution, earlier Mexican presidents gave their administrations the image of being nonrevolutionary. López Mateos changed this image.

López Mateos employed a nullification policy to void the concessions given to cattle ranchers who were violating the provisions of their contracts that closely resembled the policies pre-Cárdenas presidents had used. The targeted concessions were those granted by Avila Camacho, Alemán, and Ruiz Cortines under Certificados de Inafectabilidad Ganadera. During his term, López Mateos revoked forty-six such cattle-raising concessions for violating the Código Agrario. The violations meant that the proposed activity was not taking place on the land granted under the concession. This policy effectively conceded that previous agrarian reform policies had allowed a reconcentration of land in the hands of a few, particularly in northern Mexico. The size of the pasture-land concessions granted under earlier administrations ranged from over nine thousand hectares to twenty-five hundred hectares. In breaking up these concessions, López Mateos was able to redistribute the land to cattle-raising ejidos. During his term he created eighty-six of these ejidos.
López Mateos claimed to have distributed over ten million hectares of national and other lands to colonists, ejidatarios, and small farmers (see table 20). His colonization efforts were concentrated in Campeche, Oaxaca, Veracruz, and the Territory of Quintana Roo. Although colonization was a policy preference of López Mateos, in 1963 he repealed the Ley Federal de Colonización and dismantled the Comisión Nacional de Colonización because he felt they were subverting the intention of the Código Agrario by leasing and selling national lands to speculators. His point, again, was that the basic interests of the campesinos were not being met by governmental actions.

Through the first four years of his administration, López Mateos not only pursued an active pace of land redistribution but also gave new impetus to land reform. His land reform policies worked to benefit both ejidatarios and small farmers, but in his presidential addresses more space was given to discussions of ejidos. The impression was that his reform efforts were specifically designed to benefit the poorest of the agrarian sector. A review of some of these policies is given for the purpose of assessing the direction of his land reform policies.

In 1959, López Mateos initiated a policy of organizing cattle-raising ejidos and executed it first in the Cananea region. He reduced the price of agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and insecticides to make them more accessible to campesinos. In 1960, he issued an executive order stipulating that national lands and new irrigation districts would be used only for agricultural purposes. A new credit system was opened with Bancos Agrarios operating to have
direct contact with ejidatarios. The Seguro Agrícola and Seguro Ganadero policies were extended and by 1964 protected 3.1 million hectares of land and 350,000 head of cattle. He announced a plan for the integrated development of ejidos that would better coordinate and organize their activities on a national basis. This was a precursor to his program for La Reforma Agraria Integral, which was announced in 1964.

Agricultural credit programs also received new support from the López Mateos administration. In the first nine months of the new term, the Banco Ejidal and Banco Agrícola made available $1.2 billion in credit. This was supplemented by an additional $1.8 billion from other sources. By 1964, the amount of agricultural credit reportedly made available totaled $6 billion. Similar increases were registered for the funding of irrigation projects, and by 1964 the government was spending nearly $2.4 billion annually. In six years the López Mateos administration claimed to have allocated nearly $8 billion for irrigation projects. With this kind of assistance, agricultural productivity increased by approximately 6 percent annually.

A noticeable change in verbal discussion of land reform and land redistribution policies can be detected in the 1963 and 1964 presidential addresses. At this time, with successful land redistribution behind him, López Mateos reduced the pace of redistributions and verbally referred more to agricultural productivity. Cárdenas had also slowed the pace of agrarian reform in the later years of his administration, perhaps in recognition that land redistributions had hampered productivity. It is also likely that by 1963 López Mateos had an idea
whom he would select to succeed him as president. Gustavo Díaz Ordaz was acting minster of Gobernación and, according to precedent, would be the likely choice. He was ideologically more conservative than López Mateos, and the change in policy direction by 1963 most probably eased the transition into the new administration. The endorsement of revolutionary land reform during the López Mateos administration contributed significantly to popular associations between the Mexican government and the Revolution of 1910. The ideological commitment to land reform demonstrated by López Mateos satisfied some demands for land and enhanced regime legitimacy by reemphasizing the ejido as a contributor to Mexican agricultural productivity. López Mateos conducted his agrarian reform in a legalistic manner and used the laws of the revolution to acquire more needed land. He also forbade the invasion of land by landless campesinos. Under the Añón Camacho, Alemán, and Ruiz Cortines administrations, the incidence of land seizures and occupations had increased as land redistribution was deemphasized. In clear terms in 1960 and 1962, López Mateos promised to repress any invasions of private property because "everything under the law, nothing outside of it." Systematic land redistribution and land reform characterized his approach to the agrarian situation.

Ideological adherence to revolutionary land reform can be traced in the rhetoric and actions of López Mateos. But it is also important again to compare his term of office with that of Cárdenas. During the depression era of the 1930s, a trend worldwide toward more reformist policy making occurred. Cárdenas's massive land reform and labor policies were not necessarily that dissimilar from the redistributive
welfare policies pursued by other nations at that time. The particular context of Mexico made land redistribution a more salient issue than in other countries, but at its heart it addressed the same kind of social justice concern that other welfare policies addressed. In the late 1950s, Cuba successfully underwent a major social-transforming revolution which brought to power a communist government in the western hemisphere. Mexico applauded Fidel Castro for his success and maintained sympathetic rhetoric during the harried days of the Cuban missile crisis and other cold war related events between the United States and the Soviet Union. Perhaps in the context of these situational factors, López Mateos felt there was more room to pursue land redistribution policies without fear of United States' disapproval. This situational variable may have played an important role in the decision making of President López Mateos; but in order to explain the scope and extent of his land reform policies, it is more realistic to assess his ideological adherence to this policy area and to acknowledge the importance of rebuilding peasant support for government activities. Under López Mateos, Mexico returned to populism, a resurgence of legitimacy, and endorsement of governmental actions. It is likely López Mateos, as other Mexican presidents before him, understood the historic linkage between political legitimacy and the revolutionary ideology. Although the content analysis of the rhetoric of Avila Camacho and Alemán revealed considerable congruence between their expressed ideological orientations and policy choices, they did not adhere to the social justice component of the revolutionary ideology of land reform. The López Mateos administration marked a return to that
component of the revolutionary ideology. It is interesting that only
during three postrevolutionary administrations had presidents committed
themselves publicly and through policy decisions to the redistributive
aspect of land reform. When López Mateos turned over political
authority to Díaz Ordaz in 1964, land reform had been part of the
prevailing national value system for nearly fifty years. Would Díaz
Ordaz continue redistributive land reform policies, or would his
administration return to more conservative distributive measures, as
Avila Camacho had done following Cárdenas? After a second period of
massive land redistribution, would the public expect more purposeful
governmental action, or had the goal, by and large, been fulfilled?
After fifty years, was land redistribution still a salient issue, or had
a shift occurred to reorient popular concern toward some other area?

Díaz Ordaz inherited a situation of relative peace and prosper-
ity in the agrarian sector. In his inaugural address of 1 December
1964, he pledged his administration to the same kinds of redistributive
policies as López Mateos. He specifically referred to the accelerated
division of lands, the development of communal lands, and guarantees to
small farmers. Unlike López Mateos, though, Díaz Ordaz publicly
stated that if no land was available for redistribution, he would make
that known clearly to those campesinos that possessed agrarian rights to
receive land. This cautious introduction to his land reform policies
gave Díaz Ordaz a great deal of policy leeway in determining a course of
action. On the one hand he pledged continuation of accelerated land
distribution, and on the other he asserted that insufficient lands were
available for distribution. How did he define his approach to the
agrarian problem in his annual addresses? Was this ambiguity maintained and, if so, what purpose did it serve for Díaz Ordaz?

Because this study ends after assessing fifty years of agrarian reform in Mexico, the two initial years of the Díaz Ordaz presidency will be analyzed in this section. This provides us with his inaugural address and two annual messages to Congress, one in 1965 and the other in 1966. The pattern of ideological intensity demonstrated by Díaz Ordaz during this time period is revealed in figure 17.

FIGURE 17. DIAZ ORDAZ, 1964-66: INDEX OF VERBAL IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE

A = Symbols; B = Agrarianism; C = Reforms
D = Structures; E = Patriotism

The high frequency distribution on the Symbols dimension shows that linkages were made between his administration and the Revolution of 1910. Díaz Ordaz consistently made a high number of references to
Agrarianism, Reforms, and Patriotism and a moderate number of references to Structure (see appendix B). This suggests that in messages to Congress, Díaz Ordaz reflected verbal ideological concern for the revolutionary land reform program and solutions to the lingering agrarian problem. The pattern shown on the Patriotism dimension reflects nationalistic appeals for unity and, in conjunction with agrarianism, suggests that Díaz Ordaz anticipated problems with resolving prevailing problems. In general, the level of ideological commitment shown in figure 17 is high.

In two annual messages to Congress, Díaz Ordaz claimed to have redistributed 6,830,992 hectares of land through dotation and restitution policies to 160,551 campesinos. The average size of the distribution was 42.54 hectares. At this pace (over 3.4 million hectares per year), Díaz Ordaz ranked first, ahead of Cárdenas and López Mateos, for the most land redistributed per year in postrevolutionary history.\textsuperscript{20} Independent analysts, however, attribute Díaz Ordaz with the redistribution of 2,507,000 hectares in the first two years of his term.\textsuperscript{21} At that pace, Díaz Ordaz had redistributed more than 1.25 million hectares per year, far less than the figure cited in his annual addresses but still notable for its scope in postrevolutionary Mexican history. In 1965, several sections of his annual address to Congress mentioned agrarian reform. Of special concern was the rate of growth in rural areas which was estimated to increase rural population by fifty thousand per year. Díaz Ordaz said: "At this point, the country cannot arrange land for everyone."\textsuperscript{22} The blow to land redistribution that this signaled was softened when he added that agrarian reform would move
ahead. Part of his reform effort would come about through the targeting of excess or surplus lands and by assessing the real boundaries of ejidos and other communities or small properties. To carry this out, Díaz Ordaz ordered the nation divided into six zones with each zone responsible for measuring the amount of distributable land. Any land found in these zones would be turned over to the Departamento Agrario for distribution to campesinos. Rather than providing new land for redistribution, this policy placed responsibility for locating distributable land on regional units and gave no assurance that any such land would indeed be found. Díaz Ordaz said he would not renew Certificados de Inafectabilidad Ganadera that were granted by Alemán, and any workable land located on these ranches was to be distributed to campesinos when the concession expired. It was announced that new colonization programs would not be initiated because the old ones were not working well, and that efforts would be made to increase the size of the older colonies. Campesinos from other parts of Mexico would be transferred to these larger colonies.

In 1966, a more production-oriented address was delivered to Congress (see appendix B). It called for economic growth of 6 percent annually; increased agricultural and cattle production; industrialization; more balanced regional development; a more equitable distribution of national wealth; improvements in education, living conditions, social security; the development of internal savings; and economic stability. Díaz Ordaz announced that ten thousand petitions for land had received negative responses from local and state authorities and that he would turn down these requests because there was insufficient land.
Paradoxically, though, Díaz Ordaz announced in the same message that 126,616 Certificados de Inafectabilidad Agrícola protecting seven million hectares of land, and 717 Certificados de Inafectabilidad Ganadera protecting eight million hectares of land were issued by his government. Was there a real shortage of land, or was Díaz Ordaz simply unwilling to sacrifice agricultural productivity to pursue expropriations of private property for redistribution? In this address, Díaz Ordaz claimed to have redistributed more than six million hectares of land in two years in office. Clearly this pace necessitated large tracts of available land. Had all land been depleted? The granting of the Certificados de Inafectabilidad Agrícola and Ganadera strongly suggests that available lands existed. Why, then, would Díaz Ordaz load his state-of-the-nation addresses with pessimistic assessments about the ability of the government to redistribute more land? Why were ten thousand petitions for land turned down? His address maintains the same kind of ambiguity detected in his inaugural message, for as is shown in appendix B, he made nineteen references to the revolution and ten to the agrarian problem in this 1966 address. By his language we would not have expected the protection of such large amounts of land for farming and cattle raising. It is likely that he was preparing the nation for a slowdown in the amount of land to be distributed in the next four years of his administration. This ambiguity provided him with the ability to claim successful redistribution while available lands existed and to make associations between his administration and the revolution. And it allowed him to absolve his government from further land redistribution because, according to his reports, no new lands were available. Indeed,
government figures show that a slowdown in land redistribution occurred in the later years of the Díaz Ordaz administration and that by 1968 his government had redistributed a total of nine million hectares.29 In 1967, Díaz Ordaz executed the division of large haciendas in northern Mexico and redistributed over one million hectares to ejidatarios to create cattle ranches.30 The pace was still active, especially when compared to the Avila Camacho, Alemán, and Ruiz Cortines administrations.

The dominant tone in the 1965 and 1966 addresses stressed agricultural production, and World Bank and Agency for International Development loans for irrigation, roads, agricultural electrification, and cattle raising were solicited.31 In 1965, Díaz Ordaz noted that nearly $1.7 billion was invested in irrigation projects and over $2.5 billion was made available for agricultural investment through the Fondo de Garantía para el Fomento de la Agricultura, the Banco Agrícola, the Banco Ejidal, and the Bancos Agrarios.32 In 1965, Díaz Ordaz announced the creation of the Banco Nacional Agropecuario, a new institution designed to decentralize agricultural credit for farmers and ejidatarios. This institution would stress better agricultural productivity.33 He also encouraged small farmers to join together in cooperative efforts to overcome the disadvantages small-plot farming faced in maximizing the utility of inputs like machinery, seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides.34 Did this signal a shift toward Cárdenas-style collectivism? Again, the intent of Díaz Ordaz's policies in the agrarian area was not always clear, but what is clear is that increasingly other economic development issues became salient as his term progressed. And as is
well documented, in 1968 Díaz Ordaz faced the most serious challenge to PRI political dominance with student riots and strikes. In meeting these challenges with violent repression, Díaz Ordaz earned his administration the label of being the most conservative in the entirety of postrevolutionary history.

The state of land distribution by the mid-1960s was ambiguous. For more than twenty-five years presidents had announced that there was no more land available for distribution, but between 1940 and 1965 some 31,073,665 hectares of land had actually been redistributed. This means that six million more hectares of land were redistributed between 1940 and 1965 than had been redistributed from 1916 to 1940. For those who have said that land reform in Mexico stopped after Cárdenas, the figures do not agree. Certainly a shift occurred in the direction of land reform policies away from social justice goals and toward economic development goals. But with more than 56.5 million hectares of land redistributed to more than two million campesinos during fifty years of application of agrarian laws, it is accurate to say that the social justice goal of land reform was never completely subverted during periods of economic emphasis. Those presidents who exhibited an ideological adherence to the social justice goal of Mexican land reform were responsible for the distribution of more than thirty-five million hectares during a total of fourteen years in office. López Mateos was responsible for bringing about a resurgence of land redistribution and publicizing the concept of social justice through land reform. He also successfully integrated land redistribution and development and governed in a prosperous time. Díaz Ordaz operated under a similar framework
during the first two years of his term, but he began a process of preparing Mexico for a slowdown in land redistribution.

Slowdown, however, could not be detected in the verbal ideological adherence of Luis Echeverria Alvarez, elected in 1970 to the presidency. He pledged his administration to agrarian reform, and in 1972, some 222,000 hectares of large, private landholdings were expropriated by the government and redistributed to 941 campesino families. Incidence of land seizure also increased as campesinos had raised expectations and saw an opportunity to force the issue of land redistribution. Although he linked his administration to the goals of the revolution, Echeverria's term in office was plagued by increasing violence by students and urban and rural guerrilla movements. Inflation and unemployment coupled with the high rate of population increase threatened the economic stability of Mexico. The sporadic incidents of violence in the countryside reflected dissatisfaction with the quality of land that had been redistributed to Mexico's campesinos. Since the end of the Cardenas administration, the quality of reform sector landholdings had declined. Demands for land were satisfied through the parceling of uncultivable land. Finally, in protest, campesinos demanded more productive land distributions. But most of Mexico's cultivable, productive landholdings comprised the profitable export sector of the agricultural economy and were not likely targets of government seizure.

Economic boom and bust would characterize Mexico in the decade 1970 to 1980. Land reform was officially terminated under the presidency of Jose Lopez Portillo, Mexico's president from 1976 to
1982. He cited a lack of available land and the need for more efficient organization of rural production as the main reasons for the termination of the revolutionary program. These were the same reasons used by Avila Camacho and Alemán thirty years earlier to cut back on land redistribution. Because of Mexico's economic crisis, it was observed that "The government is also less likely to divide up large landholdings which exceed the legal limit but which produce important crops for the urban or export market." The argument is familiar, and it is a part of Mexico's ongoing history of agrarian reform. But throughout similar periods of deemphasis in land redistribution policies, the symbolism of agrarian reform continued, and eventually the program resurfaced in government policy. Can any one president terminate a program and a goal inextricably linked to Mexico's national ideology? Some of the implications resulting from developments in the 1970s and 1980s will be discussed in the next chapter.
END NOTES TO CHAPTER 7


3Ibid., 786.

4Ibid., 722.


7Los Presidentes de México, 4:849.

8Ibid., 757.

9Ibid., 849.

10Ibid., 695.

11Ibid., 696.

12Ibid., 722.

13Ibid., 847.

14Ibid., 758.

15Ibid., 846.

16Ibid., 846.

17These included the administrations of Portes Gil, Cárdenas, and López Mateos.

18Los Presidentes de México, 4:867.

19The 1966 annual address refers to events which occurred in 1965, the fiftieth anniversary of the Ley Agraria.

20Los Presidentes de México, 4:915.


22Los Presidentes de México, 4:878.

23Ibid.

24Ibid.
25 Ibid., 879.  
26 Ibid.  
27 Ibid., 903.  
28 Ibid., 916.  
30 Ibid., 120.  
31 *Los Presidentes de México*, 4:876.  
32 Ibid., 877.  
34 Ibid., 5:942-47.  
37 Portes Gill - 1,173,199 hectares; Cárdenas - 17,889,792 hectares; López Mateos - 16,004,169 hectares; total - 35,067,160 hectares. Included in these figures is the confirmation of titles granted under previous administrations.  
39 Ibid., 140.  
41 Ibid., 446.
CHAPTER 8

THE RELATIONSHIP OF IDEOLOGY TO LAND REFORM POLICIES:
A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

During the first fifty years of revolutionary land reform in Mexico, a fairly consistent pattern of policy preferences emerged with regard to agrarian reform. In annual messages before Congress, each postrevolutionary president linked his administration to the goal of land reform through the use of verbal references to the revolution and its agrarian program. The results of this research reveal new information with which to evaluate the nature of Mexico's agrarian revolution. Madero led the successful revolutionary coalition that deposed Porfirio Díaz and initiated the government's program of land reform. Underlying this program was a reformist ideology that can be traced to the mid-nineteenth century liberal Reforma period in Mexican history. Madero's primary motivation for deposing the aging dictator was to bring about the construction of stable, liberal, democratic, political structures and foster related values within Mexican society through the promotion of free and open electoral competition. He did not build an ideology of appropriate governmental initiative to assist with the social transformations many Mexicans perceived as necessary in the post-Porfirian age. In a negative reaction to Zapatismo, Madero rejected campesino demands for land redistribution and land reform and instead gradually developed a program to boost agricultural productivity and extend the
class of small farmers through distributive land reform policies. As
this program was extended and defined by subsequent presidents, it came
to represent the preferred policy approach to the resolution of the
agrarian question for most of Mexico's postrevolutionary administra-
tions. In its rejection of expropriation and agricultural collectivism
this approach to land reform sponsored the development and growth of
administrative-bureaucratic structures designed to promote the extension
of a class of small and mid-size agriculturalists rather than state
structures that would swiftly and purposefully alter the situation of
Mexico's millions of landless campesinos by redistributing productive
agricultural lands. For these reasons it is not accurate to view
Mexico's agrarian revolution as fundamentally socially transforming.
Through very gradual change in the land tenure structure of Mexico a
new, but still relatively small, class of farmers made the land produc-
tive and the landless remained without land.

A measure of verbal ideological adherence to the revolution and
land reform was devised using content analysis of presidential addresses
to determine the frequency of use of words and phrases relating to the
revolution or to land reform goals. Frequency counts within dimensions
of revolutionary ideological adherence to land reform (Symbols,
Agrarianism, Reforms, Structures, and Patriotism) seemed to reflect the
intensity of the verbal ideological adherence to the general policy
area. When compared to the implementation of land reform policies, high
frequency distributions on each of the dimensions generally showed
congruence between what was said about the enactment of land reform
policies and what was actually done. High frequency distributions on
the Symbols, Agrarianism, and Reforms dimensions also were associated with the implementation of land reform goals consistent with the verbal ideological orientation of the president. The analysis concentrated on the patterns which developed over the course of the term of office of postrevolutionary presidents. The findings for year-by-year analysis of verbal ideological adherence, policy choice, and implementation were generally the same as the findings for the term taken as a whole. This suggests that these presidents were consistent in their use of language and the types of land reform policies they implemented.

In three of the thirteen postrevolutionary administrations significant frequency distributions on these dimensions were consistent with an expressed ideological orientation toward a mixed system of collective and private land ownership, and active land redistribution. In six other cases lower frequency distributions on these dimensions were consistent with a policy preference toward the creation or extension of a class of small, private, landowners, and more distributive land reform policies. The first policy orientation developed out of the Zapatista program for revolutionary land reform and emphasized the redistribution of land and wealth through the expropriation of haciendas. The other policy orientation developed out of the Maderista revolutionary program that emphasized the goal of efficient agricultural production through the cultivation of smaller properties. This orientation gave rise to a gradual distributive program of land reform mainly, although not exclusively, through the division and sale of national lands and the implementation of programs that assisted the development of productive agricultural units. Efficient capitalist economic
development of rural Mexico was the core goal of this revolutionary program.

In four postrevolutionary administrations a different pattern emerged. The use of revolutionary ideological language did not reflect a predisposition toward the enactment and execution of related land reform policies. Rather, in each case moderate to high frequency distributions on the Symbols, Reforms, and/or Patriotism dimensions were associated with a reduction of governmental effort in land redistribution and land reform. In two cases this reduction in policy output coincided with internal disorder (1915 to 1920) or economic collapse (1930 to 1932). In one case (1952 to 1958) this pattern of verbal ideological adherence was associated with the culmination of a long period of decline in land reform policy output. The administrations immediately preceding Ruiz Cortines had implemented land reform and land distribution policies consistent with patterns established in the postrevolutionary period which emphasized capitalist agricultural development through private land ownership and cultivation even though the amount of land they distributed declined relative to the Cárdenas administration. The 1952 to 1958 period continued this trend.

The important difference between the two patterns of verbal ideological adherence and the implementation of related land reform policies seems to lie in the acknowledgement of an agrarian problem. In conjunction with other dimensions, high frequency distributions on the Agrarianism dimension of ideological adherence consistently were associated with the implementation of land reform policies and frequently with redistributive social justice goals. And in conjunction with other
dimensions, low to moderate frequency distributions on this dimension coincided with policy preferences toward and implementation of distributive land reform policies with the goal of agricultural productivity and economic development.

These findings suggest a significant level of congruence between words and actions was established by most of Mexico's postrevolutionary presidents during their terms of office. Although this study does not attempt to assess the relationship of elite policy preferences to mass policy preferences, the history of relative rural calm in Mexico gives tacit support to the argument that some degree of congruence between elite and mass preferences existed. Aside from the relatively small group of Zapatistas that had developed a reasonably organized program for agrarian change, Mexico's postrevolutionary presidents seemed to establish the policy agendas and foster policy preferences that were accepted by the public. In this case, the public was broadly constituted, initially ill-organized, and later state-sanctioned as a legitimate interest group, and lacking in consensus regarding specific policy actions or remedies. This being the case, the revolutionary government was accorded sufficient policy room to create less-than-revolutionary responses to Mexico's land question.

In the specific case of land reform, the Mexican Revolution gave rise to two competing theories of appropriate governmental action. The ideology of one approach was equalitarian; the other was liberal reformist. One approach was created by Mexico's landless campesinos; the other was devised by bourgeois landowners. Both approaches, to some extent, were incorporated in the revolutionary Constitution of 1917 in
Article 27. But the balancing of both interests rarely occurred. History has shown that in most instances one orientation was emphasized over the other through the enactment and implementation of land reform policies. Relative peace in the countryside was maintained during the period of this study precisely because diverse interests could be satisfied over time with variations in goal priorities. Although the modal pattern favored the implementation of distributive policies, the extension of capitalist agriculture and private property, at important times the administrations favoring the other approach assumed power and satisfied some of the social justice goals of many of Mexico's landless campesinos.

The dualism apparent in the revolutionary ideology of land reform seems to have had roots in historical and regional differences between northern and south-central Mexico. The social justice goal of revolutionary wealth redistribution originated in the populated south-central region of Mexico where a high concentration of land in the hands of a few alienated large numbers of landless campesinos in the prerevolutionary period. The capitalist agricultural development goal originated among the relatively wealthy revolutionary leaders of the sparsely populated northern region of Mexico where large landholdings were common but the lack of population concentration caused less campesino alienation.

The patterns which emerged in each of the thirteen postrevolutionary administrations considered in this study are presented in the following tables. The grouping of what we have called the symbolic administrations is shown in table 21. The liberal reformist
administrations that pursued private property and agricultural development goals are compared in table 22. And the three social justice/redistributive administrations identified in this study are analyzed in table 23.

In four cases the frequency distributions along the dimensions of ideological adherence did not establish significant patterns that clearly coincided with policy preferences or implemented programs. For these administrations, a qualitative review of the content of their addresses revealed an ideological orientation toward the agricultural development goal of land reform. Each president used revolutionary symbolism and rhetorical references to the agrarian problem but implemented policies consistent with private property and agricultural productivity goals. As mentioned above, the political and/or economic environments of these administrations were unstable or transitional. Revolutionary ideological rhetoric was likely used to encourage support for the regime in the face of impending or actual threats to legitimacy. None of these administrations pursued active redistributive land reform policies and actually slowed the pace of land reform during their terms. The frequency distributions along the dimensions of ideological adherence for these administrations are shown in table 21.

The brief Madero administration has been included with other postrevolutionary governments in this analysis even though national land reform legislation was not enacted until 1915 under Carranza. The reason for including his administration is that it set the tone for subsequent land reform policies by emphasizing small-plot farming and agricultural development. Madero was unable to implement land reform
policies because of the brevity of his term and instability resulting from internal political turbulence. However, a qualitative review of his presidential addresses before Congress revealed a clear policy preference for distributive land reform, encouraging the private cultivation of small properties, and increasing agricultural productivity with such inputs as education, machinery, and fertilizers. The Madero revolution was steeped in liberal reformist political traditions and orientations. As shown earlier, a preference for the spread of small-property farming was a reaction to the corruption and economic inefficiency of the large hacienda. Madero avoided considering the social justice goals of the Zapatistas and blamed their movement for causing Mexico's unrest. This approach to land reform was carried on after Madero's death by Carranza.

TABLE 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Symbols</th>
<th>Agrarianism</th>
<th>Reforms</th>
<th>Structures</th>
<th>Patriotism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madero**</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carranza</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ortiz Rubio</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruiz Cortines</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These figures represent frequency distributions on these dimensions of ideological adherence and are based on the content analysis of presidential addresses.

**These figures are based on the content analysis of two addresses before Congress and must therefore be considered as relative indicators of intensity.
Perhaps the most important legacy of the Madero administration for the future of postrevolutionary land reform was its position regarding the role of the state. Madero's original land reform proposals were incorporated in his Plan de San Luis Potosí. They called for the return of despoiled lands to Indians (restitution) and the breakup of the hacienda (expropriation). Regarding restitution, the proposal required that Indians prove that lands they had once owned were wrongfully or illegally taken from them. They had to show title to the land as proof of ownership. Many Indian villages did not have proof of title. Additionally, the Indian village was required to initiate proceedings against the landowner it claimed had taken its lands. Often these landowners threatened the Indians with reprisal if such actions were initiated. The effect of these stipulations was to place the state in a reactive position. Without having to be purposive or initiating, the state could conveniently neglect the expropriation policies of land reform it had endorsed and concentrate more on the creation of a new class of productive farmers through the distribution of public or idle lands.

For the purposes of this analysis, the administrations of Carranza, Ortiz Rubio, and Ruiz Cortines revealed more information regarding the associations of ideology and land reform policies. These administrations diverged from their professed goals with the policies they implemented. For the Carranza administration, internal political instability and economic ruin impeded the government from undertaking positive actions in most areas. In the land reform area, however, Carranza showed no inclination to move ahead with the kinds of reforms
his own agrarian law sanctioned nor with the policies incorporated in the new Constitution of 1917. The original Ley Agraria of 1915 resembled the kind of policy Madero had endorsed. Burden of effort and burden of proof were placed on the village petitioning for land under government programs. For restitution this meant showing that lands had been illegally taken from Indian villages. Carranza did originate the concept of dotation which provided outright grants of land to villages which showed they needed more even if they could not prove they had once owned the land. Dotation was a significant addition to early land reform legislation. However, the agrarian law only applied to villages with political status. This clause of the law effectively excluded the majority of landless campesinos from petitioning the government for land through either dotation or restitution policies. Further reforms to the agrarian legislation under the Carranza administration reduced its scope and effectiveness. With less than 170,000 hectares redistributed in three years, it was clear that Carranza did not work to bring about major structural changes in the Mexican land tenure system.

The pattern of divergence uncovered for Ortiz Rubio should really be attributed to the imposition of power by Calles. During his brief term as president, Ortiz Rubio was never able to exert independent political authority. Assuming power after the interim presidency of Portes Gil in which a significant rise in the rate of land redistribution occurred, it is likely that Ortiz Rubio was forced to reduce land reform efforts under orders from Calles. This is not to say that had Calles not been involved in his administration Ortiz Rubio would have proceeded with similar land reform policies as Portes Gil. We do not
have any evidence on which to base such a claim. But, by the same
token, with Calles actively intervening in the powers of the presidency,
it is equally incorrect to place sole responsibility on Ortiz Rubio for
the reduction in the pace of land reform. Clearly, Calles must be
associated with Ortiz Rubio's policies.

The Ortiz Rubio administration was the first to use a very large
amount of symbolic rhetoric in addresses before Congress. Consistently,
Ortiz Rubio pledged his government to fulfilling the goals of the revo-
lution, including its land reform goals. And consistently, the policies
implemented under his administration diverged from the professed goals.
The two years of his term coincided with the onset of the Great
Depression. As a puppet president facing economic crisis, Ortiz Rubio
seemed to use a great deal of symbolic and emotive rhetoric to cover the
faults of his administration, to detract attention from more serious
political and economic problems, and to try to build some support from
the popular sectors. His resignation from power in 1932 suggests he
failed to accomplish these goals.

The Ruiz Cortines administration differed from both the Carranza
and Ortiz Rubio governments in that in the 1950s, Mexico was internally
calm and the economy was growing at a healthy pace. From the content of
his speeches, Ruiz Cortines was concerned with the social situation in
rural Mexico, and he directed many of his policies to alleviate problems
which attend poverty, such as illiteracy and malnutrition. But he also
referred to land redistribution and reform in terms of completing the
goals of the revolution. During his term improvements in rural infra-
structure were made, especially in irrigation and transportation. In
the 1950s, ejidal productivity matched that of private farms for the first time in the postrevolutionary period.¹ This meant that for the first time the land reform sector had proven its ability to be economically productive. Ruiz Cortines had pursued agrarian reform policies rather than land redistribution. His land redistribution policies continued the pattern of reduction established by Avila Camacho and Alemán. This was incongruent with the professed goals of his administration and probably resulted from pressures to continue the economic development policies of the post-Cárdenas administrations. The focus was primarily on industrial development, but Alemán had succeeded in transposing this viewpoint to the agricultural sector. Heavy investments in rural infrastructure were part of the plan to modernize and industrialize Mexico in the postwar period. The price for this paid by Mexico's campesinos was further reductions in land redistribution.

To highlight the differences in approach reflected in the competing theories of land reform, the patterns of the group we have called the liberal reformist administrations are shown in table 22. The low number of references to Agrarianism in each of these administrations, in conjunction with generally lower frequency distributions on the Reforms and Structures dimensions, seemed to coincide with a policy preference toward agricultural development goals and was translated into distributive land reform policies that favored private property. In the immediate postrevolutionary period, making small plots of land available through lease or sale was the preferred policy approach to resolving the land question. Public lands or idle private lands were sold or leased to small farmers who were obligated to make them productive. This
policy also called on the owners of very large estates to subdivide and sell their lands or face the possibility of expropriation. Typically, the hacendado would retain the best land for himself and divide the rest among family members, in compliance with the stipulation that it be divided; afterward, the property could still be farmed as one unit. These policies favored those who wanted land but could not purchase any under the Porfiriato, and they accommodated the interests of those who already owned land. As time went on only slight modifications to these policies evolved, and by the late 1940s land was again being concentrated in the hands of a few, a new class of modern hacendados protected under the law. Agricultural modernization and productivity increased until the 1960s. Through the course of these administrations, landless campesinos generally went without land.

**TABLE 22**

INTENSITY OF IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE BY PRESIDENT (liberal reformist goals*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Symbols</th>
<th>Agrarianism</th>
<th>Reforms</th>
<th>Structures</th>
<th>Patriotism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>De la Huerta</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obregón</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calles</td>
<td>54**</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodríguez</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avila Camacho</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alemán</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These figures represent frequency distributions on these dimensions of ideological adherence and are based on the content analysis of presidential addresses.

**The presidential address of 1928 discussed the assassination of president-elect Obregón and made forty-eight references to revolutionary symbols.*
Adolfo de la Huerta and Abelardo Rodríguez were interim presidents and their administrations need not be discussed further. The other presidents in this category earned different reputations for their activities in postrevolutionary agrarian reform. Obregón and Calles were considered the early reformers who put into practice the laws that Carranza had neglected. Obregón surpassed the amount of land redistributed under Carranza, and Calles's land redistribution surpassed Obregón's efforts. This could have signaled a cumulative buildup to more extensive redistributive efforts except that after several years of redistribution Calles decided to reduce policy output. By 1932, with Calles acting as Jefe Máximo of the revolution, land redistribution had nearly come to a stop. One historian claims that U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Dwight Morrow was responsible for altering Calles's reformist orientations.² Perhaps their friendship did hasten his conversion, but that cannot be documented. Demands on the treasury, inefficiency in the reform sector, and an ideological shift away from reformism probably best explain Calles's changed attitude.

Both Obregón and Calles were from northern Mexico and both were landowners. During their presidencies neither had advocated expropriation of private lands as a means of providing land to landless campesinos. Between the two of them, about four million hectares of land were redistributed: Obregón redistributed nearly one million hectares and Calles about three million. Obregón's redistributive policies combined restitution and dotation. His distributive policies included the law of 2 August 1923, which sanctioned the colonization of national lands. Calles altered the collectivist orientation of
restitution and dotation policies and enacted his Ley de Fraccionamiento Ejidal which divided ejidal land into individually owned plots. Calles continued Obregón's colonization program.

In other agrarian reforms, Calles was responsible for extending the bureaucratic organs which oversaw the execution of these policies and for creating new agencies. One of these was the Banco Agrícola Refaccionario which was the first national credit institution for small farmers in the postrevolutionary period. It later became the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola. He also initiated the nation's first irrigation program. The emphasis, increasingly, was on ways to improve agricultural productivity.

The period following the Maximato was the most active from the standpoint of land redistribution. It was not until 1940 that Mexico returned to the types of policies Obregón and Calles had legitimized during their terms of office. Avila Camacho returned to the pre-Cárdenas style of land reform after his election to the presidency in 1940. Although he successfully redistributed more land than any of the pre-Cárdenas administrations, Avila Camacho was held responsible for the gradual termination of Mexico's revolutionary land reform. This research has shown that the fact that Avila Camacho redistributed more land than any other postrevolutionary president except Cárdenas was significant, and additionally, his policies fit more closely with the modal pattern of land reform policies initiated after the fall of Díaz. Avila Camacho emphasized the cultivation of individual properties, not communal properties as Cárdenas before him had started. Avila Camacho emphasized agricultural productivity as a means of assisting war-
generated industrialization. Infrastructural and irrigation programs received a good deal of governmental attention. These policies were extended further under Miguel Alemán who became president in 1946. By this time Mexico was firmly committed to the goal of industrialization; and to fuel an ever-growing urban population, agricultural production became an imperative. Alemán espoused the same kind of economic development creed as had Avila Camacho and successfully incorporated the agricultural sector into his plans for the economic modernization of Mexico. Land redistribution continued to decline.

The pattern that holds true for each of these administrations is that the presidents made fewer references to the redistribution of land and the revolutionary program of land reform in their addresses before Congress. At the same time they enacted fewer redistributive policies, implemented fewer land redistribution measures, and concentrated more on improving agricultural production. In other words, there was significant congruence between what they said about land reform and what they did. This does not mean to imply that symbolic rhetoric was never used to link their administrations with the goals of the revolution. Rather, the use of such rhetoric was relatively low. The policy preferences and choices of these administrations fit with the ideological orientation initially endorsed by Madero. This may not have been the main orientation of Mexico's landless campesino class, but the Carranza government bestowed it with legitimacy by ensuring that its main tenets were incorporated in the Ley Agraria of 1915 and in the Constitution of 1917. The consistent implementation of distributive rather than redistributive policies, the continual emphasis given to rural productivity, and even
the passive role of the state in agrarian proceedings were accepted as legitimate land reform policy orientations. As we will see, the fact that these policies are more characteristic of contemporary Mexican land reform helps explain current campesino dissatisfaction with the government.

The last policy orientation this study uncovered was practiced only by three postrevolutionary administrations. We can call these the social justice/redistributive administrations. The patterns of verbal ideological adherence revealed by the content analysis of their presidential addresses are shown in table 23.

**TABLE 23**

INTENSITY OF IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENCE BY PRESIDENT (social justice goals*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Symbols</th>
<th>Agrarianism</th>
<th>Reforms</th>
<th>Structures</th>
<th>Patriotism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portes Gil**</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cárdenas</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>López Mateos</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These figures represent frequency distributions on these dimensions of ideological adherence and are based on the content analysis of presidential addresses.

**These figures are based on only two addresses before Congress and must therefore be considered as relative indicators of intensity.

Because their approach to land reform differed from the modal pattern, the distributions along this index of ideological adherence will be discussed in detail. There are considerable similarities within this group between the frequency distributions on all of the dimensions except Patriotism. Part of the explanation of López Mateos's high
distributions on the Symbols and Patriotism dimensions related to his celebratory discussions of the fifty-year anniversary of the Mexican Revolution in 1960. Each of these administrations shows high distributions on the Symbols, Agrarianism, Reforms, and Structures dimensions. High frequency distributions on the Agrarianism dimension seemed to indicate a pattern of redistributive land reform policies in conjunction with high distributions on the other dimensions. The administration of Portes Gil is unique in that he was an interim appointee and held office briefly at a time when Calles was attempting to manipulate and control the executive. Because of legal barriers set up during the actual Calles presidency (1924-28) under the Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos, Portes Gil could not proceed with the redistribution of land into collective units. He was constrained in policy making but still successfully redistributed land more rapidly under dotation and restitution programs than any postrevolutionary administration to that time. Although certainly no equal of Cárdenas or López Mateos, Portes Gil exhibited the same verbal ideological patterns and policy choices as these other social justice/redistributive administrations.

As was noted in chapter 6, the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas was unique in postrevolutionary Mexican history. Portes Gil may have accelerated the redistribution of land before Cárdenas assumed power, but by 1930 Calles had seen to it that a much reduced program would be implemented by his other "puppet" governments. Cárdenas successfully thwarted Calles's bid to manipulate his administration; and once firmly in control of Mexico's government (by 1935), he began his massive land redistributions. The essential difference between Cárdenas and the
other postrevolutionary administrations before him was his focus on creating collective agricultural units through the redistribution of private property. The expropriation and subsequent redistribution of the henequen plantations in Yucatán State to ejidatarios was an example of the kind of collective agriculture Cárdenas wanted to implant in Mexico. With support from the military and his armed campesino militias, Cárdenas was able to survive the resistance of hacendados whose properties were truly threatened for the first time in postrevolutionary history.

Cárdenas successfully redistributed some eighteen million hectares of land during his six-year term. His policies finally addressed the age-old problem of peones acasillados, those campesinos resident on the haciendas who had been conveniently left out of postrevolutionary land reform measures. He had finally found an outlet for the aspirations of those who had assisted Emiliano Zapata. For Cárdenas, land reform meant a redistribution of wealth. He not only gave more land to ejidatarios, it was also better land. With the incorporation of ejidatarios into the Confederación Nacional Campesina and into the revolutionary political party, Mexican campesinos felt their interests were being heard and acted upon.

Cárdenas increased the structural side of land reform as well by establishing the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal and extending credit to small, private farmers under the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola. Access to credit gave reform-sector farmers the opportunity to improve their productivity. The rewards from this would not be reaped until the 1950s when ejidal productivity equaled private farm productivity, but
the important groundwork was established under Cárdenas. In conjunction with his redistributive policies, Cárdenas had begun the social as well as economic transformation of rural Mexico.

That Cárdenas's social-transforming policies did not carry over into the administration which succeeded him gives credence to the view that the modal pattern of land reform in Mexico was not redistributive and did not pursue social justice goals. On the contrary, as we saw above, the Avila Camacho and Alemán administrations returned to pre-Cárdenas land reform policies and pursued economic development more vehemently, even in the land reform sector. Only under López Mateos did Mexico return to the social justice/redistributive land reform policies of the Cárdenas era. And this occurred after eighteen consecutive years of declining land redistribution and distribution. López Mateos successfully redistributed over sixteen million hectares of land at a time when other postrevolutionary presidents had claimed there was no more land to redistribute. Even more so than Cárdenas, López Mateos's policies combined social justice and agricultural productivity goals as agricultural output was at a high point in the 1960s. But between the 1930s and the 1960s, Mexico's population doubled and there were even more campesinos in need or want of land when López Mateos assumed the presidency than when Cárdenas had become president.

The common theme with each of these three social justice/redistributive administrations is that they pledged their governments to active land redistribution policies and they came through by enacting and implementing them. The role of the state was purposive and active. The government located areas it deemed appropriate for
expropriation and went ahead with this action. The lands were then redistributed to landless campesinos. Although this does not prove that an ideological predisposition toward social justice and redistributive land reform goals caused these presidents to pursue related policies, the evidence uncovered in this study suggests that they did carry through with the kinds of policies and programs they announced publicly in their presidential addresses. A high level of congruence was found between what they said they would do about land reform and what they actually accomplished.

The hypothesis of this study is that a verbal adherence to an ideological position by a decision maker would translate into the enactment of related public policies. For the case of land reform policies in postrevolutionary Mexico, the data suggest that during nine of thirteen administrations there was significant congruence between the verbal ideological orientation of the president and the kinds of policies implemented during his term. In four of the administrations a pattern of divergence was found and was explained in part by the president's perceived need to legitimize his government by associating it with the revolution in a highly symbolic and emotive fashion. Although these results are not conclusive evidence that ideology plays a determinative role in a decision maker's selection of policies, they do strongly suggest that attention should be paid to the way in which the Mexican president discusses his policies. A pattern emerged which indicates that a president tends to reveal consistent policy preferences that, barring major political, economic, or social disruptions, may become implemented policies during his term of office. Specifically in
the land reform area, it appears that consistent policy positions regarding the role of the state and the scope and direction of these policies may be revealed by the president in his annual reports to Congress regarding the state of the union.

This study has argued that two competing theories of appropriate political action and response in the land reform area emerged from the 1910 revolution. Although both were incorporated into the Constitution of 1917, only one has received consistent governmental attention. This is not to say that future governments will deter from the goals of private property and agricultural development goals. But clearly the fact that a different approach to the land question was assumed by three administrations legitimized that approach and placed it in contention with the modal pattern as an appropriate governmental action.

Conclusion

The analysis undertaken in this study of revolutionary ideology and land reform policies has produced some further insight into the dynamics involved in the policy process and into the nature of revolutionary politics in Mexico. The conclusions which result from this endeavor are important for their contribution to both areas of inquiry. We will now remark on the implications of these findings for Mexico and for other societies.

Perhaps most central to the relationship of ideology and land reform policies in Mexico is the context in which the revolutionary ideology developed. It seems the process of ideological interpretation was enhanced by the fact that competing ideas for the effective use of state power and authority developed in the 1910 to 1917 period and to
varying degrees were assimilated into the national myth which Mexico today perpetuates through shared images, symbols, and realities. This study has reviewed how the dual orientation toward land reform influenced postrevolutionary administrations in the fifty years following the implementation of the first agrarian law. How do the results help us to explain or interpret the current situation in rural Mexico? Can any kind of prediction be offered using the findings of this study to help us understand the land reform policy directions of contemporary Mexican governments?

A brief review of the kinds of land reform policies pursued since 1965 in chapter 7 revealed that the modal pattern of distributive policies has been pursued with greater regularity than social justice/redistributive policies. Early in his term, Luis Echeverría used the kind of language that has been associated with the social justice/redistributive administrations of Cárdenas and López Mateos. In light of the domestic situation he faced in the early 1970s with both rural and urban unrest, political and economic motivations probably directed his use of symbolism characteristic of social justice/redistributive administrations. Until about 1965, Mexico had been nearly self-sufficient in food production. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, Mexico was required to import basic foodstuffs. Also by the 1970s, complications associated with rapid population growth, a shortage of cultivable land for redistribution, and rural poverty made the implementation of land reform policies more difficult. During his term, Echeverría focused on rural development schemes to regionally balance agriculture in Mexico and to encourage greater basic food crop
production. But even if Echeverría had wanted to pursue more redistributive policies, he would have had to expropriate productive private landholdings. The alienation of landowners from his support group which likely would have resulted from expropriations could have precipitated a severe crisis of legitimacy. And the loss of revenue from productive agricultural units would have put further strains on the Mexican treasury. The historic emphasis on agricultural productivity and private land ownership meant that a reconcentration of land had occurred in the postrevolutionary period. It is probable that only another agrarian revolution could alter that situation, and this is not likely to occur in the near future.

After Echeverría's presidency, land reform policies increasingly focused on the extension of infrastructure and irrigation to the countryside. In the early 1980s, with the advantage of new oil wealth, José López Portillo increased the amount of the federal budget dedicated to agriculture from the 15 percent figure of the 1970s to over 25 percent by 1980. Between 1980 and 1982, more than $2 billion of public revenue was invested in agriculture and rural development. López Portillo implemented policies that were designed to make Mexico agriculturally self-sufficient again. Oil wealth, however, brought about increased urbanization, and this in turn increased demands for more food. When oil production fell in 1982, the government was forced to reduce its agricultural development schemes. Today, Miguel de la Madrid faces multiple crises in rural Mexico. He will unlikely be able to redistribute land. He is pursuing export-oriented agricultural production policies which, coupled with livestock production and
exportation, could give Mexico increased earnings. Growing rural unrest will not be met with either distributive or redistributive policies, and new methods will have to be found to retain campesino support, or at least their passivity. Keeping the United States border open to legal and illegal Mexican migration will be of interest to the Mexican government, but on the other side of the border there is increasing pressure to shut off this safety valve. As one student of Mexico has summed up the situation:

Once a major contributor to Mexican political stability and development, Mexico's agrarian reform is over, leaving some 3 million peasants without land and as many with poor and inadequate resources for feeding their own families, much less for providing food for a burgeoning urban population. It is clear the future will be fraught with tension and a great deal of uncertainty.

Actually, what has ended is Mexico's postrevolutionary land reform. The inadequacy of policies that developed in a dualistic ideological context is in part to blame for Mexico's poor land reform performance. Postrevolutionary presidents tended to adhere to one orientation that defined and set the context for their land reform policies, while the campesinos, by and large, accepted the tenets of the other competing orientation. Cárdenas was a very popular president among those campesinos that had benefited from his massive land redistribution policies. He initiated on a national scale the same kinds of programs that Zapata had implemented in his region in the very early postrevolutionary period. Contrary to the view held by many scholars, land reform in Mexico did not start with Cárdenas. Rather, Cárdenas started implementing the kinds of policies Zapata had called upon the Madero and Carranza governments to initiate. Cárdenas was the first postrevolutionary president to pursue redistributive land reform
policies in an effort to bring about a redistribution of national wealth, greater social justice, and the social transformation of Mexico. As Zapata had failed to convince either Madero or Carranza of the efficacy of his call for Tierra y Libertad, so, too, had Cárdenas failed to convince the Revolutionary Family that redistributive land reform policies would benefit Mexico politically, economically, and socially. Because Cárdenas was involved in the government after he left the presidency and was closely associated with Avila Camacho, we can raise the suggestion that he, too, changed his orientation to accept industrialization and economic modernization, as a partial explanation of the significant shift away from redistributive land reform policies after his administration ended. Only some twenty years later did redistributive land reform again characterize the policy choices of a postrevolutionary Mexican president. And López Mateos, the second such president, was also Mexico's last.

This study has shown that it is important to consider what a political leader expresses as his policy orientation and goals. The presumption that ideology plays only a symbolic or manipulative role in politics caused many students of Mexican government to discount what a president says in his state-of-the-nation addresses. These addresses provide the Mexican president with a public forum to discuss the accomplishments of his administration, the limitations of his policies, and the goals he is trying to obtain through the enactment of policies. Not in every case will this information match the reality of his actions. However, it could also be said that not always are these addresses used for symbolic or manipulative purposes. Somewhere there
is balance. What this study has shown is that orientations toward policy choices and actual implemented programs were uncovered in all of the thirteen postrevolutionary administrations analyzed in this study. In nine of these cases the index of ideological adherence, which was devised to provide a quantitative measure of this relationship, showed fairly consistent patterns between what a president said about land reform and the kinds of policies he implemented in this area. Only in four cases did this quantitative measure fail to reveal significant patterns. However, qualitative reviews of these administrations revealed that even in these four "symbolic" administrations, a clear pattern favoring liberal reformist land policies emerged. These results are significant even if they cannot prove that adherence to an ideology causes a president to implement certain types of land reform policies.

How do these findings apply to other societies and other systems of government? This study has shown that leading political decision makers may reveal important information about the kinds of policies they will implement. It is likely that ideological underpinnings to these policy choices will become clear if presidential language is analyzed over a relevant length of time. At this stage we cannot say that in all systems or all societies political decision makers will reveal such information. In some systems public addresses by political decision makers may be rare, or they may not contain policy material. But certainly in systems where decision makers are even marginally responsible to an electorate, or where they owe the stability of the system to popular support or passivity, it may be possible to trace such associations in their language and policy choices. In a case such as
Mexico's, with one-party hegemony, little visible ideological choice is offered to the electorate. Therefore, understanding why changes in policy scope or direction occur in this kind of system contributes to our overall understanding of the political dynamics of the Mexican system. The question of the relationship of ideology to public policy is an empirical one, and only through further research will more conclusive findings develop.
END NOTES TO CHAPTER 8


5Sanderson, Land Reform in Mexico, 117.

6Ibid.

7Ibid., 154.
APPENDIX A

Words and phrases used in the content analysis of presidential addresses and the dimensions they were assigned to in creating the Index of Intensity of Ideological Adherence.

Symbols Dimension

In this category references to the Mexican revolution, its ideology of social transformation, its important actors, and related words or phrases were coded. These references indicate the verbal linkages between a presidential administration and the Revolution of 1910. Capitalization and tenses varied for many of these entries.

el acto de justicia de la Revolución: the act of justice of the revolution

las Administraciones revolucionarias: revolutionary administrators

el anhelo revolucionario: the revolutionary wish

el apostolado revolucionario: the revolutionary apostleship

Carta Magna Fundamental Revolucionaria: fundamentals of revolutionary law

la Causa Constitucional: the constitutional cause

la causa revolucionaria: the revolutionary cause

la conciencia del revolucionario: the revolutionary conscience

conquistas revolucionarias: revolutionary conquests

continuidad revolucionaria: revolutionary continuity

las convicciones revolucionarias: revolutionary convictions

la creación revolucionaria: the revolutionary creation

cumplimiento de los deberes de revolucionarios: completion of the rights of revolutionaries

la doctrina de nuestra Revolución: the doctrine of our revolution

los elementos revolucionarios: revolutionary elements
el esfuerzo revolucionaria: the revolutionary force
espiritú revolucionario: revolutionary spirit
la ética revolucionaria: the revolutionary ethic
familia revolucionaria: the revolutionary family
fidelidad Revolucionaria: revolutionary loyalty
fuerzas revolucionarias: revolutionary forces
los gobiernos nacidos de la Revolución: the governments borne of the revolution
gobiernos revolucionarios: revolutionary governments
la gran transformación social: the great social transformation
el grupo revolucionario: the revolutionary group
la idea de la Revolución: the idea of the revolution
el ideal revolucionario: the revolutionary ideal
los ideales del pueblo mexicano: the ideals of Mexico
la ideología de la Revolución Mexicana: the ideology of the Mexican revolution
el impulso revolucionario: the revolutionary impulse
instituciones revolucionarias: revolutionary institutions
Jéfe de la Revolucion: leader of the revolution
la legislación revolucionaria: revolutionary legislation
las leyes y los principios emanados de la Revolución: the laws and principles emanating from the revolution
la lucha: the struggle
una moral revolucionaria: a revolutionary moral
el movimiento social mexicana: the Mexican social movement
el movimiento innovador en Mexico: the innovative movement in Mexico
movimiento insurreccional: insurrectionary movement
movimiento revolucionario: revolutionary movement
nuestra revolución: our revolution
nuestra Revolución Social: our social revolution
el nuevo régimen (Madero): the new regime (Madero)
la obligación de revolucionario: the obligation of the revolutionary
la obra de la Revolución: the work of the revolution
la obra agraria de la Revolución: the agrarian work of the revolution
la opinión revolucionaria: revolutionary opinion
el órden revolucionario: revolutionary order
la orientación revolucionaria: revolutionary orientation
la posición revolucionaria: revolutionary position
la positiva revolución económica y social de México: the positive economic and social revolution of Mexico
los postulados de la Revolución: the posulates of the revolution
postulados de la nueva ideología: postulates of the new ideology
la postura revolucionaria: revolutionary posture
los principios básicos de la Revolución: the basic principles of the revolution
principios revolucionarios: revolutionary principles
el proceso revolucionario de México: Mexico's revolutionary process
el programa social de la Revolución: the social program of the revolution
el programa revolucionario: the revolutionary program
las promesas hechas en nombre de la revolución: the promises made in the name of the revolution
el pueblo revolucionario: the revolutionary nation
la reforma agraria de la Revolución: the agrarian reform of the revolution
la Revolución de 1910: the Revolution of 1910
La Revolución Mexicana: the Mexican Revolution
Revolution: revolution

los revolucionarios auténticos: the authentic revolutionaries

el sector revolucionario: the revolutionary sector

el sistema revolucionario: the revolutionary system

la tendencia revolucionaria: the revolutionary tendency

las tradiciones revolucionarias: revolutionary traditions

el triunfo de la Revolución: the triumph of the revolution

la unidad revolucionaria: revolutionary unity

la verdadera revolución del hombre: the true revolution of man

la voluntad revolucionaria: revolutionary will

Agrarianism Dimension

In this category references to the agrarian problem, shortage of land, the hacienda or latifundia system, the land goals of Mexicans, the concentration of land or other related topics were coded. References to these words or phrases by an administration reflected awareness of the agrarian problem that developed around 1910.

acción agraria: agrarian action

adquirir tierras: to acquire lands

adquisición de fincas: acquisition of farms

el agrarismo mexicano: Mexican agrarianism

buscar una mejora redistribución a la riqueza de la tierra: to look for a better redistribution of the wealth of the land

la causa agraria: the agrarian cause

condiciones agrícolas: agricultural conditions

la cuestión agraria: the agrarian question

una distribución mejor en el territorio: a better distribution in the land

distribución de tierras: distribution of lands

dividir las grandes propiedades: to divide the large properties
entregar tierras: to deliver lands
las haciendas: rural estates
importante problema de tierras: important problems of lands
los latifundios: vast rural properties
la latifundista: owner of a vast rural property
la lucha agraria: the agrarian struggle
la mala distribución de tierra ejidal: the poor distribution of ejidal lands
una mas equitativa distribución de la tierra: a more equitable distribution of the land
la materia agraria: the agrarian matter
mejoramiento rural: rural improvement
el movimiento agrario: the agrarian movement
la política agraria: the agrarian policy
postulados agrarios: agrarian postulates
el problema de la tenencia de la tierra: the problem of the possession of land
el problema ejidal: the ejidal problem
el problema del reparto de tierras: the problem of the distribution of lands
los problemas agrarios: agrarian problems
el programa agrario: the agrarian program
el programa agrícola: the agricultural program
proporcionar tierras: to provide lands
la redistribución de la propiedad: the redistribution of property
la redistribución de la tierra: the redistribution of land
la reforma agraria: the agrarian reform
régimen de la hacienda rural: the regime of the rural estate
repartir tierras: to distribute lands
la resolución integral de los problemas de tierra: the integral resolution of the land problems

Reforms Dimension

In this category references to proposed reforms, policies, programs, actions, or legislation considered by the executive relating to the land question were coded. References to these words or phrases by an administration reflected a concern with the resolution of the land problem.

ampliación de ejidos: extension of ejidos
aplicación de las leyes agrarias: application of the agrarian laws
Artículo 27: Article 27
Código Agrario: Agrarian Code
colonización: colonization
crédito agrícola: agricultural credit
crédito ejidal: ejidal credit
crédito rural: rural credit
distribución de tierras nacionales: distribution of national lands
dotación: dotation, endowment
ejidos: ejidos, communal farms
expropiación de tierra: expropriation of land
fraccionamiento de tierras: division of lands
indemnizar: to indemnify
Legislación Agraria: agrarian legislation
Ley Agraria: agrarian law
Ley de Asociaciones Agrícolas: law of agricultural associations
Ley de Colonización: law of colonization
Ley de Dotación y Restitución de Tierras y Aguas: law of endowment and restitution of land and water rights
Ley Federal de Colonización: federal law of colonization
Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos: law of the division of ejidos
Ley General de Crédito Agrícola: general law of agricultural credit
Ley del Seguro Agrícola Integral y Ganadero: law of integral agricultural and livestock insurance
Ley de Servicios Agrícolas Federales: law of federal agricultural services
Ley de 6 de enero de 1915: law of 6 January 1915
Ley de 2 de Agosto de 1923: law of 2 August 1923
limitaciones de la propiedad privada: limitations on private property
organizaciones ejidales: ejidal organizations
proyecto de Ley de Tierras: projected law of lands
Reglamento Agrario: agrarian ordinance
restitución: restitution
tierras ejidales: ejidal lands

Structures Dimension

In this category references to proposed or existing bureaucratic structures that dealt with some aspect of agrarian reform were coded. References to these words or phrases by an administration reflected a concern with finding the means to resolve the land problem.

Agencias Generales: general agencies
Asambleas Generales de Ejidatarios: general assemblies of ejidatarios
Aseguradores Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera: national agricultural and livestock insurers
Banco Agrícola Refaccionario: agricultural finance bank
Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales: agricultural bank for ejidos
Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola: national bank of agricultural credit
Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal: national bank of ejidal credit
Banco Nacional Agropecuario: national land and cattle bank
Banca Privada: private bank
Bancos Regional de Credito Ejidal: regional banks of ejidal credit
Bancos Regionales de Credito Agricola: regional banks of agricultural credit
Centros de Bienestar Rural: centers of rural well being
Comision Nacional Agraria: national agrarian commission
Comision Nacional de Colonizacion: national commission of colonization
Comision Nacional de Irrigacion: national commission of irrigation
Comision de Colonizacion y Fraccionamiento de Predios Rusticos Nacionales: commission of colonization and division of national arable lands
Comision Organizadora del Consejo Nacional de Agricultura: organizing commission of the national agricultural council
Comisiones Locales Agrarias: local agrarian commissions
Confederacion Nacional Campesina: national peasant confederation
Consejos Locales del Banco Ejidal: local councils of the ejidal bank
cooperatives agrícolas: agricultural cooperatives
Cuerpo Consultativo General: general consultative body
Departamento Consultivo y de Legislacion: legislative advisory department
Departamento de Aprovechamiento de Ejidos: department of ejidal improvement
Departamento de Indemnizaciones: department of indemnizations
Departamento de Organizacion Agraria: department of agrarian organization
Departamento de Tierras y Colonizacion: department of lands and colonization
La Direccion de la Pequena Propiedad Agricola: the office of small agricultural property
La Dirección General de Defensa Agrícola: the general office of agricultural protection

La Dirección de Agua: the office of water

Dirección de Aguas, Tierras y Colonización: office of water, lands and colonization

Dirección de Fomento Agrícola: office of agricultural development

La Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería: the general office of agricultural and livestock

La Dirección de Agricultura: the office of agriculture

La Dirección Agraria: the agrarian office

La Dirección de Cooperacion Agrícola: the office of agricultural cooperation

Fondo de Garantía y Fomento para la Agricultura Y Ganadería: the guarantee and development fund for agriculture and livestock

Fondo Nacional Ejidal: national ejidal fund

Institución Nacional de Crédito Ejidal: national institution of ejidal credit

Instituto de Investigaciones Agrícolas: institute of agricultural investigators

La Dirección General de Promoción Agrícola Ejidal: the general office of ejidal agricultural promotion

Mutualidades de Seguro: mutual insurance groups

Nacional Financiera: national financial bank

Oficina Deslindora de Comunidades Indígenas: office of the demarcation of indigenous communities

Oficina de Fraccionamiento: office of (land) divisions

Oficina de la Pequeña Propiedad: office of small property

Partido Nacional Revolucionario: National Revolutionary Party

Primer Congreso Nacional de Derecho Agrario: first national congress of agrarian rights

Procuraduría de Asuntos Agrarios: attorney's office of agrarian affairs
El Ramo de Colonización: the office of colonization

El Ramo de Tierras: the office of lands

Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento: secretary of agriculture and development

Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería: secretary of agriculture and livestock

Secretaría de Fomento, Colonización e Industria: secretary of development, colonization and industry

Secretaría de Recursos Hidráulicos: secretary of water resources

Seguro Agrícola: agricultural insurance

Seguro Ganadero: livestock insurance

Seguro Social: Social Security

Sistemas Nacionales de Riego: national systems of irrigation

Patriotism Dimension

In this category references to patria (homeland) were coded. This was the only word or phrase selected for the content analysis of this dimension. References to patria by an administration could have symbolized a call for national unity, a pledge to bring about national unity, or a call for nationalist sentiment and support for the revolutionary regime.
APPENDIX B

The tables presented below show the frequency distributions along the dimensions of ideological intensity recorded through the use of content analysis of the individual presidential addresses made by Mexican presidents before Congress during the years 1917 to 1965.

**TABLE B-1**

**CARRANZA**

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<th>Reforms</th>
<th>Structures</th>
<th>Patriotism</th>
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<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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**TABLE B-2**

**DE LA HuERTA**

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**OBREGON**

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### TABLE B-4

**CALLES**

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### TABLE B-5

**PORTES GIL**

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### TABLE B-7
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**AVILA CAMACHO**

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### TABLE B-10

**ALEMAN**

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**RUIZ CORTINES**

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**LOPEZ MATEOS**

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APPENDIX C

MAJOR AGRARIAN LAWS AND POLICIES, 1915 to 1965

Carranza

1915 Ley Agraria: Agrarian Law
1916 Comisión Nacional Agraria: National Agrarian Commission

Obregón

1921 Ley de Ejidos: Law of Ejidos
1924 Escuela Nacional de Agricultura de Chapingo: National School of Agriculture of Chapingo

Calles

1925 Comisión Nacional de Irrigación: National Irrigation Commission
Ley del Patrimonio Ejidal: Law of Ejidal Patrimony
Escuelas Centrales Agrícolas: central Agricultural schools
1926 Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola: National Bank of Agricultural Credit
1927 Oficina Nacional para la Defensa Agrícola: National Office for Agricultural Defense
Ley de Dotaciones y Restituciones de Tierras y Aguas: Law of Endowment and Restitution of Lands and Water Rights

Ortiz Rubio

1930 Censo Agrícola Ganadero: agriculture and livestock census
Rodríguez

1934 Código Agrario: Agrarian Code
Departamento Agrario: Agrarian Department

Cárdenas

1935 Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal: National Bank of Ejidal Credit
1936 Ley de Expropiación: Law of Expropriation
1937 Reparto Agrario en la Lagunera, Yucatán, y el Yaqui: agrarian distributions in the Laguna, Yucatán, and Yaqui regions
1938 Fundación de la Confederación Nacional Campesina: founding of the National Peasant Confederation
1940 Código Agrario Agrarian Code

Avila Camacho

1942 Decreto sobre Inafectabilidad Ganadera: decree regarding livestock inaffectability

Alemán

1947 Secretaría de Recursos Hidráulicos: Secretary of Water Resources
1950 Censo Agrícola, Ganadero y Ejidal: agriculture, livestock and ejidal census

Ruíz Cortines

1953 Programa de Bienestar Social y Rural: program of rural wellbeing
1957 Entrega del Latifundio de Bavícora: transfer of the rural estate "Bavícora"
1958 Entrega del Latifundio de Cananea: transfer of the rural estate "Cananea"
López Mateos

1959 Extensión del Seguro Social al Campo: extension of Social Security to the countryside

1960 Censo Ejidal y Agrícola - Ganadero: ejidal, agriculture and livestock census
Seguro Obligatorio de los Trabajadores del Campo: mandatory insurance for rural workers

1962 Aseguradora Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera: national agricultural and livestock insurance

Diaz Ordaz

1965 Reparto de 2 millones de hectáreas a los campesinos: distribution of two million hectares to peasants
Reformas legales para extender el Seguro Social a los campesinos: legal reforms extending Social Security to peasants
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Richmond, Douglas W. "Factional Political Strife in Coahuila, 1910-1920," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 60 (February 1980), 49-68.


GLOSSARY

Agencias Generales: general agencies
agraristas: agrarianists
baldíos: untiled (lands)
Banca Privada: Private Bank
Banco Agrícola Refaccionario: Agricultural Finance Bank
Banco Agrícola y Ganadero: Agricultural and Livestock Bank
Banco Nacional Agropecuario: National Farming Bank
Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola: National Agricultural Credit Bank
Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal: National Ejidal Credit Bank
Bancos Agrícolas Ejidales: ejidal agricultural banks
bracero: laborer
Callistas: supporters of Calles
campesinos: peasants
Cardenistas: supporters of Cardenas
caudillismo: rule of the chief leader
caudillo: leader
Carrancistas: supporters of Carranza
Centros de Bienestar Rural: Centers of Rural Wellbeing
Certificados de Inafectabilidad Agrícola: Certificates for Unaffected Land
Certificados de Inafectabilidad Ganadera: Certificates for Unaffected Livestock
científicos: scientists
Código Agrario: agrarian code
Código de Tierras:  land code

Comisión Agraria Ejecutiva:  Executive Agrarian Commission

Comisión de Colonización y Fraccionamientos de Predios Rústicos
Nacionales:  Commission of Colonization and Division of National
Arable Lands

Comisión Nacional Agraria:  National Agrarian Commission

Comisión Nacional de Colonización:  National Colonization Commission

Comisión Nacional de Irrigación:  National Irrigation Commission

Comisión Organizadora del Consejo Nacional de Agricultura:  Organizing
Commission of the National Agricultural Council

Comisiones Locales Agrarias:  local agrarian commissions

Comité Revolucionario para la Reconstrucción Nacional:  Revolutionary
Committee for National Reconstruction

Comités particulares ejecutivos:  special executive committees

comunidades:  communities

Confederación Nacional Campesina:  National Peasant Confederation

congregaciones:  congregations

Cristeros:  participants in the Cristero rebellion

Departamento Agrario:  Agrarian Department

Departamento Consultivo y de Legislación:  Legislative Advisory
Department

Departamento de Indemnizaciones:  Department of Indemnifications

Departamento de Organización Agraria:  Department of Agrarian
Organization

Deuda Pública Agraria:  Local Agrarian Debt

Dirección Agraria:  Agrarian Office

Dirección de Agricultura:  Office of Agriculture

Dirección de Aguas:  Office of Waters

Dirección de Aguas, Tierras y Colonización:  Office of Waters, Lands and
Colonization
Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería: General Office of Agriculture and Livestock

Dirección General de Cooperación Agrícola: Office of Agricultural Cooperation

Dirección General de Promoción Agrícola Ejidal: General Office of Ejidal Agricultural Promotion

Distrito Federal: federal district

Distrito Norte del Territorio de la Baja California: northern district of the Territory of Baja California

dotación: a grant of land based on need

ejidatarios: members of ejidos

ejido: common public land

fincas: farms

Fondo de Garantía para el Fomento de la Agricultura: Guaranty Fund for the Development of Agriculture

Gobernación: Interior

hacendados: landowners; owners of haciendas

haciendas: rural estates

henequen: hemp

Institución de Crédito: credit institution

Instituto de Investigaciones Agrícolas: Institute of Agricultural Investigations

jefe máximo: maximum chief

latifundio: vast rural property

Ley de 6 de enero 1915: Law of 6 January 1915

Ley Agraria: Agrarian Law

Ley de Aguas: Law of Waters

Ley de Asociaciones Agrícolas: Law of Agricultural Associations

Ley de Colonización: Law of Colonization
Ley de Crédito Agrícola: Law of Agricultural Credit

Ley de Dotación y Restitución de Tierras y Aguas: Law of Endowment and Restitution of Lands and Water Rights

Ley de Ejidos: Law of Ejidos

Ley de Expropiación: Law of Expropriation

Ley Federal de Colonización: Federal Law of Colonization

Ley de Fraccionamiento de los Ejidos y la Creación del Patrimonio de Familia: Law of the Division of Ejidos and the Creation of Family Patrimony

Ley General de Crédito Agrícola: General Law of Agricultural Credit

Ley General de Instituciones de Crédito: General Law of Credit Institutions

Ley Reglamentaria: Regulatory Law

Ley de Responsabilidades de Funcionarios y Empleados Agrarios: Law of Responsibilities of Civil Servants and Agrarian Employees

Ley de Servicios Agrícola Federales: Law of Federal Agricultural Services

Ley de Tierras Ociosas: Law of Unused Lands

Maderistas: supporters of Maderos

Máximato: the reign of Calles

minifundio: very small rural property

Nacional Financiera: National Finance Institution

Obregónista: supporter of Obregón

Oficina de Fraccionamiento: Office of (land) Divisions

Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN): National Action Party

Partido Constitucional Progresista: Constitutional Progressionist Party

Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM): Mexican Liberal Party

Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR): National Revolutionary Party

Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI): Party of the Institutionalized Revolution
Partido Revolucionario Mexicano: Party of the Mexican Revolution

patria: homeland

patria chica: subnational identification

peones acasillados: peasants who did not benefit from agrarian reforms

Plan de Agua Prieta: Plan of Agua Prieta

Plan de Ayala: Plan of Ayala

Plan de Guadalupe: Plan of Guadalupe

Plan de San Luis Potosí: Plan of San Louis Potosí

Plan Sexenal: Six Year Plan of the PNR released in 1933

Porfiriato: the reign of Porfirio Díaz

Proyecto de Ley Orgánica de Petróleo y Combustibles Minerales: Projected Organic Law of Petroleum and of Combustible Minerals

Proyecto de Ley de Tierras: Projected Law of Lands

pueblos: villages

Ramo de Colonización: Department of Colonization

rancherías: ranches

Recuadacions de Rentas: collections of rents

Reforma: liberal reform period in nineteenth-century Mexico

La Reforma Agraria Integral: the integrated agrarian reform

Región Lagunera: Laguna region

Reglamento Agrario: Agrarian Ordinance

Reglamento de los Servicios Agrícolas Federales: Regulation of Federal Agricultural Services

restitución: the return of lands to previous owners

Reyistas: supporters of General Reyes

Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento: Secretary of Agriculture and Development
Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería: Secretary of Agriculture and Livestock

Secretaría de Fomento: Secretary of Development

Secretaría de Fomento, Colonización e Industria: Secretary of Development, Colonization and Industry

Secretaría de Recursos Hidráulicos: Secretary of Water Resources

Seguro Agrícola: agricultural insurance

Seguro Ganadero: cattle insurance

sinarquista: a political movement based on Syndicalism

tierra y libertad: land and liberty

Valle de México: Valley of Mexico

Villista: supporter of Francisco "Pancho" Villa

writ of amparo: an injunction

Zapatismo: the ideas and beliefs of Zapata and his followers

Zapatistas: supporters of Zapata